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14 December 2020

Michael Arthur  
Headteacher  
Toner Avenue Primary School  
Johnston Avenue  
Hebburn  
Tyne and Wear  
NE31 2LJ

Dear Mr Arthur

### **Ofsted remote visit to Toner Avenue Primary School**

Following my remote visit with Jenny Thomas, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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 (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 your deputy headteacher. 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:**

- At the time of the visit, a Year 1 'bubble' was isolating at home. Just over a quarter of pupils have had to study from home for a period of time, because of COVID-19, since the beginning of the autumn term.
- You told us that pupils are studying their usual range of subjects this term. You provide extra sessions to help pupils catch up on learning they missed last term. You expect to return to the usual curriculum in these subjects by summer term 2021, if not earlier.
- In September, staff checked pupils' knowledge in reading and phonics. Where pupils in Years 1 and 2 have fallen behind in their phonics knowledge, they are receiving extra support. In Years 3 to 5 where pupils are not reading as fluently as they should, you are providing more time to practise.
- Teachers carried out similar checks in mathematics. You identified that a common gap resulting from missed learning over the summer was in pupils' calculation skills. You are prioritising revision of multiplication tables to support pupils to improve in this area.
- In subjects such as history, you have directed teachers to check what has been missed as a result of COVID-19. Pupils are revisiting spring- and summer-term content alongside their usual learning this term.
- All pupils access remote education as part of their weekly timetable. This means that pupils are familiar with the online learning system when class bubbles or individual pupils have to study from home. Teachers have pre-

recorded some lessons so that parts of the remote learning are in line with what they teach in school.

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 South Tyneside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**