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16 December 2020

Andy Cosslett  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Cosslett

### **Ofsted visit to Takeley Primary School**

Following my visit with Isabel Davis, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 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.

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, senior leaders and the office manager. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

### **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 (coronavirus) 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:**

- Since the school reopened to all pupils at the beginning of September 2020, one Year 2 'bubble' has needed to self-isolate. A very small proportion of individual pupils have had to work at home so far this term.
- Pupils are learning about the usual range of subjects in the school's curriculum, although you have adapted the content in a couple of them. For example, in physical education, swimming is not currently being taught. Although pupils are having some exposure to French, the full modern foreign languages curriculum is not yet back in place.
- You have assessed pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, and have found that pupils are behind where you would usually expect them to be. Teachers are adapting how they deliver the curriculum, to meet pupils' needs. For example, teachers have gone back to earlier phases of the school's phonics programme to ensure that pupils do not have gaps in their knowledge, as they develop their ability to read fluently.
- In mathematics, you have found that pupils have forgotten some of the things that they have previously been taught. This is particularly the case with calculations, and with recall of multiplication tables and other number facts. This is having an impact on pupils' ability to apply their knowledge to solve mathematical problems.
- You have decided not to undertake any educational visits for the time being, and plan to review this decision next term. To counteract this, you have arranged to have more visitors into school to enhance different aspects of the curriculum. For example, a visiting provider led a 'Victorian Day' in school on the day that our visit took place.

- You have a different approach to remote education depending on whether it is an individual or a bubble that needs to self-isolate. For individuals, pupils are given work to do in English and mathematics, and provided with links to a range of online resources. Pupils in bubbles are provided with remote education that aims to replicate what they would do in school, including direct instruction from their teacher using the school's chosen digital platform.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**