

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Richard O'Sullivan
Headteacher
Byron Primary School
Barkerend Road
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD3 0AB

Dear Mr O'Sullivan

Ofsted visit to Byron Primary School

Following my visit with Steve Shaw, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 9 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 attendance manager and one of the deputy safeguarding leaders. We also spoke to a range of subject leaders. 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:

- At the time of our visit, the school was closed to one group of Nursery children and a small number of pupils in Year 3 were self-isolating because of COVID-19. Over half of your pupils have worked from home for a period of time since September 2020 because of the pandemic.
- Leaders have paused the introduction of a new languages curriculum to assess gaps in pupils' learning and focus on addressing these gaps. Physical education and music have been adapted to include activities that do not require the sharing of equipment.
- Leaders' checks have shown that pupils' phonics knowledge has been affected by COVID-19 restrictions. For example, Year 1 pupils were not able to blend sounds as the school would expect. There is now a greater focus on teaching missed phonics skills. In writing, there is more focus on spelling, grammar and building writing stamina.
- In mathematics, the curriculum has been organised to cover the content that pupils missed during the period of partial closure. For example, pupils in Year 3 are being taught some of the content that would normally be taught in Year 2.
- Leaders have adapted the wider curriculum to support pupils' return to school. In September 2020, there was a focus on personal, social, health and economic education at the beginning of term to help pupils settle back into learning.

- In nursery, children do not have some of the basic skills that leaders would normally expect at this time. As a result, leaders have adapted the curriculum to focus on the 'letter of the week' earlier than usual.
- Remote education is aligned to the school's curriculum. It is organised so that pupils can access work through paper packs or the use of digital technology. When class 'bubbles' are required to self-isolate at home, teachers record lessons for pupils to support them in completing learning tasks 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, chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Nurture Academies Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Vellensworth
Her Majesty's Inspector