

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



17 December 2020

Mary Haney  
Headteacher  
Lynsted and Norton Primary School  
Lynsted Lane  
Lynsted  
Sittingbourne  
Kent  
ME9 0RL

Dear Mrs Haney

### **Ofsted remote visit to Lynsted and Norton Primary School**

Following my remote visit with Harry Ingham, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 November 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, the English leader and the interim chief executive officer and the school improvement lead for The Village multi-academy trust. 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:**

- At the time of the remote visit, the school had just closed to all pupils due to several confirmed cases of COVID-19. Additionally, a small number of pupils have worked from home for short periods this term due to positive tests in the family home.
- Pupils continue to study the full range of national curriculum subjects. Staff have made some adaptations to teaching to enable social distancing. For instance, pupils have learned hockey and football skills without playing full games. Leaders anticipate the curriculum will return to normal by the summer of 2021.
- Staff have used a range of tests and teacher assessments to check pupils' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. In other subjects, staff are checking pupils' knowledge before and after they teach new topics.
- Staff have found that pupils have lost confidence in reading and struggle to understand age-appropriate texts. Staff are spending more time reading with pupils and modelling how to scan a text for information. A small number of pupils are being supported by staff to tackle specific gaps in their phonics knowledge.

- In mathematics, pupils have been recapping their basic skills in calculation and place value. Leaders are pleased that most pupils have 'bounced back' quickly and are now able to move on to content such as fractions, decimals and percentages.
- Year 1 pupils who missed much of their Reception year are being supported by specialist teachers to improve their communication, physical and social development.
- Pupils or class 'bubbles' that are isolating are able to access their work online. Tasks are uploaded at set times of the day to replicate pupils' normal timetable. Pupils complete the work and submit it for their teachers to review and give feedback on the work to help them improve.

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 board of trustees, the chief executive officer of The Village multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Daniel Lambert  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**