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16 December 2020

Victoria Forbes  
Assistant Director/Principal  
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Dear Mrs Forbes

### **Ofsted remote visit to Harris Primary Academy Croydon**

Following my remote visit with Daniel-John Constable, 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 and members of the senior leadership team. 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:**

- Since September 2020, a few pupils have needed to study from home for several days while isolating.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders have shortened the time allotted to some lessons to accommodate catch-up lessons in English and mathematics. Since taking over the school in November 2020, the multi-academy trust has also extended the school day to provide pupils with additional sessions and support. Leaders plan to return all pupils to their usual curriculum at the beginning of the spring term.
- Teachers' assessments in September 2020 identified that some pupils needed extra support in mathematics with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils are not able to use these number skills to problem solve in mathematics. Leaders are using the newly extended school day to provide additional focused sessions for pupils to help them catch up. This includes a 'shared breakfast' each day for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities when teachers give extra support to pupils' learning.
- Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics across the school, including in the early years. Leaders have allocated additional time for reading each day, including time to develop pupils' phonics knowledge.
- Teachers have identified that pupils returned to school lacking the stamina needed for sustained writing tasks. Teachers are helping pupils to build up their skills and provide pupils with more opportunities to write each day.

- Currently, pupils are unable to attend museums, art galleries or other events that enrich the wider curriculum. Leaders are working with the multi-academy trust to provide a range of online and virtual tours to enhance lessons.
- So far, remote education has been used for a small number of pupils. Leaders have carried out 'practice runs' where staff and pupils have tried the remote education online resources. Pupils are able to access the same subject content that they would be learning in school, including features such as virtual registration at the start of each day.

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

Yours sincerely

Adam Vincent  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**