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Mr David Letherby
The Headteacher
St George Catholic School for Boys
Leaside Way
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Dear Mr Letherby

**OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WHOSE OVERALL
EFFECTIVENESS HAS BEEN JUDGED SATISFACTORY**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 November 2006, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during my visit.

As a result of the inspection on 28 September 2005, the school was asked to;

- Introduce changes to the curriculum at Key Stage 4 (KS4) which will allow it to meet fully the needs and interests of all pupils.
- Raise achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities by improving the co-ordination of learning support services.
- Continue to develop the role of the middle managers so that they take greater responsibility for the work of their departments.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

The school has reviewed and developed its KS4 curriculum and as a consequence it now better meets the needs and interests of all pupils. This is particularly true for those pupils for whom a purely academic range of subjects is not appropriate. Vocationally based BTEC courses in public services and physical education have been introduced. A school developed course called "introduction to building trades" is also offered to pupils. The practical and vocational nature of this course meets the needs of some pupils well; however, it is important that the school obtains suitable accreditation for

the pupils studying this subject. Vocational courses at local colleges are also open to some pupils if they express an interest in, or would benefit from, a particular course. The introduction of these courses for current Year 10 pupils is beginning to impact on their attendance and their motivation to complete coursework in other subjects.

Despite these recent improvements, the school is aware of the need to further develop its vocational curriculum. As it does so it needs to continue to work with local schools and colleges to ensure that there are appropriate progression routes for the courses it offers.

The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and English as an additional language (EAL) co-ordinator have instigated a number of strategies to better co-ordinate support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). There are much improved procedures in place for identifying the specific needs of LDD and EAL pupils. This is now leading to more focussed and effective structured support for these pupils. New individual education plans have been introduced containing clear, measurable targets for improvement and teaching strategies to support progress. These have been circulated to all teachers in order to ensure a co-ordinated approach across the school. These actions have raised the profile of support for LDD and EAL pupils; however, they have only recently been introduced and need time to embed before they become fully effective.

The progress of pupils towards their targets is now being tracked well. School data indicates that the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is now at least satisfactory.

Middle managers are becoming increasingly responsible for the quality of teaching and pupil progress within their departments. Heads of department have received training on the use of data and, as a consequence, better use is made of assessment information to improve pupil learning. Suitably challenging targets are now set for pupils and the school regularly monitors the progress of pupils towards these targets. Although the quality of teacher assessments has improved, there remains too much variation in quality. The school is aware of this issue and is implementing sensible plans to improve the quality of these assessments.

Heads of department monitor teaching well and have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning within their subject areas. They are well aware of the need to improve the proportion of good lessons being taught. The core departments are being well supported by local authority consultants in this regard. Heads of department are also developing a number of strategies such as peer observation and mentoring to share good practice between teachers. However, due to the recent introduction of these strategies they have not had time to sufficiently impact on the quality of teaching.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson
Her Majesty's Inspector