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Alison Bailey
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Ms Bailey

Ofsted visit to Walpole Highway Primary School

Following my visit with John Randall, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 6 October 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.

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, the senior leadership team and the senior leader responsible for safeguarding pupils. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

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 to all pupils on Friday 4 September 2020. You expect all pupils to attend full time.
- Since opening, pupils' attendance is below that normally expected for this time of year. You are trying to reassure parents who are anxious about safely sending their children back to school.
- Leaders are prioritising pupils' reading skills, building on work that they had planned before COVID-19. In Year 2, you are checking what pupils can remember about the sounds they have learned in phonics. You intend to adapt the phonics programmes so that pupils do not have gaps in their understanding. You are providing additional support packages for reading and writing.
- In mathematics, staff are identifying the knowledge that pupils need to cover or revisit. You told us that the focus this term is on reinforcing place value and the four operations of arithmetic at an age-appropriate level. Additionally, there is more practice of times tables for Year 4 pupils.
- Pupils are being offered the full range of subjects. You are making adaptations to the teaching of physical education, music, art and science. You have focused on personal, social, emotional and health education as part of the recovery programme so that pupils feel safe, happy and ready to learn.
- Teachers have carried out assessments to identify pupils' new starting points in subjects. Alongside more formal approaches, teachers are using quizzes

and conversations with pupils to work out what they have remembered. You intend to use the information to decide the most important content to teach so that pupils do not have gaps in their knowledge or understanding.

- Staff have been trained in the digital learning technology. You consider that you are well prepared for remote learning, if the need arises. You told us that your model now aligns closely with the curriculum pupils experience in school. You have in place plans to monitor pupils' engagement with remote learning.

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 Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop
Her Majesty's Inspector