

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



3 December 2020

Jo Costello
Headteacher
Stretton St Matthews Church of England Primary School
Stretton Road
Stretton
Warrington
WA4 4NT

Dear Mrs Costello

Ofsted remote visit to Stretton St Matthews CofE Primary School

Following my remote visit with Jo Olsson, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 24 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 assistant headteacher and the leader for welfare and pastoral care. 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:

- At the time of our visit, one Year 6 class 'bubble' was self-isolating at home. A small number of pupils have had to work from home since the start of term.
- Checks on pupils' reading show that most younger pupils have not forgotten the sounds and letters that they had previously learned. Some older pupils are less confident in understanding the meaning of and retrieving information from a text. Extra support has been put in place to help these pupils catch up.
- Teachers have checked on what pupils know and remember in mathematics. Most older pupils have remembered, since March 2020, how to use numbers to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Teachers are building on that knowledge to further develop pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills.
- Pupils are accessing all subjects from the wider curriculum. Checks are being made to identify what pupils have remembered or forgotten in these subjects. Teachers have amended curriculum plans to incorporate key subject content not taught in the summer term, so that pupils can cover what knowledge they have missed.
- You are aiming to return all pupils to the usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Whole-class bubbles and individual pupils who are self-isolating are provided with either online or paper-based resources to support their learning at home.

The activities provided reflect the curriculum that pupils are being taught in school.

- Pupils can watch live lessons given by teachers in most areas of the curriculum, including phonics. Younger pupils have access to decodable books to help develop their reading skills. Teachers check pupils' work and provide feedback. You told us that parents take an active role in supporting their children with remote education.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector