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Jo Fallowell
Principal
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Dear Mrs Fallowell

Ofsted remote visit to Compass Primary Academy

Following my remote visit with Damien Turrell, 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 vice principal, the safeguarding leader and members of the wider 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:

- At the time of the visit, a 'bubble' of children in the Nursery year was isolating at home. Since September 2020, a small number of pupils have had to learn at home.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Swimming, singing and educational visits are deferred until later in the year. Some after-school sports clubs are taking place outside, with competitions held 'virtually'.
- Leaders plan to return to the full curriculum and range of activities by summer 2021.
- Staff have carried out assessments in English and mathematics, to identify pupils' new starting points. These checks have shown that most pupils have knowledge gaps in both subjects.
- Pupils are receiving support in phonics to help them catch up. Staff are making sure that pupils in all year groups have increased opportunities to read a wide range of texts.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are revisiting how to form letters and write grammatical sentences. In the older year groups, staff are helping pupils to build stamina for writing at length.
- The checks in mathematics show that the younger pupils need more practice in basic number awareness.

- In other subjects, there is a focus on physical education and personal, social and health education, to support pupils' mental and physical health and well-being.
- Leaders have developed a phased plan to provide remote learning matched to the normal class timetable. If pupils need to learn at home for short periods of time, staff provide paper-based packs of resources. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes receive family-friendly activities based on games and nursery rhymes. If a whole bubble needs to isolate, staff provide paper packs and links to online learning resources to support English, mathematics and the full range of subjects.

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, chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Brooke Weston multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Northamptonshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
Her Majesty's Inspector