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26 April 2013

Mrs Angela Holleran  
Headteacher  
All Saints Catholic Primary School  
Chesnut Grove  
Bootle  
Merseyside  
L20 4LX

Dear Mrs Holleran

**Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to All Saints Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 26 April 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since its most recent section 5 inspection in January 2013 when the school was judged to require improvement.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I appreciated the opportunity to join you on a tour, or 'learning walk', around the school. I held meetings with you and other members of your staff, two members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and the National Leader in Education (NLE) who is working with you. The school improvement plan was evaluated, and other documents such as the attendance and punctuality policy, records of the monitoring of teaching and tracking of pupils' progress, and minutes of governing body meetings.

**Context**

Since the inspection in January 2013 one member of the teaching staff has left the school and the Vice Chair of the Governing body is covering the role of the Chair in an acting capacity.

## **Main findings**

Since the inspection the school has taken action quickly to refine its work and further raise expectations of pupils and staff. The school's action plans are succinct and focus on the key priorities that will have the most impact on raising attainment. Leaders' monitoring of teaching and marking through lesson observations, learning walks and scrutiny of pupils' books has provided constructive feedback to staff on strengths and areas for development. Teachers are more enthused and keen to try out ideas from training courses or feedback in order to improve their practice. Consequently, senior leaders have reliable evidence that good teaching is becoming the norm and none is inadequate. The impact of this is shown in increasingly accurate assessments that show better rates of progress for many pupils across the school. Data from tracking pupils' progress shows impressive gains in reading, writing and mathematics during the spring term for many pupils. Contributing factors to this are the numerous additional opportunities that have been provided for pupils to access learning outside the normal school day. You and your staff give freely of your time to provide focused support in literacy and numeracy for groups of pupils, on a regular basis before and after school. This is rewarded by the growing number of pupils (supported by their parents) who are keen and happy to attend these sessions.

Staffing is more settled than it has been in the past, there is a strong sense of teamwork and you are well supported by your leadership team, staff and governors. A positive partnership between All Saints and the National Leader in Education's (NLE) school is supporting the professional development of staff and mutual sharing of ideas and good practice. The work of the NLE is also helping you and your staff to recognise and build on the school's growing strengths in leadership and provision that contribute to an improving trend in pupils' achievement.

Since the inspection, a small team of staff meets weekly for 'attendance and punctuality panels' and includes an experienced education welfare officer who knows the children and their community well. Parents are being held firmly to account through the school's new policy and guidance on matters of attendance and punctuality. The impact is beginning to be seen in a slow but steady rise in attendance, including for a few pupils who have been persistently absent in the past.

A very attractive, lively and well equipped learning environment reflects the school's continuing commitment to providing an enjoyable and relevant curriculum. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to the topic themes, educational trips and visitors that enliven their learning. Following the inspection, small library areas were further developed so that pupils have immediate access to a wide range of well-chosen reading resources. Positive links with the church include a group of retired parishioners who come in regularly to talk and read with children, contributing to pupils' improving levels of communication and confidence.

Members of the governing body have benefitted from training and are more able to understand information about the school's performance and hold leaders to account. They recognise that there is room to develop further their knowledge of school improvement strategies and how to check on the effectiveness of actions taken to raise standards.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- encourage leaders and the governing body to take account of the Ofsted survey report: 'School Governance ; learning from the best'  
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-practice-resource-%E2%80%93-school-governance-learning-best>

In addition, it has been agreed that I will attend the next meeting of the full governing body. This will be in the capacity of an observer but also to offer appropriate guidance on any questions relating to school improvement actions and evaluation of progress.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The headteacher and governing body have particularly welcomed the support provided by the local authority's human resources department. This service is bought in by the school and has been helpful in resolving some difficult staffing issues.

The school's allocated Standards and Effectiveness Officer (SEO) visits termly and is invited to attend the governing body's meetings of its standards committee. It was stated that the authority considers the school now has a more accurate view of pupils' attainment and how to improve it, and is confident in the ability of the headteacher and her team to improve pupils' rates of progress to raise standards of attainment. This contrasts with some negative communication received by the school last summer. The Local Authority has been instrumental in brokering the support of the NLE, who has built up a good relationship with yourself and the staff and introduced further opportunities for constructive partnerships beyond the school itself.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director for Children, Schools and Families for Sefton.

Yours sincerely

Marguerite Murphy

**Her Majesty's Inspector**