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Katie Jones
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Jones

Ofsted remote visit to Ss Simon and Jude CofE Primary School

Following my remote visit with Adam Sproston, 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 to you, the senior leadership team and the leader responsible for safeguarding. 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 September 2020, approximately half of the pupils in the school have had to work from home for short periods of time.
- Teachers are delivering the school's usual range of curriculum subjects. Teachers have adapted their plans so that any learning that was missed or not taught during the spring and summer terms is included into future topics. You intend to resume the school's usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Teachers have identified the phonics knowledge that some pupils have forgotten since the school was closed to most pupils, due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Staff are providing a range of opportunities for pupils to practise their phonics. You explained that this is to help pupils regain the knowledge that they have lost.
- You told us that some pupils are not as confident with their vocabulary knowledge as they were before March 2020. Teachers are providing opportunities for pupils to read a variety of new texts, including texts about other curriculum subjects, to rebuild their confidence and extend their language.
- In mathematics, some pupils are less accurate with calculations and place value than they were before March 2020. You have put support in place to help pupils catch up.

- You have developed a range of paper-based and online resources for pupils' remote education. You have provided support for pupils and their families on how to work safely online.
- You explained that the daily timetable for pupils who are self-isolating includes opportunities for them to practise and consolidate what they already know in English and mathematics. Staff also plan activities to prepare pupils for what they will be learning next in subjects other than English and mathematics. Teachers provide feedback to pupils when they submit their work.

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 chief executive officer of the Vantage Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Manchester, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bolton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector