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14 December 2020

Stacy McHale  
Acting principal  
St Teresa's Catholic Primary Academy  
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Wolverhampton  
West Midlands  
WV4 6AW

Dear Mrs McHale

### **Ofsted remote visit to St Teresa's Catholic Primary Academy**

Following my remote visit with Mark Sims, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 26 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 assistant principal and the pastoral leader. We also spoke to three senior leaders from St Francis and St Clare Catholic Multi-Academy company. 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 this visit, the Year 5 class 'bubble' was isolating. Two other class bubbles, Reception and Year 1, have isolated at different times this term. This has affected almost half of pupils at the school.
- Pupils are studying the usual range of subjects. Leaders have prioritised more time for reading, writing and mathematics and have made adaptations to other subjects. For example, this term, the amount of time spent on geography, design technology and languages has been reduced.
- Leaders have reorganised the order of what is taught in music and physical education. Pupils are spending more time on individual fitness sessions and have not yet returned to swimming lessons. Leaders have prioritised personal, social and health education to support pupils' well-being.
- Leaders explained that their checks on reading skills have identified that pupils need extra help to improve fluency and to understand what they have read. Teachers provide additional whole-class sessions every day and one-to-one interventions for the pupils who have fallen furthest behind.
- You told us that assessment in mathematics has shown that pupils in Years 1 and 2 need extra help to complete basic number operations. You explained that pupils in Years 3 to 6 are finding it difficult to apply mathematical knowledge when solving problems. There are now extra daily mathematics sessions to practise these skills.

- Remote education for class bubbles is delivered online using pre-recorded lessons. Pupils are expected to watch the recording and complete the tasks the teacher sets. For individual pupils who are isolating, there are no recorded lessons. These pupils are given similar tasks to their classmates while studying at home.
- You told us that, where possible, remote education is aligned to what pupils would be learning in school. You said this is the case in English, mathematics, history and religious 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 board of trustees and the chief executive officer of St Francis and St Clare Catholic Multi-Academy company, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wolverhampton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**