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4 January 2021

Louise Seargeant  
Headteacher  
Fender Primary School  
New Hey Road  
Woodchurch  
Wirral  
CH49 8HB

Dear Mrs Seargeant

### **Ofsted visit to Fender Primary School**

Following my visit with Tim Vaughan, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 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 deputy headteacher, the business manager and the home-school link worker. 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 term, around one third of pupils have had to self-isolate and study from home for a short period of time.
- You have made changes to the curriculum to provide more time for the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics. For example, you are not currently teaching languages. You plan to return to the school's usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- The checks that you have made in mathematics show that many pupils are below where you would expect them to be at this point in the year. Teachers have focused on arithmetic this term. However, you have plans to cover the learning that pupils have missed since March 2020 by the end of the summer term 2021.
- Teachers in all classes have carried out assessments on pupils' reading. You told us that most older pupils have not slipped behind with their reading skills. However, you have found that many younger pupils are struggling with their reading. Staff are providing additional phonics teaching to help these pupils catch up.
- You are aware that parts of the wider curriculum have not been taught since March 2020. Teachers have recently begun to check pupils' knowledge and understanding across subjects. They are using this information to adapt curriculum plans to take account of the learning that pupils have missed.

- Since the beginning of term, you have provided work for those pupils who have had to work from home. This has mainly been paper-based activity as you told us that many pupils do not have the technology to access the resources that you are providing online. You explained that, where possible, the work that teachers set provides pupils with the opportunity to follow most of the school's curriculum while working 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 Wirral. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Tomkow  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**