

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Sue McManamin
Headteacher
Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy
St Peter's Avenue
Sowerby Bridge
West Yorkshire
HX6 1BL

Dear Mrs McManamin

Ofsted visit to Sacred Heart Catholic Voluntary Academy

Following my visit with Michele Costello, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 3 December 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.

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, the senior leadership team, subject leaders for English, mathematics, computing and art, and the senior leader responsible for safeguarding. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

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 (coronavirus) 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:

- During the visit, the Year 1 and Year 2 class 'bubbles' were self-isolating due to COVID-19. Since the start of term, around half of pupils have had to study from home at some point.
- Pupils continue to study the range of subjects that make up your usual curriculum.
- In reading, teachers have identified new gaps in pupils' learning. Older pupils have lost skills in their reading comprehension. You explained that, because of this, pupils are being enabled to catch up through reading activities first thing every morning.
- Teachers have identified that pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. This is because they missed this teaching during the spring and summer terms 2020, when the school was not open to all pupils. You explained that you have adapted curriculum plans in mathematics to enable pupils to catch up in these areas.
- In other subjects, such as computing and art, you are considering where pupils have gaps in their learning due to the partial closure of your school. You explained that teachers will then be directed to adapt their curriculum plans accordingly.
- Pupils who are self-isolating access the school's curriculum remotely, using resources which are emailed to parents and carers. You explained that your

remote education matches what is taught in class, although this does not include the teaching of music. You told us that you provide pupils with paper-based resources if requested.

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 academy council and the chief executive officer of the Blessed Peter Snow Catholic Academy Trust, the director of education for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Calderdale. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcus Newby
Her Majesty's Inspector