

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



4 January 2021

Eugene Samuel
Headteacher
Purfleet Primary Academy
Tank Hill Road
Purfleet
Essex
RM19 1TA

Dear Mr Samuel

Ofsted visit to Purfleet Primary Academy

Following my visit with Andrew Hemmings, 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, the senior leadership team and the attendance officer. 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 start of the academic year, the proportion of pupils who have had to learn from home due to isolation is approximately 7%. A Year 1 'bubble' was in isolation before the half-term break.
- Teachers started the term by planning lessons from the school's well-being programme. Pupils are now studying most of the subjects from the curriculum. Year 6 is the only class that is having computing lessons in the computing room. Other classes are using laptops in their own classrooms.
- Leaders from key stage 1 have carried out checks of pupils' phonic knowledge. They have found that some pupils have not remembered all the sounds they had been taught previously. Teachers are delivering additional phonic lessons to help pupils catch up.
- Teachers have found out how well older pupils are reading. You told us that some pupils were not reading frequently during the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions. Leaders have introduced a 'reading for pleasure' session to encourage pupils to read widely.
- In mathematics, leaders have undertaken similar checks of pupils' knowledge. Leaders' assessments have guided teachers' planning to help address the gaps in pupils' mathematical understanding. You are providing additional lessons before and after school to help pupils get back on track in mathematics and reading.
- Teachers are asking questions to find out what pupils have remembered in other subjects such as history and art. Curriculum plans are adapted to

address gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers investigate different ways to deliver the curriculum where trips are currently not taking place.

- Remote education has been provided for pupils who have had to self-isolate or be absent from school. This has been delivered in the form of paper-based work packs or through class pages on the school's website. Along with the trust, further plans are being made for remote education. You are planning to ensure that teachers receive training and guidance in the use of these approaches.

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 local governing board, and the chief executive officer of the Reach2 multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Thurrock. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Mellors
Her Majesty's Inspector