

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Linda Emmett
All Saints Catholic College
Birch Lane
Dukinfield
Cheshire
SK16 5AP

Dear Mrs Emmett

Special measures monitoring inspection of All Saints Catholic College

Following my visit with Deborah Bailey, Ofsted Inspector to your school on 8–9 March 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education, Children’s Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school’s previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in February 2016. The full list of the areas for improvement that were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children’s services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Smart
Her Majesty’s Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in February 2016.

- Ensure that leaders, and the newly reconstructed governing body, build urgently on the initial systems put in place to improve the school, so that the quality of teaching and behaviour of pupils is at least good across all year groups, by making sure that:
 - leaders at all levels bring about the swiftly the necessary improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and behaviour in classrooms and around the school
 - the use and the impact of the pupils premium and extra literacy support for weaker readers in Year 7 is sharply monitored, in order that it improves the progress of those pupils whom it is intended to support
 - subject leaders are effectively trained and supported in quickly overcoming the legacy of weak teaching and poor behaviour in lessons and around the school
 - leaders in charge of improving attendance intensify their work with families to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent, especially in Years 10 and 11
 - parents and pupils feel well informed about changes in a timely fashion and have the opportunity to express their views.
- Urgently improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics and the sciences by:
 - raising the expectations that teachers have of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able pupils, so that they provide challenging and engaging activities in lessons and in homework
 - ensuring that teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' progress, set accurate targets and use the information in their planning to speed up pupils' progress
 - making certain that teachers mark pupils' work according to the school's marking policy, so that pupils receive the guidance they need to improve the standard of their work
 - insisting that pupils' skills in writing at length are of the highest quality across all subjects.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are not missed, by careful planning across subjects.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 8 March 2017 to 9 March 2017

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work and met with the executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, parents, members of the governing body, trust directors and the director of education for the Diocese of Shrewsbury.

Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, moving to and from lessons and during break and lunchtime. Inspectors met formally with a range of pupils across both key stages. They also spoke to pupils informally in lessons and around the school. Additionally, inspectors observed teaching and learning across a range of subjects, of which a significant proportion was undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Alongside leaders and middle leaders, inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work.

A range of documentation was also scrutinised by the inspection team, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of ongoing teacher training, governors' minutes and records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors also examined attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding documentation, school policies and the school's own information about current pupils' progress and attainment.

Context

Since the previous inspection, leaders have quickly stabilised the turbulence in the school's staffing. Pupils are no longer taught by a significant number of supply teachers. Across both English and mathematics, there is a full complement of specialist teachers. In mathematics, a lead practitioner supports the subject leader. The English department is completely new. In science, one additional member of staff has recently resigned. However, leaders have already appointed a replacement teacher. The total number of staff who have resigned is now 23 since the previous inspection in February 2016.

Since the last monitoring visit, the new, highly skilled governing body continues to meet monthly. The executive headteacher supports the governing body effectively. He has strengthened governance by providing additional experienced governors from Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College. There is a new chair of governors and a new chair of the multi-academy trust. Furthermore, there is a new chair of the curriculum committee with the relevant and appropriate skills needed.

Unquestionably, the new senior leadership team is also fully established and highly effective. A new finance director is in post. Leaders continue to be supported by an associate deputy headteacher seconded from Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic

College.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The headteacher, ably supported by the executive headteacher, leads with honesty, integrity and moral purpose. The entire community embraces her clear vision and unquestionable commitment to securing the best possible education for her pupils. She has surrounded herself with senior leaders and middle leaders who are passionate, committed and extremely capable of continuing this journey of improvement. Parents and staff say that they are both pleased and relieved that the new leadership team has already made such a difference. Pupils are equally happy. Several pupils described the headteacher as an inspiration to them. Without doubt, the headteacher and her leadership team have had to establish a new school from scratch and they clearly have the skills to make the difference needed.

