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Alison Frost
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Dear Mrs Frost

Ofsted remote visit to St Gildas Catholic Primary School

Following my remote visit with Nathan Kemp, 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 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. 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:

- Approximately 1% of pupils have had to work at home so far this year.
- All pupils study the full curriculum. You and your staff have checked pupils' knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. You have planned additional support, using the COVID-19 catch-up premium, for some pupils who have gaps in their knowledge of these subjects.
- You and your staff have assessed pupils' phonics knowledge. Pupils have not fallen behind in their early reading skills. However, some pupils have difficulty with writing, and you and your staff have adapted the curriculum to secure pupils' writing skills.
- Using a range of assessments, teachers have identified some gaps in pupils' understanding of texts. Teaching approaches have been adapted to develop pupils' comprehension and inference skills. To complement pupils' study of reading, you have introduced new texts to pupils across the school.
- You and your staff have adapted the mathematics curriculum in order to revisit multiplication and division. Teachers are focused on ensuring that pupils' knowledge is secure in order to support pupils to move on to more complex concepts.
- Through a range of assessments, you and your staff have noted that some pupils have difficulty with their language skills. You have adapted the curriculum to provide additional opportunities for pupils to develop such skills.

Teachers have focused on specialist vocabulary in subjects such as science in order to support pupils' talking and writing development.

- You have established a new system for remote learning which enables older pupils to upload their work and teachers to assess it. The new system enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to listen to what they have written. Younger pupils continue to use the website for remote learning. Teachers ensure that pupils who access remote learning follow the normal curriculum.

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

Susan Aykin
Her Majesty's Inspector