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Nicky Haslam-Davies
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Haslam-Davies

Ofsted remote visit to Giffards Primary School

Following my remote visit with Andrew Hemmings, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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, the two assistant headteachers and the business manager. 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 the autumn term, some pupils have had to work from home while they await results of a COVID-19 test.
- Leaders have chosen to introduce a 'recovery' curriculum for this academic year which includes the usual range of subjects. Leaders have reduced the teaching time for physical education to give more time for reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders plan for the normal curriculum to resume in summer 2021.
- In personal, social and health education, teachers are focusing on well-being to support pupils' mental health.
- Teachers have carried out checks on what pupils remember in English and mathematics. In reading, teachers are spending more time on improving pupils' comprehension of their reading.
- In mathematics, teachers are providing additional lessons to pupils who are less confident with calculations and using their mathematics knowledge to solve number problems.
- Some pupils in Years 1 and 2 have forgotten what they learned in phonics. Teachers are continuing the usual phonics programme as well as revisiting pupils' phonics knowledge when learning in other subjects.
- In all subjects, teachers have identified the knowledge that was not taught during the summer term. Teachers have adjusted planning for the autumn

term, so that they teach pupils the missed content before they introduce any new learning.

- Pupils can access remote learning online or via workbooks. Leaders plan for pupils learning at home to cover similar curriculum content as their peers learning at 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 and the chair of the board of trustees, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Thurrock. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Liz Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector