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Jessica Buzzing
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Buzzing

Ofsted visit to St John's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Rob Hackfath, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 8 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 special educational needs coordinator and key stage 1 leader. 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 2 September 2020. From that date, you expected them to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with what you normally expect at this time of year.
- Leaders have suspended some parts of the usual curriculum. Currently, music is not being taught in the normal way. For instance, singing and practical activities have been replaced with music appreciation. In physical education, swimming and sports that require the sharing of equipment are not being offered. Cookery is not being taught, because of your current hygiene arrangements. Leaders plan to return to the school's usual curriculum when the current protective measures are no longer required.
- Teachers have assessed pupils on the work they were set to cover during the summer term. They have also carried out baseline assessments in reading and mathematics and assessed Year 6 pupils by using a test.
- In reading, leaders say that pupils have returned to school in the habit of reading often, but not for long periods of time. Teachers have assessed key stage 1 pupils to check their phonics knowledge. They have identified some areas where pupils need to catch up and are working on these in lessons.
- In mathematics, teachers have identified that a lack of repetition of key vocabulary, for example perpendicular and parallel, has led to some pupils not being able to readily recall some concepts.

- You explained that teachers aim to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge in other subjects as the term progresses.
- Leaders are developing plans to deliver remote education in the event of this being needed. They are considering the resources they might use to do this and are trying out some approaches at the moment. They plan to offer an online curriculum that contains different elements of the school day, for example acts of worship alongside literacy, numeracy and foundation 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, the director of education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury, and the director of children's services for Shropshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dan Owen
Her Majesty's Inspector