In order to rebuild the school, the headteacher is relentless in her pursuit of opportunities to embed excellent leadership at all levels. The headteacher and governors are adamant that leadership will be both sustainable and transformational. The effect of this drive to improve leadership can now be seen across the school, particularly in the core subject areas of mathematics, English and science, which were identified as particular weaknesses at the last inspection. Stable leadership in these areas ensures that pupils' behaviour for learning continues to improve so that effective learning can take place. Teachers do not yet, however, capitalise on the improvement in behaviour to plan effectively for the different groups of pupils in their classes.

Leaders do, however, ensure that pupils know that there are high expectations of behaviour across the school. Through appropriate support, leaders now enable teachers to apply school policies more consistently. Leaders make use of effective monitoring systems to ensure that the impact of teaching on learning is constantly evaluated. Leaders link the outcome of regular monitoring closely to ongoing staff training needs. It is also closely linked to the school's improvement plan and the systems to assess the performance of staff. Regular training, including weekend leadership development days, enables staff to share good practice. Leaders have a robust coaching programme in place to assist teachers who need to improve the quality of their teaching.

Despite increased accountability at all levels, teachers feel empowered, supported and valued by leaders, including governors. Consequently, staff morale is very high. Teachers say that they can see more and more pupils engage in a culture of learning; pupils now want to make progress and succeed. Pupils have improved their resilience and determination. An unfolding culture of higher aspirations and expectations is clearly visible. Leaders and teachers believe in their pupils; pupils are now acutely aware of this and they now try much harder to produce better-quality work.

The governing body also goes from strength to strength. Governors have a wide range of appropriate experiences and routinely undergo training to improve their effectiveness. Governors are sharp and unflinching in holding leaders to account. They have an accurate view of the effectiveness of their school and are adamant that only the best quality of education will do. They are ambitious for the school's pupils. Records of governors' minutes show that they are highly influential in driving forward sustained improvement across the school.

Governors continue to support leaders to strengthen the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. This aspect of leaders' work is now good. Pupils have access to a wide range of visits, including spiritual retreats. SMSC development is woven throughout the curriculum, for example in science, where pupils debate the ethics of dissection or fracking for gas. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn about parliament, taxation and fair trade. Teachers ensure that pupils receive increasing opportunities to work collaboratively and demonstrate self-awareness, resilience and teamwork. The improvement in pupils' behaviour is testament to their moral and social development. Teachers now routinely plan for SMSC development, for example in art, where pupils explore cultures, beliefs, ideas and religions.

Parents increasingly acknowledge the success of leaders' work to raise aspirations across the school. Parents also appreciate leaders' efforts to strengthen communication with them. The proportion of parents who are positive about the school, evidenced through ongoing surveys, has increased. Inspectors also spoke with parents who value the school's new website, the weekly newsletter and the headteacher's 'open door' policy. They appreciate the new approach to parents' evenings and recognise that both teaching and behaviour have improved. Equally, leaders routinely seek the views of pupils and staff to assess the effectiveness of their actions to improve the school. Pupils know that leaders now value their opinions.

Without doubt, leaders and governors' efforts to date have been rewarded by discernible improvements to many aspects of the school's work. A relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, improving pupils' attitudes to learning, improving behaviour in and around school and improving attendance continues. However, leaders are honest and accurate in their appraisal of what is still to be done. They recognise that they have embarked on a journey that will take time. Leaders acknowledge that many pupils in Year 11, for example, remain too far behind in their studies. They also know that disadvantaged and the most able pupils do not yet achieve as well as they could. That said, leaders and teachers do not give up. There are numerous strategies to help pupils to catch up, for example evening and weekend revision and catch-up sessions. This is just one example of how staff now go the extra mile for their pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Although there are substantial improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, leaders rightly recognise that there is still a lot more to do. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve provision. Additionally, leaders have successfully appointed staff to fill all previously vacant positions. The use of temporary teachers is now for emergency cover only.

The assistant headteacher responsible for the quality of teaching and learning is highly effective and works well with other leaders to secure improvement. Middle leaders and teachers value the work that he does to help staff improve the quality of provision. Ongoing staff training to improve the quality of teaching is good; for example, regular Friday morning meetings focus on strategies to improve teaching. Staff find these sessions valuable. Leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching mean that many teachers are in the process of rediscovering the joy of teaching and pupils have embarked on a journey to develop a love of learning.

