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Gary Parnaby
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Parnaby

Ofsted remote visit to Shilbottle Primary School

Following my remote visit with Graham Findlay, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 5 November 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 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 your key stage 2 leader. 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 (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:

- The school opened fully to all pupils on 2 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- You told us that pupils' attendance is broadly similar to the normal attendance for this time of year.
- You said pupils are studying the usual full range of subjects. Adjustments have been made to some subjects such as physical education and music. You explained that some local facilities are closed; visits out of school and events such as inter-school sporting competitions are not currently taking place. You hope to return pupils to their usual curriculum by summer term 2021.
- Teachers have checked pupils' current knowledge to identify their new starting points. You have pinpointed reading, including phonics, as a priority because of lost or missed learning due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Teachers are offering extra reading and/or phonics sessions after school to help target pupils across year groups to catch up.
- You have also prioritised mathematics because you found gaps in some pupils' knowledge due to lost or missed learning. Extra mathematics sessions are currently taking place in the afternoons. You intend to focus on mathematics in the after-school sessions that teachers are planning for early next term.
- You told us that you are working on your approach to delivering the full range of subjects remotely should this be needed in the future. At present, you offer paper packs of work for pupils and, where connectivity allows,

pupils can also access learning online. You are trying to overcome some local issues of internet access for pupils trying to work online from 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, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Northumberland. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Fiona Manuel
Her Majesty's Inspector