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8 December 2020

Helen Pinnington
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Pinnington

Ofsted remote visit to Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School

Following my remote visit with Alyson Middlemass, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 19 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 with you, your senior leadership team, including the senior leader responsible for safeguarding, your attendance officer, your behaviour officer and the curriculum leaders for English and modern foreign languages. 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 autumn term, almost one fifth of pupils have worked from home for short periods of time.
- All pupils, across all year groups, are following their usual curriculum subjects.
- You described how teachers are regularly assessing pupils to identify the curriculum content that they have forgotten since March 2020. Teachers are adjusting their curriculum plans to reflect pupils' new starting points. Additionally, you told us that teachers are making time to revisit work that Year 7 pupils have missed from Year 6.
- You have recognised that some pupils have fallen behind with their reading and literacy skills. You attribute this to the period of time pupils spent at home during the summer term 2020. To address this, you told us that all pupils now have weekly reading sessions during form time.
- You explained that, in Years 7 to 9, teachers have introduced new practical curriculum content in physical education. You said that this is so pupils can benefit from being physically active outdoors, while developing skills in orienteering and map-reading. You intend to cover the usual curriculum content in all subjects by the end of the summer term 2021.
- To support pupils in Years 10 and 11, you explained that teachers are focusing on covering the curriculum content that they consider the most essential. You said that this is to help pupils prepare for their examinations. For example, in

modern foreign languages, teachers are concentrating on developing pupils' spoken language and listening skills.

- You described the range of ways that you are offering remote education to pupils who need to self-isolate. Teachers are providing online and paper-based resources to enable pupils to follow their usual timetable. You talked about the challenges that you face in establishing effective systems to monitor what pupils are learning 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 archdiocese 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

Rachel Goodwin
Her Majesty's Inspector