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Elizabeth Powell
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Powell

Ofsted remote visit to Ashby-de-la-Zouch Church of England Primary School

Following my remote visit with Steve Varman, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 December, 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 the deputy headteacher. 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 visit, all pupils in a Year 2 class were self-isolating. Since the start of term, almost a third of pupils have learned at home for a period of time.
- Pupils are studying the school's usual range of subjects. In computing, design and technology, and music, teachers have reordered parts of the curriculum so that they can be taught later in the year. Leaders plan to resume the school's usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- Teachers have completed checks on pupils' new starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have plans in place to regularly check pupils' understanding in these subjects. Teachers are aware of what content has been missed in other curriculum areas.
- Teachers are helping pupils in Years 1 and 2 to practise their phonics knowledge. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are developing their skills to understand what they have read. Teachers are making sure that pupils are getting extra opportunities to read.
- In writing, teachers are helping pupils with their spelling and with how they use different types of sentences. Teachers are providing extra lessons to help pupils catch up on learning they have missed or forgotten.
- In mathematics, teachers in all year groups are revisiting knowledge that pupils have forgotten, particularly in relation to their knowledge of number.

- Leaders have made pupils' well-being a priority. They have increased the time that teachers spend on teaching personal, social, health and economic education. Extra-curricular activities and clubs are not taking place.
- Teachers are ensuring that children in the Reception Year receive regular opportunities to develop their communication and language skills and socialise together safely.
- Leaders have developed plans to provide remote learning in paper-based and online formats. This learning is based on the existing curriculum. When a class 'bubble' must learn from home, teachers will set work online, including by providing videos and links to websites.

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 director of education for the Diocese of Leicester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicestershire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Shaheen Hussain
Seconded Inspector of schools