

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



16 November 2020

Michael O'Brien
Deputy Headteacher
Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School
Poulsom Drive
Bootle
Merseyside
L30 2NR

Dear Mr O'Brien

Ofsted visit to Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

Following my visit with Claire Cropper, Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI), to your school on 4 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.

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 were unable to speak with the headteacher because she was not available. We spoke to you, the assistant headteacher and the learning mentor. We did not speak to pupils because of the protective measures in place.

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 (coronavirus) 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:

- The school reopened to all pupils on 3 September 2020. Pupils are expected to attend full time.
- Pupils' attendance is below the usual rate at this time of year. You are working with families to encourage more pupils to return to school.
- Teachers have carried out checks to identify where pupils are up to in their reading. Younger pupils, who have fallen behind with their knowledge of phonics since March 2020, receive extra help to catch up. Older pupils are being given more opportunities to practise their comprehension skills to help them make up for lost learning.
- In mathematics, teachers have found that many pupils have forgotten some basic number skills since March 2020, such as their recall of multiplication tables. You plan to provide catch-up sessions to help pupils regain this lost knowledge.
- Pupils are studying most of the subjects from the primary national curriculum. Teachers have reorganised the way in which some subjects are taught, such as physical education and music. There are plans in place to check pupils' knowledge in subjects other than English and mathematics later in this term. You are aiming to return all pupils to their usual curriculum by summer term 2021.

- Systems are in place to deliver education remotely, should this be needed. You are looking at ways of working with parents to help them to support their children's learning at home.

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

Yours sincerely

Sheila Iwaskow
Her Majesty's Inspector