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Dawn Lindley
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Dear Mrs Lindley

Ofsted visit to St John's Church of England Primary School, Radcliffe

Following my visit with Sheila Iwaskow, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 15 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 senior leadership team. 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 1 September 2020. A very small proportion of pupils are following a part-time timetable.
- Pupils' attendance is below the usual rate at this time of year. You are working with families to encourage more pupils to return to school. Currently, the Year 4 'bubble' is isolating.
- You explained that pupils are not studying the full curriculum. This is so you can focus on pupils' social and emotional well-being and the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics. You are endeavouring to return all pupils to a full curriculum by summer 2021 or earlier if possible.
- Teachers are checking pupils' phonics knowledge in key stage 1. You have noticed that some pupils have not remembered some of the phonics content that was taught before the period when schools were only open to some children due to COVID-19 restrictions. You are providing additional support for these pupils.
- In mathematics, teachers have assessed what pupils have remembered. Teachers have found that some pupils have forgotten some basic number skills. Some pupils are also less confident when solving mathematical problems relating to shape, space and measure. Teachers are revisiting these areas of learning so that pupils can recap on what they have forgotten before moving on to new mathematical content.

- You have developed your provision to deliver education remotely, should this be needed as a result of COVID-19. Teachers are able to set and monitor pupils' work aligned to your curriculum.

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 interim chief executive officer of the Christ Church of England multi-academy trust, the director of education for the diocese of Manchester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bury. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Simon Hunter
Her Majesty's Inspector