

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Deborah Albon
Headteacher
St Gregory's Catholic Primary School
Sandy Lane
Lydiate
Liverpool
L31 2LB

Dear Mrs Albon

Ofsted remote visit to St Gregory's Catholic Primary School

Following my remote visit with Pippa Jackson-Maitland, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 November 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. Following changes to government guidance and the imposition of COVID-19 (coronavirus) lockdown restrictions, we made this visit remotely to reduce pressure on the school.

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 deputy headteacher, the key stage 2 leader and the curriculum leader for English. We did not speak to pupils.

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 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:

- Since the start of term, almost half of the pupils in the school have spent some time working from home.
- With the exception of modern foreign languages and some aspects of computing, pupils are studying all subjects in the primary national curriculum. You have prioritised pupils' health and emotional well-being this term to help them settle back into school. Teachers have made changes to the way some subjects are taught, such as music and physical education. Plans are in place to return pupils to the usual curriculum by the end of the summer term 2021.
- Teachers have started to make checks on what pupils remember and what they have forgotten of the learning they did prior to March 2020. Teachers have amended planned work to incorporate key subject content that was not taught in the summer term, so that pupils can move forward with their learning.
- Teachers' checks show that some pupils in Years 1 and 2 have forgotten some of the sounds and letters they learned before March 2020. These pupils are receiving extra support to help them catch up. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are being given more opportunities to practise their comprehension skills to help them regain lost knowledge.
- Assessments in mathematics showed where pupils had forgotten prior learning. This has led to a focus on fractions, particularly for older pupils.

Younger pupils are revisiting basic number facts before they move on to new curriculum content.

- All remote education is currently provided online. Individual pupils and class 'bubbles' are provided with a range of activities which broadly reflect what is being taught in school. Teachers provide feedback for pupils who have submitted their work online.
- Parents and pupils have had training to help them access remote education safely. You and your staff provide advice and support for any pupil or parent who is experiencing difficulty in accessing 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 Archdiocese of Liverpool, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Sefton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector