

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



3 December 2020

Kate Holland
Headteacher
St Mary and St Giles Church of England School
King George Crescent
Stony Stratford
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK11 1EF

Dear Miss Holland

Ofsted remote visit to St Mary and St Giles Church of England School

Following my remote visit with Aimee Floyd, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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 senior leadership team and the pastoral leader. 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 the school year 2020, about one third of pupils have had to self-isolate and work from home for a few days.
- Pupils are mostly studying their usual subjects with some adjustments to the content in, for example, music and physical education (PE). Teachers are giving more time to English and mathematics instead of teaching French. Leaders intend to provide the full curriculum by September 2021.
- At the start of the school year 2020, teachers checked what pupils remembered in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders are using a five week 'Saturday school' this half term to help some pupils in Years 3 to 6 to catch up in learning lost during the summer term 2020.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2, and some pupils in other year groups, are having extra lessons to practise early reading skills. Older pupils are being supported to understand what they are reading. In writing, teachers are supporting pupils to improve their handwriting.
- In mathematics, teachers identified some areas where pupils needed extra teaching, including securing their knowledge of multiplication tables and number bonds.

- In other subjects, teachers are usually teaching the planned topics for this autumn term 2020. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is being used to support pupils' well-being. In Reception, teachers are giving children extra support to help them with their speaking and listening skills.
- When pupils self-isolate, teachers provide a paper pack of learning activities. This remote education includes the revision of skills that pupils are expected to learn during this school year.
- If a pupil 'bubble' needs to work at home, leaders plan to provide remote education through a mix of lessons recorded by the school, online skills practice and links to other resources. Daily videos will be provided to support pupils with early reading skills. If a pupil does not have online access, paper packs will be provided.

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

Yours sincerely

Laurie Anderson
Her Majesty's Inspector