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Catherine Hunt
Headteacher
St Francis Catholic School
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Dear Mrs Hunt

Ofsted remote visit to St Francis Catholic Primary School

Following my remote visit with Stewart Gale, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 10 November, 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 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 remote visit, we spoke to you and the deputy headteacher. 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 (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:

- At the time of the visit, there were no class 'bubbles' isolating. A small number of pupils have had to work from home, as they were self-isolating.
- Pupils are learning their usual range of subjects but with some modifications in practical subjects, such as music, design technology, science and information technology. You have plans in place to fully return to the practical aspects of these subjects by summer term 2021.
- Pupils in all year groups have completed assessments in reading, writing and mathematics to identify any gaps in their knowledge. Teachers have used this information to plan the order in which key concepts and knowledge are taught. Teachers provide additional support to help pupils catch up.
- Teachers have undertaken checks to establish where pupils are up to in learning to read. In Year 1, some pupils have struggled to recall their phonics knowledge. You are providing additional phonics sessions to help these pupils.
- In mathematics, teachers have identified gaps in pupils' knowledge, for example in number bonds and times tables. As a result, teachers are focusing lesson content on number and place value.
- In the wider curriculum, you understand that teachers will not be able to cover all the subject content that was missed during the national lockdown. However, teachers are looking to see how such gaps can be covered in future topics.

- In the past, the school provided remote learning for all pupils with a focus on reading, writing and mathematics. You have plans in place to provide further online resources if a bubble, or an individual pupil, needs to work at home. Pupils will have daily work to complete in English and mathematics with other subjects, for example science and history, also being timetabled.

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 Clifton, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Somerset. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jen Southall
Her Majesty's Inspector