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Catherine Hughes
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Dear Mrs Hughes

Ofsted visit to St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Nasim Butt, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 13 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, including the leader responsible for safeguarding. 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 3 September 2020. You expect pupils to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is similar to what it was at this time last year.
- For the autumn and spring terms, leaders have made some adjustments to the curriculum. In physical education, teaching of team sports has been reduced, with more emphasis given to promoting pupils' well-being through regular exercise. Design and technology lessons will restart in summer 2021.
- In all subjects, teachers are using a range of information to establish what pupils know and remember. You expect teachers to amend planning so that pupils make up for any learning they have lost and are ready to study new concepts. Some pupils will receive extra help in English and mathematics over the next two terms.
- Pupils' reading has been given a high profile. In Years 1 and 2, teachers are helping pupils to remember and apply the phonics knowledge that they have previously learned. For pupils in Years 3 to 6, teaching is focused on developing pupils' knowledge and use of rich vocabulary.
- Teachers have found that pupils' recall of key mathematical facts is not as speedy and accurate as they would usually expect. You and your team have amended planning to give greater weight to this area of mathematics. Teaching also includes extra opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge, for example by solving problems.
- Throughout the school, you have prioritised pupils' social and emotional well-being. Staff are encouraging pupils to share their ideas and feelings, as well

as work cooperatively with their peers. The time allocated for pupils' personal, social, health and economic education has also been increased.

- You have sought the views of parents and staff to inform your plans for remote education. If pupils need to learn at home, you expect them to study similar content to that taught in school, including live and pre-recorded lessons.

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 Southwark, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Richmond upon Thames. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Murphy
Her Majesty's Inspector