

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Daniel Simm
Headteacher
Devonshire Primary Academy
Devonshire Road
Blackpool
Lancashire
FY3 8AF

Dear Mr Simm

Ofsted remote visit to Devonshire Primary Academy

Following my remote visit with Jackie Stillings, 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 the senior leadership team. 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:

- Since September 2020, just over half of pupils have had to study from home.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of curriculum subjects.
- Teachers' assessments have identified that younger pupils have developed gaps in their phonics knowledge. Staff are providing extra phonics sessions so that pupils can revisit the learning that they have forgotten. Older pupils are spending more time working on their comprehension skills, to enable them to catch up on lost learning from the summer term 2020.
- In mathematics, teachers' checks show that some pupils have fallen behind due to learning that was missed in the summer term. Staff are adapting the mathematics curriculum to include this lost learning, and are providing more opportunities each week to help pupils get back on track.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers have identified the curriculum content that pupils missed during the summer term. Teachers are adapting their plans so that missed subject content is included in the units of work that are taught this academic year.
- Staff have provided a range of online and paper-based resources for pupils who have been unable to attend school due to COVID-19. Most of the activities set consolidate what pupils have been learning in school the previous week. You told us that staff provide feedback for pupils on the work that they complete at 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 school's governing body, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Sea View Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Blackpool. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow
Her Majesty's Inspector