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Paul O'Malley
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Dear Mr O'Malley

Ofsted visit to Stokesay Primary

Following my visit with Alun Williams, 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 chief executive office of the trust 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 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 beginning of the autumn term, a small number of pupils have been absent from school at some point as a result of COVID-19.
- You told us that pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. However, in some subjects you have adapted how you teach the subjects because of the protective measures in place at school. For example, in design and technology, pupils are making their models individually instead of in groups and some music teaching is held outside.
- At the start of the term, you checked pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics. You are planning what you teach in these subjects based on this information. You told us that in key stage 2 pupils have needed more support to help them catch up in their writing than their reading and mathematics.
- You are using some of the COVID-19 catch-up premium to provide extra phonics teaching in the early years and key stage 1. You have also provided staff with additional training with the aim of strengthening phonics teaching.
- In mathematics, you have identified that pupils need to practise and relearn some basic skills. For example, pupils in key stage 1 are focusing on basic number skills and pupils in key stage 2 are focusing on times tables. You are providing pupils with additional time to practise these skills.
- In the early years, you have developed the outdoor area to provide more space for children to use the learning resources. Based on your checks of children's learning, you are providing them with more opportunities to develop their literacy and mathematical skills.

- Following the first national lockdown, you changed how you provide pupils with remote learning when they cannot attend school due to COVID-19. Most pupils use the remote learning you provide through the online learning programmes. Pupils who need additional technology to access online learning at home can now borrow school equipment. You continue to provide some pupils with paper-based remote learning where needed.

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 board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the TrustEd School's Partnership, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Shropshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard
Her Majesty's Inspector