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Neil Harris
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Harris

Ofsted visit to St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Maltby)

Following my visit with Matthew Vellensworth, 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 deputy 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 the 4 September 2020. Children in the Nursery and the Reception Years had a phased start over the first three weeks of the term. All year groups are now expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance since the start of the term is higher than it was over the same time last year.
- Pupils are studying the range of subjects that make up the school's usual curriculum.
- Leaders directed teachers to check pupils' phonics knowledge when they returned in September. In Years 1 to 4, teachers have identified that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge of phonics. You have adapted the phonics and reading curriculum to prioritise the content pupils have not remembered.
- In mathematics, teachers have assessed pupils' new starting points. Leaders have adjusted the curriculum content to address gaps in pupils' learning. For example, you told us that teachers are prioritising helping pupils to recall their multiplication tables.
- In the wider curriculum, teachers have considered the content that pupils have missed in subjects such as science, and personal, social, health and economic education. Teachers have made some changes to the curriculum so that pupils cover the subject knowledge they have missed. You intend to return to the school's usual curriculum by the summer term of 2021.

- Leaders have plans in place to deliver parts of the curriculum remotely, should this be needed. You explained that you have purchased various resources to help with the delivery of remote education.

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

Yours sincerely

Jean Watt
Her Majesty's Inspector