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Michael Burns
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mr Burns

Ofsted remote visit to St Patrick's Catholic College

Following my remote visit with Jenny Thomas, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 5 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 head of school, your senior leadership team and the senior leaders responsible for safeguarding. 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:

- St Patrick's Catholic College opened fully to all pupils on 4 September 2020. Pupils attended gradually during the first week. All pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly in line with the usual attendance for this time of year. During this remote visit a Year 9 'bubble' was isolating at home due to Covid-19.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Leaders have adjusted curriculum content in some subjects so that pupils can revisit learning that they missed in the summer term. Leaders aim to return to the usual curriculum in all subjects by the summer term 2021.
- Leaders say that since opening the school to all pupils, they have made checks in all subjects to identify any missed learning. Pupils have time in lessons to study the subject content that they need to revisit. Some pupils receive extra catch-up sessions where they return to the basic skills in English and mathematics that they may have missed or forgotten.
- For pupils in Years 7 to 9, you have prioritised catch-up programmes in a range of subjects to tackle any gaps in pupils' knowledge due to missed learning during Covid-19 restrictions.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils are continuing to study for their usual examination subjects. Leaders told us that they have adapted curriculum plans in line with Ofqual's decisions about assessment for GCSE examinations.

- You have set up a package of remote learning and you are continuing to develop this for all subjects. Some learning can be accessed digitally so you have trained staff and pupils to use the online system.

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 and the chief executive officer of the Nicholas Postgate Catholic Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Middlesbrough, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Stockton-on-Tees. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison
Her Majesty's Inspector