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Matthew Johnson
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Dear Mr Johnson

Ofsted remote visit to Copnor Primary School

Following my remote visit with James Broadbridge, 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, the senior leadership team, subject leaders and members of the pastoral support 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:

- At the time of the visit, one class 'bubble' of Year 3 pupils was self-isolating and studying from home. Overall, since September, a low proportion of pupils have needed to study from home over a few days for COVID-19 related reasons.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 and children in the Reception year are studying their usual curriculum with some adjustments. Leaders have reviewed their plans for what pupils will learn in some subjects, including history, geography, science, art and computing. Teachers have prioritised specific skills and concepts and rearranged when some topics will be covered during the year.
- At the moment, physical education is only taking place outdoors. Pupils are not playing wind instruments in music lessons and are singing outside. Leaders are planning to return to their usual ways of working in these subjects by the end of the academic year
- From formal tests and teachers' assessments, leaders have identified that pupils need to build up their vocabulary and remember how to punctuate and spell correctly. They have also noted that pupils need to read texts that are at the right level of difficulty for their age and ability.
- In mathematics, teachers are giving pupils more time to practise their arithmetic skills and relearn their times tables.

- Leaders have noticed that some children in the Reception class have missed out on experiences that help them to understand the world around them. Staff have adjusted the early years curriculum to focus on real-life materials and activities.
- At the start of the term, leaders sent families packages of work for individual pupils or bubbles who were self-isolating. Teachers have now developed a system of online lessons that replicate pupils' usual timetables. Pupils who need to study at home send work to their teachers who then provide help and feedback.

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 Portsmouth local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Janet Pearce
Her Majesty's Inspector