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Nigel Daintith
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Dear Mr Daintith

Ofsted visit to Arboretum Primary School

Following my visit with Rachel Tordoff, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 December 2020, 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 and the senior leadership team. 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:

- There were no class or year-group 'bubbles' isolating at the time of the visit. A small minority of pupils have needed to learn from home since the start of the term.
- Except for French and music, all pupils are studying the usual curriculum. Leaders are planning to enable pupils to access the full curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Teachers have identified that pupils have developed gaps in their phonic knowledge. Pupils who have forgotten previous learning in phonics are being given additional individual support to help them to catch up.
- Teachers' checks on pupils' knowledge and skills in mathematics have shown that most pupils have been able to retain their understanding of place value and their ability to calculate accurately. A small minority of pupils have needed extra help with applying their knowledge to solving mathematical problems.
- Pupils' writing skills were assessed at the beginning of the term. Teachers found that pupils were struggling to punctuate and spell accurately and produce detailed and extended pieces of writing. Teachers have supported pupils by guiding them to plan more carefully the content of their writing, as a means of helping them return to the normal standard of work.
- Leaders are providing paper-based packs of learning activities for pupils to complete if they are sent home. Pupils are given tasks to complete in phonics, English, mathematics and other subjects linked to the current topic. Parental access to technology and the internet is proving to be the barrier that leaders are trying to overcome through use of the additional COVID-19 funding.

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 school's governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Derby Diocesan Academy Trust 2, the director of education for the Diocese of Derby, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Derby. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Carter
Her Majesty's Inspector