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Marian Ryder
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Ryder

Ofsted visit to St Clare's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Ahmed Marikar, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 22 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 and the acting assistant headteacher. 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.
- Pupils' attendance is better than it usually is for this time of year.
- You have adapted the usual curriculum to provide more time for the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics. As a result, you are teaching a reduced curriculum in modern foreign languages this term. You are planning to return to the usual curriculum by January 2021.
- Teachers have identified that some younger pupils are not as far on with their phonics knowledge as they would usually be at this time of the year. You have introduced a programme of support to help those pupils who need catch up.
- You explained to us that some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are struggling with a few aspects of reading, such as comprehension. Across the curriculum, staff are making sure that pupils have more opportunities to read.
- In mathematics, teachers' checks have shown that pupils need more practice with calculations. Staff are adapting the mathematics curriculum and supporting pupils who need additional help to get back on track.
- During lessons, in subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers are using a range of strategies to check for any gaps in pupils' learning. They are using this information to identify what pupils have missed or forgotten. Subject curriculums will be adjusted to take account of what these assessments tell you.
- You and the staff team have developed a remote education offer. You explained that the online resources that you are offering match subject

curriculums. You have provided training for staff and pupils, so that they can use the new systems safely.

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, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cheshire West and Chester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow
Her Majesty's Inspector