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Nicola White
Headteacher
St Veronica's Roman Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mrs White

Ofsted remote visit to St Veronica's Roman Catholic Primary School

Following my remote visit with Claire Cropper, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 17 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 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 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, around half of the pupils in the school have spent some time working remotely. At the time of the visit, pupils in the Years 3, 4 and 6 class 'bubbles' were self-isolating. Pupils in the Year 6 bubble have worked from home three times this term, and those in Year 4 have worked from home twice.
- Pupils are studying their usual range of primary curriculum subjects, but teachers have made some changes to the content. In physical education, pupils are using a range of new equipment that leaders have purchased. You expect pupils to return to their usual curriculum by spring 2021.
- In reading, teachers' checks show that pupils have become less fluent in reading since March 2020. You told us that reading is taking a high priority in the curriculum and you have also purchased new reading resources. Teachers have increased the time they spend teaching reading and phonics to help pupils catch up.
- You told us that pupils have forgotten some of their learning in mathematics since they were last in school full time. Teachers are giving pupils time to revisit and remember their previous learning, for example revising multiplication tables in Year 4. Teachers are adjusting their plans to cover the content that pupils have missed.

- In subjects other than English and mathematics, you are identifying important knowledge that pupils have missed. Teachers are changing the order of the content in subject plans to help pupils catch up. For example, in Years 3 to 6, teachers are giving pupils more time than usual to practise speaking in French.
- Year-group bubbles working from home access daily online teaching delivered by their teachers. Some pupils have additional online support from teaching assistants. Teachers make checks on the work that pupils complete at home.

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

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Stevens
Her Majesty's Inspector