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Nicolle Deighton
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Dear Mrs Deighton

Ofsted remote visit to Briarwood School

Following my remote visit with Jen Southall, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

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 other senior leaders, including the business manager. We did not speak to pupils.

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 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:

- Around a quarter of pupils have had to work from home for short periods since the start of term.
- Pupils are studying most subjects of the curriculum. However, history and geography are not currently being taught. You expect all pupils to return to the normal curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Since the school reopened in September 2020, teachers have checked what pupils know and can remember in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers have identified gaps on a pupil-by-pupil basis to help pupils recover from any lost learning.
- Teachers use information from pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans to write individual action plans for pupils. EHC plans have been revised, taking account of the most recent assessment information from September 2020, to help pupils catch up.
- Reading is a priority. You have made some changes to the teaching of reading since September 2020. For example, you have introduced a new phonics scheme and made sure that each pupil has a book to read with an adult.
- Mathematics was reintroduced in June 2020, as a core part of the school's curriculum, following the temporary suspension of its teaching in the spring term. Teachers have identified gaps in pupils' mathematical knowledge, linking

these to individual EHC plans. The teaching of mathematics is planned on an individual basis to meet the needs of each pupil.

- Since the return to school in September 2020, you have prioritised pupils' personal, social, health and economic education, including promoting pupils' mental health and well-being. You want pupils to feel safe and secure, so that they can learn to the best of their ability.
- Currently, there are restrictions on vocational training and work experience for post-16 students. Some therapeutic activities have also been suspended, including horse therapy and swimming. You plan to reintroduce these as soon as possible.
- Teachers use a combination of paper-based and digital activities for remote education. You have made sure that every pupil has a computer to use at home. The 'Resource bus' plays a role in supporting remote education. For example, it delivers appropriate books to blind pupils when they have to work 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 the city of Bristol. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stewart Gale
Her Majesty's Inspector