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Mr J Dachtler  
Acting headteacher  
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School  
Montacute Road  
Morden  
SM4 6RL

Dear Mr Dachtler

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Teresa's Catholic Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 28 June 2011, for the time you gave to our preliminary meeting and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils who took the time to meet with me during the day.

Since the school's last inspection, the soft federation with the Ursuline High School has ended and the associate headteacher has been appointed as the acting headteacher with a contract until August 2013. The intake of the school has continued to become more diverse with an increasing proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language. A growing number of children who join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage are at an early stage of learning English.

As a result of the inspection on 27 January 2010, 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 good progress in making improvements and good progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

There has been significant progress in raising attainment in English and mathematics. This is because of the school's sustained focus on raising expectations and improving the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. The percentage of Year 6 pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and mathematics rose dramatically in 2010 so that, for the first time in four years, pupils' attainment was slightly above national averages in both subjects. School leaders are confident that these improvements will be sustained. The recently completed 2011 assessments for

pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 show that a greater proportion of pupils have reached nationally expected levels for their age this year, particularly in mathematics and writing. Inspection evidence confirms that most pupils are making accelerated rates of progress across the school. However, some inconsistencies remain. School leaders are aware that pupils in most classes tend to make more progress in reading and mathematics than in writing. Also, learning and progress in Year 4 have not accelerated at the same rate as in other year groups this year. However this situation is being addressed and school leaders expect progress to be in line with other year groups by the end of the year. The school has recently undertaken a review of intervention programmes to ensure that additional provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. Data suggest these pupils generally make good progress. Pupils from minority-ethnic heritages and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress.

The quality of learning observed during the inspection confirms the school's view that the proportion of good teaching is growing. Pupils say that their teachers make learning fun for them by making effective links between subjects and planning exciting outings or activities. Teachers make learning intentions clear and share criteria with the pupils, so that they know what they have to achieve and can judge their own success. Teachers plan lessons with attention to the needs of individuals, including gifted and talented pupils, and use varied teaching methods to engage their pupils. Marking of written work is generally thorough, and most teachers inform pupils about their next step in learning, particularly in English.

There has been a structured process of curriculum development since the previous inspection with a new curriculum implemented across the school from the beginning of the current academic year. There are meaningful links between subjects and more opportunities for pupils to practise writing in different contexts. Enrichment activities are being carefully matched to each theme to give pupils memorable experiences and enhance learning. The impact of the new curriculum is already clear in pupils' enjoyment and in accelerating rates of progress.

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is continuing to improve steadily. Better collaboration between nursery and reception teachers is helping to improve planning and there is now better use of free-flow play between the two Reception classrooms and the outside area. Children have more opportunities to carry out problem solving activities. However, there is more work to be done to ensure that the outside area in the Reception classes is as exciting and stimulating as the indoor classroom and that adults interact with the children when they are at play. The school has worked hard to ensure that teachers' assessments of progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage are accurate and this information is now being used more effectively to plan further improvements and address the needs of the increasing number of children entering Nursery and Reception at an early stage of learning English.

The acting headteacher, together with the assistant headteacher, are strong driving forces for improvement and they communicate their high expectations clearly. Middle leaders have developed in confidence and experience, and are now making a good contribution to school improvement. Governors are knowledgeable, well informed and able to offer a good level of challenge and support to school leaders. The track record of improvement and the determination to continue to develop and make progress mean that the school is demonstrating a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has made good use of support from the local authority and has developed a very successful partnership with two other schools. This support has been well targeted and has had a positive impact on the school's improvement.

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

Melanie Knowles

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in January 2010**

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics by ensuring that all pupils make good progress so that a greater proportion of them reach or exceed the nationally expected levels for their age.
- Develop the curriculum so that each subject enriches the learning opportunities provided for all pupils and, with effective links established between subjects, makes a good contribution to aid pupils' achievement and raise attainment.
- Improve the quality of provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage and the progress children make by:
  - providing a wide range of well-planned opportunities which promote children's self-chosen activities and improve their problem-solving skills
  - making better and consistent use of outdoor provision throughout the day
  - monitoring children's progress with rigour, and using the information gathered to plan effectively for children's next steps in learning.