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Kelly Vaughan
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Vaughan

Ofsted remote visit to Pool Hayes Primary School

Following my remote visit with Deb Jenkins, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 December 2020, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the visit's findings. Thank you for the time you made available to discuss your actions since September 2020, when the government expected all schools to open fully to all pupils.

This visit was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for visiting schools while routine inspections are temporarily suspended. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

Ofsted's visits to schools during the autumn term are not inspections. We are not giving graded judgements. We did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and were unable to check other sources of evidence, such as visits to lessons or looking at pupils' work. The content of this letter gives an overview of our discussions about what has happened in your school this term.

During the visit, we spoke to you and members of the senior leadership team. We did not speak to pupils.

Context

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's education system is managing the return to full

education for pupils, following an extended break in formal schooling due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In undertaking this focused work, HMI are visiting a broad range of schools. HMI will visit a sample of:

- approximately 1,200 schools across all Ofsted grades (outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate)
- maintained schools, academies and free schools, special schools and centres of alternative provision, including those in cities, and coastal, town or rural communities.

The information from this visit will feed into Ofsted's national reporting so that the insights can be shared with the government and the education sector. We did not find any significant concerns during the visit. In such a case, an inspection report would be published on our website and available to parents and carers.

We did not consider your response to COVID-19 during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils.

From this visit, inspectors noted that:

- Approximately 15% of pupils have had to learn at home at some time this term. However, no class 'bubbles' have had to self-isolate.
- Pupils are studying all their usual subjects except swimming. You hope to reintroduce swimming into the curriculum later in the year.
- You told us that teachers are using their usual assessment procedures in lessons to check what pupils remember and understand. In reading and mathematics, you have supplemented these checks with additional tests. Your checks have identified some areas where pupils appear to have fallen back in their learning.
- Some younger pupils were less confident in their phonic knowledge at the start of the term. You are providing more lesson time and extra support to help them catch up. Older pupils are finding writing at length more challenging than they did previously. Teachers have been focusing on this area in English lessons.
- In mathematics, you have found that some pupils have forgotten key mathematical vocabulary. Others have become less confident with basic skills, such as multiplying two-digit numbers. Teachers are revisiting these areas of mathematics before moving on to new content.
- Throughout the school, you have placed a greater emphasis on personal, social, health and economic education this term than previously.

- You provide individual pupils who are self-isolating with the work their classmates are doing, either through the school's online platform or through printed packs of work.
- You have plans in place to provide remote education should a bubble have to self-isolate. It is your intention that teachers will set work, each day, using your online platform. Printed packs of work will be provided for pupils who find it difficult to access work online.

Thank you again for contributing to this important national work. The views and experiences you have shared will help to inform future policy.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Walsall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alun Williams
Her Majesty's Inspector