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6 July 2011

Mr P Sharp  
Headteacher  
St John's Catholic Junior School  
Old Chester Road  
Bebington  
Wirral  
Merseyside  
CH63 7LH

Dear Mr Sharp,

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St John's Catholic Junior School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 5 July 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 staff, pupils and local authority officer to whom I spoke.

There have been no contextual changes to the school since the last inspection.

As a result of the inspection on 16 March 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 satisfactory progress in making improvements and satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

Evidence from pupils' books and lessons observed confirms that pupils attain broadly average standards by the end of Year 6 and, given their starting points, are making satisfactory, but uneven progress. The unvalidated 2011 national test results for 11 year olds show a considerable improvement on the results for 2010, bringing the school's figures up to a more broadly average position. Pupils' progress across the four year groups is uneven because day-to-day assessment of their current level of achievement and how they are doing is not strong enough in every classroom. In Year 3, insufficient attention is paid to ensuring that all pupils entering the school have mastered necessary Key Stage 1 skills and, conversely, to stretching the more able.

Progress has been made on all the areas for improvement identified. Following the last inspection, the school purchased a support package for information and communication technology (ICT) from the local authority. An audit of staff skills was undertaken; training and support provided; resources purchased; ICT planning introduced; and a programme of discrete skills lessons introduced for pupils alongside improved lesson planning to include

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ICT in other subjects. On this inspection, the inspector observed a lesson in which pupils were making good progress in using a presentation software program to explain how to make slippers.

A start has been made on developing purposeful links between subjects. The early developments have been evaluated by staff and further improvements in planning considered. Some of the resulting pupils' work is on display in school. There are examples of pupils' writing across a range of subjects. Opportunities for pupils to undertake independent research have been increased through the greater use of ICT, but the stock of books in classrooms and the school library is poor. Pupils who spoke to the inspector commented on the lack of a range of books to read, especially those to interest and motivate boys. Opportunities are lost to link pupils' reading of fiction and nonfiction to the wider curriculum. During this inspection, it became clear that the management of the teaching of reading is not sufficiently robust. Pupils are not experiencing a wide and rich reading curriculum and do not receive appropriate guidance and challenge about the range of books they are reading.

Leaders and managers have prioritised the areas for improvement; action plans are updated and development is monitored against the milestones set. With the support of the local authority, data on pupils' progress have been transferred to a new software programme to enable more efficient checking to take place. As a result, the school is in a stronger position to examine the progress made by groups and individuals.

The local authority has a clear view about the school's work and provides good support and challenge.

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 Angela Westington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

**Annex**

**The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place on 16 March 2010**

- Improve pupils' learning and progress and thus raise achievement, by:
  - making sure that teaching has a sharper focus on pupils' progress and learning
  - improving the use of information and communication technology in teaching
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills across a range subjects to promote their skills as independent learners
  - making sure that leadership and management provide the school with a more sharply focused set of priorities for improvement and clearer strategies to tackle them effectively.