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Louise Byrne
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Dear Mrs Byrne

Ofsted remote visit to St Margaret Mary's Catholic Infant School

Following my remote visit with Adam Sproston, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 12 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, three other leaders and the learning mentor. 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, approximately one third of pupils have needed to work from home.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. You have organised some lessons differently. For instance, most physical education activities take place outdoors.
- In all subjects, teachers have checked what pupils have remembered since March 2020 to establish pupils' new starting points. Teachers are using this information to amend their subject curriculum plans. In mathematics, teachers are giving pupils in all classes additional practice in using key knowledge from their previous work.
- In reading, teachers have identified that some pupils do not fully remember their learning from prior to March 2020. For instance, in Year 1, some pupils have forgotten how to combine letter sounds together in words, so staff are giving them lots of practice in this.
- Teachers' curriculum plans include any units of work that they did not teach when schools were only open to some pupils due to COVID-19 restrictions. In science, teachers are giving pupils extra help where assessments show that pupils did not understand some learning in the summer term. In music, teachers are teaching pupils more about tempo and rhythm because they have

identified that pupils need to understand these aspects of the curriculum better.

- When pupils need to be at home to learn, staff provide each pupil with a paper pack of planned activities linked to their work at school. The teacher emails each family with further information. Daily planned activities for each class are placed on the school's website for pupils to learn at home.
- To support pupils who are working from home, you are planning to introduce additional ways for staff and parents to communicate with one another about pupils' work.

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

Yours sincerely

Tim Vaughan
Her Majesty's Inspector