During the inspection, inspectors undertook observations of teaching to see the impact of this ongoing training on pupils' learning. Inspectors observed learning across English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and humanities. English continues to be the strongest subject because pupils produce good-quality work which is appropriate to their needs and teaching is effective. Although the quality of teaching in mathematics continues to improve at a pace, leaders now need to ensure that teachers provide pupils with more opportunities to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills. In Spanish, pupils made good progress over time because they are routinely engaged and enthused by carefully planned activities which developed their knowledge, skills and understanding. While improvements can be seen across a range of the range of subjects, pupils in Year 11 have too much to catch up, especially in science, because of historic poor-quality teaching.

In order to ensure that pupils do catch up, leaders recognise that teachers need to think more carefully about their use of questions. Although teachers across subjects use a range of questions, the impact on pupils' learning varies. Some teachers use questions that extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. As yet this is not consistent, and teaching, including that in mathematics, does not yet deepen pupils' understanding sufficiently well. Teachers do not ensure that pupils have the opportunity to explain the rationale for their response. All too often, teachers put answers straight onto the board without checking whether pupils understand concepts. This means that teachers do not address misconceptions quickly enough to support more rapid learning and progress.

As with questioning, leaders recognise that teachers need more support to plan for learning and progress. There are increasing examples of teachers planning effectively for the different abilities within their class. This, however, is not yet the norm. All too often pupils receive the same work, regardless of their ability or how much additional support they need. This means that some pupils are left waiting for the teacher to move on and other pupils do not finish work. Undoubtedly, for the

most able pupils learning is slowed because they are not sufficiently challenged. Teachers do not routinely use the information they have about their pupils to plan sufficiently well for the next stages in their pupils' learning journey. This remains an area for further development.

Work scrutiny also highlighted that opportunities to develop pupils' writing have improved significantly. However, there is variability in teachers across the curriculum, ensuring that pupils write at length. Leaders know that this important aspect of pupils' learning is an ongoing area for further development. They recognise the improvement in pupils' literacy is fundamental to their success in the new GCSE examinations. Teachers are encouraging pupils to redraft their work more frequently. Teachers check that this consolidates pupils' learning and also provides them with a good set of notes from which to revise.

Since the previous inspection, teachers have undertaken intense work to ensure the accuracy of their assessments of where pupils are in their learning. Teachers engage in moderation that takes place across departments and with teachers from Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College. Teachers take part in two meetings prior to the submission of their assessment information so that they can be sure of the validity of their information. Leaders' systems to monitor pupils' progress also check whether teachers' assessments are accurate.

As part of the journey of rapid improvement, leaders have been effective in developing positive relationships between pupils and teachers. Relationships across the school continue to strengthen because pupils now know that their teachers are here to stay. Almost every pupil that inspectors spoke to recognises that their teachers want them to succeed. Pupils recognise that teaching and learning has improved.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils' behaviour continues to improve rapidly. Leaders' systems to manage behaviour are effective and staff work hard to uphold the highest possible standards. Pupils know how they must conduct themselves in lessons and around the site; they both value and welcome the changes made. Pupils wear their uniform with pride and at social times they enjoy one another's company. Incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively, should they arise. Pupils value this. Pupils also appreciate leaders' actions to create more space at social times by staggering the times for different year groups. This allows them to socialise and enjoy the school's facilities more comfortably. That said, there is still a small proportion of pupils, for example some boys in Year 8, who continue to misbehave.

Teachers now enforce routines more consistently in lessons and most pupils are proud to be part of All Saints Catholic College. Pupils appreciate that leaders have recruited teachers who care for them and want them to achieve. Pupils know, accept and understand that their school expects each of them to 'be inspired, be

excellent and succeed'. Pupils universally recognise that there has been a significant change in attitudes to learning. They are grateful to the headteacher and her leadership team for their visits to lessons and their continuous presence around the school. Most pupils learn in calm, purposeful classrooms. There is, however, a prevalence of low-level disruption in lessons where teachers do not yet routinely plan effectively for pupils' learning and progress. This is especially the case in a minority of classes in Year 11 and Year 8.

