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14 October 2020

Jemma Stuttard
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Stuttard

Ofsted visit to St John Southworth Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Sue Eastwood, 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 and the senior leadership team. We spoke to leaders responsible for safeguarding. We held a telephone conversation with the chair of the governing body. 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 to all pupils on 2 September 2020. Children in the Reception class attended school part time for the first two weeks.
- Pupils' attendance is above where it was at the same time last year. Pupils in the Year 2 'bubble' are working at home. You remain in contact with these pupils daily.
- The teaching of mathematics, reading, and personal, social and health education is a high priority. You have plans in place for pupils to return to the normal curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Teachers found that pupils were not as fluent in reading as before the period when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions. Increased time is being spent on reading to help pupils to remember forgotten vocabulary, learn new vocabulary and improve fluency.
- In mathematics, teachers have made checks on what pupils remember. Assessments show that pupils have forgotten some previous learning. Teachers incorporate the revision of basic number skills into daily mathematics lessons.
- With the exception of computing, pupils are studying most subjects in the wider curriculum. Teachers plan to check what pupils know and remember from previous years in these subjects. Teachers are adapting the curriculum to make sure that pupils catch up on any lost learning.

- You have a range of systems in place so that teachers can deliver the curriculum remotely. Plans are in place to provide a wide range of online resources for pupils in case of further restrictions.

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

Yours sincerely

John Donald
Her Majesty's Inspector