

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Claire Temple
Headteacher
Sandbrook Primary School
Stavordale Road
Moreton
Wirral
Merseyside
CH46 9PS

Dear Ms Temple

Ofsted visit to Sandbrook Primary School

Following my visit with John Tomlinson, 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. 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:

- Sandbrook Primary School opened to all pupils on 2 September 2020. Every pupil is expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is slightly lower than it would typically be at this time of the year. You are following your usual procedures to encourage all pupils to attend school regularly.
- You explained that all subjects in the primary national curriculum are being taught. You front-loaded some subjects, such as art, at the start of term. You believe this helped pupils to settle back into school routines.
- Pupils are studying their usual curriculum, but with some adaptations. You have amended some of the curriculum content, for subjects other than English and mathematics, to help pupils make up for lost learning.
- In some subjects, teachers have checked what pupils have remembered from before the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions. You have found out that many younger pupils have lost ground with their phonics knowledge. You aim to refresh their memories through small-group work and a new approach to teaching phonics.
- Teachers have picked up that older pupils are reading with less fluency and confidence. This has led you to bring forward your plans to place reading at the heart of the curriculum. Teachers are using story books and information texts to cover subject content that pupils may have missed in the summer term.

- Since September, pupils have spent their time in mathematics lessons going over number facts. This is because teachers' checks revealed that many pupils found it difficult to complete calculations quickly and efficiently.
- You are in the process of updating your remote learning offer, in case it should be needed in the future. Curriculum booklets, which match the planned curriculum, will be available to pupils if they are not able to come into 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 regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wirral. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jo Olsson
Her Majesty's Inspector