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Elizabeth Crellin
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Crellin

Ofsted visit to Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Sheila Iwaskow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 29 September 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 with you, the acting headteacher from the other school in your federation and the leaders for reading, mathematics and early years. 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.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with attendance for this time of the year.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. You and staff are giving greater attention to pupils' social and emotional development. When planning lessons, teachers focus on the current units of work and gaps that have arisen in pupils' knowledge over the period of COVID-19 restrictions.
- You and your leaders have set the teaching of phonics and reading as a key priority for this year. Staff have listened to all pupils read to help assess pupils' current reading ability. Some pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are not as fluent in their reading as they were before the period of COVID-19 restrictions. Staff are providing all pupils with support to make up for lost ground with their reading skills.
- In mathematics, staff have used fun quizzes to assess pupils' current understanding. Teachers know that pupils in different year groups need extra help with different work. For instance, in early years, staff are giving children additional practice at recognising numerals up to 10. The mathematics subject leader has sent information to parents for each class about the learning their children will cover.

- Staff have started to assess pupils' knowledge and skills in other national curriculum subjects, for example in art and design. This assessment work will continue until spring 2021.
- Leaders have trained staff in how to make better use of online learning for pupils. You have plans in place to teach each subject remotely should this be needed. Staff now place more work online and help pupils to make more frequent use of an online learning platform.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector