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Rachel Purvis
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Purvis

Ofsted visit to William Rhodes Primary & Nursery School

Following my visit with Vic Wilkinson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 29 September 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 family support 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 made 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:

- The school reopened to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Pupils attend full time. At the time of the visit, no class 'bubbles' were in self-isolation.
- Attendance is below that usually seen at this point in the school year. You are supporting a small number of families to ensure that parents and carers feel confident enough to send their children back to school.
- Pupils are not yet studying the school's usual curriculum. English, mathematics, science, history, art and physical education (PE) are taught currently. You are gradually reintroducing other subjects so that pupils will be taught the full curriculum by summer term 2021.
- Teachers have identified gaps in some pupils' communication skills and in their reading and phonic knowledge. You know that some younger pupils' reading abilities have not improved while learning remotely. You have increased the number of reading and phonic sessions that pupils receive each week.
- In mathematics, teachers have assessed all pupils' knowledge. You are in the process of identifying common gaps in pupils' understanding. Teachers are revisiting some aspects of the curriculum to ensure that pupils gain knowledge that they may have missed during lockdown.
- You have prioritised the teaching of PE to help improve pupils' physical fitness and well-being. In science, leaders have created a bespoke curriculum plan to help pupils catch up. Teachers are at an early stage of checking pupils' knowledge and understanding across the wider curriculum.

- Staff delivered remote education throughout the spring and summer terms. You continue to offer remote education to a small number of pupils who are self-isolating. You have plans in place to develop remote education further so that it matches what pupils would learn were they present in school. You provide equipment and training to make sure that parents can support their children while learning remotely.

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 Derbyshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Varnam
Her Majesty's Inspector