

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Lucy Sutton
Headteacher
Samlesbury Primary School
Potters Lane
Preston
Lancashire
PR5 0UE

Dear Mrs Sutton

Ofsted remote visit to Samlesbury Primary School

Following my remote visit with John Nixon, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 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 the assistant 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:

- Since the start of this term one in every five pupils has had to work from home.
- You explained that pupils are studying the usual curriculum, but with some amendments. For example, in music, pupils are signing rather than singing.
- Across the wider curriculum, teachers are checking the subject content that pupils have remembered since March 2020. Teachers are amending planned work, to combine a revision of knowledge that pupils have forgotten with new subject content.
- Assessments in reading showed that, since March 2020, pupils in Years 5 and 6 had forgotten how to explain the meaning of fiction books and summarise information from non-fiction books. Teachers are revisiting this curriculum content to remind pupils how to do these tasks.
- You also identified that children in the Reception class and pupils in Years 1 to 4 had developed gaps in their phonic knowledge. You have planned extra sessions for pupils, to jog their memories in the different sounds that letters represent and bring them back up to speed.
- Your teachers have checked what pupils know and can do in mathematics. These checks showed that some younger pupils had forgotten how to add and subtract numbers. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 were struggling with the vocabulary needed to solve problems. You have introduced support sessions for these pupils to help them catch up on this lost learning.

- You provide remote education from the first day any pupils are not in school. Each pupil has a timetable to help them and their parents plan each day. The planned activities broadly reflect what is being taught in school. The work provided is tailored to the differing needs of older and younger pupils, and for individual pupils or class 'bubbles'. Teachers provide feedback to pupils at lunchtime or after school. You have provided all pupils with a pack of the resources that they need to help them learn when away from 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 director of education for the diocese of Blackburn, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Mulgrew
Her Majesty's Inspector