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Liz Orland
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Orland

Ofsted visit to Danby Church of England Voluntary Controlled School

Following my visit with Michael Wardle, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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 throughout the day. 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:

- You opened the school for all pupils from 9 September 2020. All pupils are expected to attend full time, including children in early years.
- You told us that attendance is lower than usual for your school at this time of year. You explained that this is not as a result of the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. Leaders are working with external agencies and families to improve pupils' attendance.
- Teachers have been delivering all subjects in your usual curriculum since September. Leaders are considering reducing the curriculum in some subjects to support pupils catching up on work missed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- You asked teachers to complete short assessments to check what pupils can remember from their prior learning. You said that this has showed you that an increased focus on phonics is needed for children in early years and pupils in key stage 1. With older pupils, you are focusing on gaps in written grammar.
- In mathematics, you said that teachers are delivering lessons with regular 'recaps' to check pupils' understanding. You have found this helpful in identifying pupils' individual gaps in learning.
- Leaders said that some adaptations have been made to the wider curriculum, for example, having physical education tournaments virtually, and moving some practical aspects of music and food technology to later in the year.

- Leaders are considering how remote learning could be improved, in case it is needed in the future. You have explored a range of options which will allow learning on site and remotely, so that pupils who may need to remain at home can learn in 'real time' alongside their peers.

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 York, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Zoe Lightfoot
Her Majesty's Inspector