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30 October 2020

Caroline Vile  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Vile

### **Ofsted visit to Ellesmere Port Catholic High School**

Following my visit with Michael Pennington, 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 to you, the senior leadership team and the deputy 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:**

- You opened the school to all pupils on 4 September 2020. Pupils in all year groups and students in the sixth form are attending full time.
- Attendance is broadly in line with the attendance rates for this time last year.
- You have arranged for all pupils and students to be taught their usual curriculum from the start of this term. They have access to the full range of specialist facilities in the school. You and your staff team have not changed the order of topics in subject curriculums due to COVID-19.
- You and other leaders told us that the school's personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is supporting pupils' mental health and well-being. You have put a range of support in place to help with pupils' transition into Year 7.
- Teachers have checked what pupils and students know and remember, using a range of strategies, and have identified gaps in their learning. Leaders have plans in place to help pupils and students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, get back on track in the subjects that they are studying.
- You told us that all pupils in Years 9 to 11 and students in the sixth form are following the subjects that they chose for their options. Year 11 pupils and students in Year 13 are receiving extra support to prepare them for their external examinations. Some GCSE and A-level subject curriculums have been

adjusted in response to changes made by examination boards as a result of COVID-19.

- Your staff team has materials in place to deliver all subjects remotely for all pupils and students, should this be needed. The online resources have been developed so that they match subject curriculums. Staff have developed ways to check what pupils and students are learning when they are not in school.

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 Shrewsbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cheshire West and Chester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Ahmed Marikar  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**