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Rosemary Hince
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hince

Ofsted remote visit to St Joseph's RC Primary School

Following my remote visit with Amanda Stringer, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 24 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 and the deputy headteacher. 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, just over half of pupils have had to work from home for short periods of time.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of curriculum subjects. Some parts of the physical educational (PE) curriculum are not currently being taught, such as gymnastics and dance. You intend to resume the school's usual curriculum by the summer term 2021.
- Teachers' checks on pupils' reading have identified that many younger pupils have not remembered some of the phonics content previously taught. Staff are providing extra support to help these pupils get back on track.
- You told us that some pupils are not as confident with their vocabulary choices as they were before March 2020. Teachers are providing more opportunities for pupils to read a variety of new texts, to help improve their fluency and comprehension skills.
- In mathematics, teachers are also checking pupils' knowledge and understanding. Staff are adapting the mathematics curriculum and supporting pupils who need additional help to get back on track.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers have identified important learning that pupils may have missed or forgotten during the

summer term 2020. Teachers are using this information to adapt plans and resources, so that they can address gaps in pupils' learning.

- Staff have provided a range of online and paper-based resources for pupils who have been unable to attend school due to COVID-19. The activities set are matched to the learning that pupils in school are accessing in most subjects, apart from PE. You are pleased with how well pupils have engaged with their remote education.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Barlow
Her Majesty's Inspector