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Zoe McGuigan
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Dear Mrs McGuigan

Ofsted remote visit to Hertford Infant and Nursery School

Following my remote visit 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, I 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. I did not undertake the usual range of inspection activities and was 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, I spoke to you, members of the senior leadership team, including the leader responsible for safeguarding, the early years leader and the attendance officer. I 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. I 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.

I 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, the inspector noted that:

- Since September 2020, over a third of pupils have had to self-isolate for a number of days. They have continued with their learning at home during their absence.
- Pupils are studying all the subjects in the school's usual curriculum, with some changes to the order of what is taught in the year. For instance, not all pupils currently have regular access to the computer suite. As a result, they will learn about coding later in the year, when restrictions are lifted.
- Teachers have used several ways to check on what knowledge and understanding pupils have retained since the summer term. These checks show that there are areas of learning that some pupils need to cover again.
- Leaders have placed an emphasis on rebuilding pupils' reading and writing skills and are providing opportunities for pupils to practise and improve. They say that pupils are not as fluent and capable in their reading as they were. Teachers have found that pupils are not able to write as much or with the accuracy that they would have expected at this stage.
- Pupils have retained their mathematics skills better than skills in other subjects. Teachers have planned for topics such as geometry and statistics, that were missed over the summer, to be covered during this year.
- Teachers are identifying the learning that pupils have missed in other subjects. They plan to prioritise teaching the essential elements that pupils have missed or forgotten.

- Leaders have developed a range of remote learning resources that parents can use with their children when required. This is available both as an online programme and as hard copies. The work that is set follows the normal curriculum wherever possible.

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 Brighton and Hove. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Yasmin Maskatiya
Her Majesty's Inspector