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20 May 2011

Mrs C Beswick  
Headteacher  
Our Lady's Catholic Primary School  
Old Chapel Street  
Edgeley  
Stockport  
Cheshire  
SK3 9HX

Dear Mrs Beswick

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Our Lady's Catholic Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 19 May 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to talk with me, and the Chair of the Governing Body and staff for their time and courtesy. Since the last inspection the governors have appointed one permanent teacher and two temporary teachers covering maternity leave. There are new senior leader responsibilities and a new senior leadership team structure.

As a result of the inspection on 14 October 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter. Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Results of the national assessments and tests in 2010 indicate that attainment at the end of Year 6 improved. Data for groups of pupils are monitored and these show that those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attained well compared to national averages. At the higher level, attainment rose considerably in both English and mathematics. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved over time, although those pupils achieving the higher level declined in reading and writing in 2010. Progress by pupils is tracked and monitored by the school and improved procedures ensure the school has a better picture of progress by pupils and groups. There are still ways, however, in which this tracking can be used to better effect for the school to hold a more accurate overview of group and cohorts. Current progress data show more pupils are now on track to reach age-related expectations in the majority of cohorts. Furthermore, more pupils are on track to achieve the higher level than in the past. As a result of improved tracking systems, the school is now in a better position to detect underperformance at an earlier stage. The school has implemented a raft

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of interventions to support such pupils in 'catching up' which has had a positive impact on pupils' progress.

Assessments of pupils' progress are made on a termly basis and this information supports pupil progress meetings held between class teachers and senior leaders. Teachers plan lessons to take into account the needs and ability levels of pupils. However, in lessons observed during the inspection, the needs of the higher-ability pupils were not always fully met and they could have been challenged further. Work has developed to improve the quality of marking. In some instances, pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work. This is most noticeable in English. However, there remain inconsistencies in this approach and, while there is evidence of effective marking, there are examples where marking simply affirms the efforts made by pupils and others where work remains unmarked.

Senior leaders have devised a cycle of monitoring and evaluating, which includes lesson observations and scrutiny of planning, pupils' books and subject leaders' files. The majority of this work is carried out by the headteacher and feedback is provided to teachers. In addition, whole-school issues are identified and become a focus for staff professional development. While systems are now in place, they sometimes lack rigour and in some cases do not sufficiently hold teachers fully to account for the ongoing achievement of pupils in the classes for which they are responsible.

Subject leaders are enthusiastic and willing to support, develop and promote improvement in their subject areas. They undertake some monitoring in their areas of expertise and have evaluated the impact of some teaching. However, the way in which this is recorded lacks sufficient rigour to secure further improvements. Moreover, the regularity of monitoring is not sufficient to ensure their overview of strengths and weaknesses is current and up to date.

The headteacher is determined to improve outcomes for pupils and has restructured the senior leadership team. Members of the governing body are committed to the school and the chair of governors holds an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has engaged effectively with the local authority, which provides valuable support. The training of staff has focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. It has been delivered by local authority consultants and has been well received.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jane Millward  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

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## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 14 October 2009.**

- Raise attainment in English and, in particular, in mathematics and science by:
  - increasing the number of pupils who attain the higher levels
  - ensuring that better use is made of assessment and tracking information to adapt activities to pupils' individual abilities, particularly the more able
  - improving the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
  
- Increase the level of monitoring, evaluation and the analysis of data by senior leaders in order to highlight any weaknesses and take swift, effective action, particularly in Key Stage 2.
  
- Ensure that subject leaders play a greater role in monitoring and evaluating their subject areas, especially in mathematics and science.