The proportion of pupils who are temporarily excluded is now starting to decline. This is because pupils know that leaders will not tolerate poor behaviour or disruption to learning. Records show that the number of senior staff who are called to assist in lessons has halved. Pupils are more diligent in lessons and now complete their work to a much higher standard.

Alongside an improvement in pupils' behaviour there continues to be a rapid improvement in pupils' attendance and punctuality. Leaders have established effective and efficient systems to monitor pupils' attendance, including those pupils who are disadvantaged pupils or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work effectively with parents and carers and relationships continue to strengthen. In addition, pupils are rewarded at every opportunity for attending school regularly. This year, to date, pupils' attendance is much higher than last year and is now close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has declined sharply. Leaders must be commended for this marked improvement. Leaders recognise that although Year 11 and disadvantaged pupils' attendance continues to improve, these are the groups that require most attention.

Leaders provide an increasing number of opportunities to raise pupils' aspirations through high-quality careers information, advice and guidance. Pupils have access to impartial careers advice, visits to major careers fairs and some pupils have the opportunity to visit Cambridge University. Through links with a local sixth form college, pupils also have the opportunity to develop their extended writing skills and sample A level courses.

Outcomes for pupils

Leaders are all too aware that outcomes for Year 11 pupils have been adversely affected by poor teaching and behaviour in the past. While leaders make every effort to close the gap, the reality is that many Year 11 pupils may not make the progress of which they are capable of in 2017 because there is insufficient time for them to catch up. In subjects where pupils have been affected by the prevalence of temporary teachers, they have lots of work to catch up. Leaders and teachers provide additional sessions to bridge the knowledge gap. It is abundantly clear that Year 11 pupils know that they have been disadvantaged. This adversely affects some pupils' resilience, drive and determination.

Conversely, sufficient time is available for teachers to help Year 9 and Year 10 pupils catch up to the level expected of them. Improvements in teaching, learning and assessment mean that these pupils now make better progress. The information that leaders have is accurate and it highlights that pupils in these year groups are on track to achieve well, especially in mathematics, English and science. Leaders monitor pupils' progress rigorously. There is still, however, much more to do to support and challenge the most able so that they can excel.

In Year 7, pupils are set extremely challenging targets and they too are on track to achieve well. They have not been disadvantaged by a legacy of poor-quality teaching. Pupils know that there are high expectations of what they can and should achieve. In Year 8, however, pupils are not as secure in their learning. Leaders recognise this and have appropriate strategies in place to address this issue.

The progress made by pupils who access alternative provision is good. Leaders have effective systems in place to ensure that these pupils attend regularly and that they achieve well. Alternative providers value the strong lines of communication between themselves and the school.

Leaders are aware that they now need to evaluate the effectiveness of the support they give to pupils who have English as an additional language. Some of these pupils do not receive the support they need to catch up to other pupils. As a result, they are at risk of falling further behind in their learning.

Leaders have effective plans to diminish the difference between the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. However, the gap in Year 11 remains wide. In other year groups, the impact of pupil premium spending is more effective. For example, in Year 7, there is only a marginal difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared to other pupils. In Year 8, though, disadvantaged boys continue to underachieve. Leaders recognise this and they have an appropriate plan in place. They recognise that pupils' literacy skills remains a core barrier. In Year 8, there is a small cohort of boys whose behaviour needs to improve so that they can make the progress of which they are capable. Overall, however, leaders' use of pupil premium funding is now more effective in securing better rates progress for disadvantaged pupils across the school.

The use of literacy and numeracy catch-up funding is also effective for the majority of pupils who are below age-related expectations on entry into Year 7. Leaders recognise that Year 7 disadvantaged pupils, who are also eligible for catch-up premium, still need more support and intervention to catch up. In order to achieve this, a new approach to teaching literacy and numeracy across the school is now required.

The use of funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. These pupils are well supported.

External support

Leaders and teachers continue to benefit from extensive support from Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College, an outstanding teaching school in Altrincham. The headteacher receives support from a member of the Talented Leaders programme. Leaders are outward-facing and they constantly seek support when and if it is required.