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Victoria Bould
Headteacher
Poulton-le-Sands Church of England Primary School
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Dear Mrs Bould

Ofsted visit to Poulton-le-Sands Church of England Primary

Following my visit with Garry White, 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 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 fully to all pupils on 2 September 2020.
- Attendance is broadly in line with usual attendance for this time of year.
- Your teachers have resumed teaching the usual range of curriculum subjects. They have altered the order of the content of some subjects, like music and physical education. You aim to return to the school's normal curriculum by summer 2021. However, you explained that the current COVID-19 restrictions may result in pupils continuing to study the adapted curriculum throughout this academic year.
- Staff have checked pupils' new starting points in reading. They are spending more time teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) to help younger pupils catch up with the gaps that have emerged since March 2020. Teachers are focusing on developing pupils' understanding of key vocabulary in different subjects.
- You explained that teachers have changed the order of some parts of the mathematics curriculum. This is because teachers' checks showed that pupils have forgotten some previous learning. In all year groups, staff have prioritised the teaching of number and place value.
- Across all subjects, leaders have identified important learning that pupils may have missed during the spring and summer terms. Teachers are using this information to adapt curriculum plans. This is to help pupils to catch up on lost learning.
- You have developed plans to deliver the curriculum remotely, should it be needed. You have taken steps to help families to access online learning. You have provided training for staff so that they can use the new systems.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector