

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Rebecca Negrello
Headteacher
Abbots Langley School
Parsonage Close
Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire
WD5 0BQ

Dear Mrs Negrello

Ofsted remote visit to Abbots Langley School

Following my remote visit with Fiona Webb, 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, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders and the family support worker. 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 our visit, one pupil was studying from home due to COVID-19. Since the start of term, approximately 20% of pupils have needed to study from home for a few days. While learning at home, pupils have access to the school's provision for remote education.
- Leaders have been working with external specialists to plan the curriculum for this academic year. Staff are teaching all of the subjects in the school's curriculum. Leaders have changed some of the content within subjects for this academic year.
- Staff have checked what pupils know across subjects. They have found that pupils need extra help to catch up in some subjects, including in English and mathematics. Leaders have provided training for staff in how to address their pupils' needs.
- In Years 1 to 3, staff are focused on helping pupils improve their reading by using phonics accurately. Leaders have planned the curriculum so that staff have more time for teaching phonics. Leaders are also providing extra small-group support sessions for pupils.
- Staff are paying particular attention to helping pupils remember mathematical facts taught over the previous academic year. Leaders have provided online activities for pupils to practise mathematics at school and at home.

- Leaders told us that pupils returned to school in September knowing more about computing than staff anticipated. Leaders also said that children in early years started school more capable than expected in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders have used the views of parents to create and improve the school's approach to remote education. Leaders have trained staff and parents in how to use the online provision. Leaders provide online and paper-based resources for pupils studying at home.

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 Hertfordshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Al Mistrano
Her Majesty's Inspector