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Rachel Senior
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Senior

Ofsted remote visit to St Hilda's Church of England Primary School

Following my remote visit with Elizabeth Stevens, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 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 and the senior leadership team. 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 September 2020, approximately three quarters of pupils have had to work from home. All pupils in the Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 class 'bubbles' have been sent home once.
- Pupils are studying all the subjects from the primary national curriculum. You are planning that pupils will study the usual curriculum before summer 2021.
- In all subjects, teachers have identified which planned units of work were not taught when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions. Teachers have amended their curriculum plans, such as in geography, to teach the work that pupils have missed.
- You have also reorganised the school's work so that pupils have more lesson time in some subjects, to catch up on missed learning. For example, in French you have increased the number of weeks when French is taught.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' understanding of phonics have helped them to identify pupils' new starting points. In Year 1 and Year 2, teachers are reteaching the phonics that pupils have forgotten, to help pupils to catch up. In all classes, staff are giving pupils extra opportunities to read a range of fiction and non-fiction books.
- In mathematics, teachers have identified that pupils cannot easily remember some of their learning from before March 2020. Teachers are giving pupils extra practice at recalling their previous learning at the start of each new unit

of work. In Year 1, staff are helping pupils to relearn simple addition problems, so they can recognise and complete them easily and accurately.

- When pupils need to learn at home, staff provide each pupil with a paper pack of work linked to their lessons at school. This work is also available on a mobile phone app.

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 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

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector