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9 December 2020

Helen Darrell  
Headteacher  
St Pauls CofE VA Primary School  
Coronation Street  
Cambridge  
Cambridgeshire  
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Dear Mrs Darrell

### **Ofsted remote visit to St Pauls CofE VA Primary School**

Following my remote visit with Steve Mellors, 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 deputy headteacher and the inclusion 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 school reopened for all pupils in September 2020, a few pupils, but no 'bubbles', have had to work at home because they are self-isolating.
- Pupils are learning about all the subjects in your usual curriculum. In some subjects, such as physical education and music, you have moved some aspects of the curriculum so that they will be taught later in the year. There is no content that you have decided not to teach at all.
- Teachers have assessed pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. You have found that some pupils have forgotten some of the phonics that they had been taught previously. You have put measures in place to help pupils to catch up.
- In mathematics, you have found that pupils are behind where you would normally expect them to be in some aspects. For example, some pupils are less fluent in their knowledge of multiplication tables and this has affected their ability to solve mathematical problems easily.
- Pupils are learning about the full range of subjects in the school's curriculum. You have decided not to have educational visits, or visitors into school to enhance the curriculum, for the time being.
- Until now, remote education has been provided via the school's website. The school is now moving over to a new online way of working. You have plans in place to replicate the school day and continue with the usual curriculum, as far as possible, should any 'bubbles' need to self-isolate.

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

Yours sincerely

Wendy Varney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**