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Helen Craft
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Craft

Ofsted remote visit to St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Following my remote visit with Jasper Green, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 12 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 leader responsible for safeguarding, the deputy headteacher and the leader responsible for special educational needs and/or disabilities. 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:

- A small proportion of pupils have had to work from home since the start of term.
- All pupils are studying their usual range of subjects. Staff have made adjustments to the curriculum. For example, pupils are not studying parts of the music curriculum that include singing. You are planning for all pupils to return to the school's usual curriculum before the end of the academic year.
- Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Teachers have carried out checks in reading to identify pupils' new starting points. Leaders have made sure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 receive additional phonics lessons to help them catch up.
- In mathematics, you are checking how well pupils recall knowledge from their previous learning and for gaps in their understanding. Some pupils have lost confidence in tackling mathematical concepts, in place value and fractions, for example. Teachers are using the information from these assessments to provide more support to pupils who need it.
- Teachers have adjusted plans for personal, social, health and economic education, to promote positive mental health. This is to support pupils'

emotional well-being by helping them reconnect with each other and understand the changes to routines.

- Leaders are developing plans to deliver the curriculum remotely if needed. You already offer remote education to a small number of pupils who are self-isolating. You have plans to make sure that what pupils learn at home is closely matched to what they would learn if they were in school.

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

Yours sincerely

Philip Garnham
Her Majesty's Inspector