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Hilary Dunford
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Dunford

Ofsted visit to St Nicholas of Tolentine Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Julie Carrington, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 20 October, 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 deputy headteacher and the leader responsible for behaviour and attendance. 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 reopened the school full time to pupils in Years 1 to 6 on 3 September 2020. Children joining the Reception Year attended half days over the first three weeks. They are now attending full time.
- Pupils' attendance this term is below the school's normal attendance for this time of year.
- Since the start of the term, you have made changes to the school's usual timetable. You have focused on pupils' mental health and emotional well-being. All pupils took part in a 'Healthy Body, Healthy Mind' learning theme.
- In the short term, you are giving a high profile to forest school, music and physical education. You plan to introduce a modern foreign language later in the school year.
- Staff have checked whether there are any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding in reading, phonics and mathematics. Teachers are using this information to match teaching to pupils' specific needs.
- You are prioritising the teaching of reading. Pupils in Year 1 have an extra phonics lesson each day. In all year groups, teachers are focusing on extending pupils' vocabulary.
- In mathematics, teachers are concentrating on developing pupils' fluency, such as the quick recall of number facts.

- You have systems in place to deliver remote education for pupils who are self-isolating. Staff have prepared a mixture of paper-based and online resources. You plan for pupils who are self-isolating to access the same curriculum content as their classmates.

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 board of trustees, the director of education for the diocese of Clifton, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bristol. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dale Burr
Her Majesty's Inspector