

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



14 December 2020

Leanne Finch
Headteacher
Bamber Bridge St Aidan's Church of England Primary School
Larch Grove
Bamber Bridge
Preston
Lancashire
PR5 6GX

Dear Mrs Finch

Ofsted remote visit to Bamber Bridge St Aidan's Church of England Primary School

Following my remote visit with Jackie Stillings, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 17 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. 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:

- You explained that a small number of pupils have had to learn remotely from home for short periods of time since the start of the autumn term.
- You told us that from October 2020, pupils have been studying most subjects from the school's usual curriculum. With the exception of Year 6, French has not been taught since the start of term. This is to allow more time for pupils to catch up with lost learning in English and mathematics.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers are checking what pupils know and remember of their learning since March 2020. Teachers are using these findings to adapt what is being taught. You anticipate that pupils will be studying their usual curriculum subjects and content by the summer term 2021.
- You have checked pupils' new starting points in phonics. Teachers have found that pupils, especially in Year 2, have forgotten some of the letters and sounds that they learned before March 2020. Extra support is in place so that pupils can catch up.
- In mathematics, you have found that many pupils are not as confident in their recall of the multiplication tables as they were before March 2020. You described the extra catch-up sessions that you have put in place for all year groups.

- In early years, you have noticed that some children started school in September with weaker personal self-care skills than has been the case in the past. Also, you have found that children are less confident in talking to adults and their peers than they have been in previous years. The early years team is supporting children to develop their independence and teamwork skills.
- You offer remote education online and in paper-based packs. You provide 'bubbles' and individual pupils who are self-isolating with daily activities, including in reading, writing, mathematics and something from the wider curriculum. You also encourage pupils to do daily physical activity.

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 Blackburn and the director of children's services for Lancashire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Eastwood
Her Majesty's Inspector