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18 December 2020

Mark Cooper  
Headteacher  
Mount St Mary's Catholic High School  
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West Yorkshire  
LS9 8LA

Dear Mr Cooper

### **Ofsted remote visit to Mount St Mary's Catholic High School**

Following my remote visit with Patricia Head, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 1 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. 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, your senior leadership team, faculty leaders and the senior 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:**

- At the time of our visit, there were no class or year-group 'bubbles' of pupils isolating at home. Approximately one third of pupils have had to learn from home for a period of time, because of COVID-19, since the beginning of the autumn term.
- You told us that across all year groups, pupils are studying the usual range of subjects that you normally offer. Leaders have temporarily reordered the curriculum plans for practical activities in subjects such as art, computing and science. You plan to return to the usual curriculum in all subjects by the summer term 2021.
- You have directed teachers to check what pupils have missed in all curriculum subjects over the summer term due to COVID-19 restrictions. Teachers have identified any gaps in pupils' knowledge and have adjusted curriculum plans. You are providing extra adult support and resources to help pupils to catch up.
- Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are revisiting their missed learning from last term alongside studying the usual curriculum content for this term. You have also concentrated on building pupils' confidence and resilience so that they can work hard to make up for lost learning.
- In Years 10 and 11, pupils continue to study for their usual examination subjects. Leaders have adapted curriculum plans in line with Ofqual's decisions about assessment for GCSE examinations.

- You have set up systems to deliver learning remotely when pupils have to self-isolate at home. Teachers set this work as closely as possible to what pupils would be learning in school. Leaders have provided guidance for pupils who need support to access this.

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

Yours sincerely

Alison Aitchison  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**