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14 July 2011

Dr J Ferguson
Headteacher
Trinity Catholic School
Guy's Cliffe Avenue
Leamington Spa
CV32 6NB

Dear Dr Ferguson

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of Trinity Catholic School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 13 July 2011, accompanied by Michael Phipps, additional inspector, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on our thanks, in particular, to the students who gave up some of their lunch break to talk to us so sensibly and helpfully.

Since the previous inspection, two appointments have been made at senior leadership level. A deputy headteacher joined the school in April 2011 and an additional assistant headteacher has recently been appointed.

As a result of the inspection on 11–12 November 2009, 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.

Standards are rising, particularly in English and mathematics. The school provided convincing evidence that the rise in 2010 is continuing. The proportion of students gaining a grade C or above in English and mathematics has increased and the proportion gaining the top two grades in English has risen significantly to come in line with mathematics where this figure was already high. In 2010, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities made very slow progress. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has been given responsibility for inclusion and much work has already been done to strengthen the school's work in this area, but it is too



soon to be able to see the impact on students' progress. The curriculum has been extended to provide a greater range of alternative provision to meet the needs of all students. Where this is provided off-site it is monitored well. The progress observed in lessons during the inspection was generally satisfactory and sometimes good.

Students are courteous and well behaved around the school and in lessons. They make a good contribution to the life of the school and are now involved in helping to improve the quality of teaching and learning by taking part in the learning walks which school leaders undertake to monitor lessons. There is one aspect of behaviour which is underdeveloped. In lessons, many students are too passive and fail to take full advantage of the increased opportunities which teachers are providing for independent and group learning.

The quality of teaching is still variable but there are some common strengths which can be linked to recent training. Lessons are planned with clear objectives for different individual needs and levels of ability. Teachers are providing more opportunities for students to be actively engaged and they use interesting resources, including information and communication technology, to make lessons more engaging. Relationships are positive. Where teaching is most effective, teachers make good use of data on students' progress to plan their lessons. They also check at the start and end of the lesson, and sometimes during the lesson, how well students are progressing. In many lessons, however, the level of intellectual challenge is too low especially for the most able. Teachers do not systematically use a range of questions to challenge and deepen the students' understanding. Some examples of very effective teaching were observed and there are systems to share good practice.

The curriculum has been refined to ensure a more consistent approach to student grouping. Personal, social and health education has a well-defined programme across Years 7 to 11. However, the school still needs to ensure a balance across the subjects, as highlighted at the last inspection.

The senior leadership team has been increased to provide greater capacity. Effective systems are in place to gather evidence on the quality of teaching, giving leaders a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and they are now well placed to take these procedures forward. A major improvement has been in establishing secure systems to gather and analyse data on the progress students are making. This is being used with increasing success to evaluate the work of the school and to raise achievement. Leaders are aware of the need to sharpen whole-school development planning in order to accelerate the rate of improvement.

The specialist subjects of technology and art make a good contribution to improvement by sharing strengths in assessment and aspects of good teaching from these subjects. The displays of students' impressive work in art and design

technology make a very positive contribution to the school environment and help to raise aspirations. Attainment in the specialist subjects is high.

The school has received effective support from external partners, including the local authority. This has involved support for internal reviews and the provision of training for middle leaders.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elaine Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elaine Taylor
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2010.

- Improve progress through:
 - ensuring that all teachers plan for, and provide appropriate levels of challenge for students of all abilities
 - reviewing student groupings in order to target teaching more precisely
 - embedding the systematic use of performance data to inform teaching and interventions across all departments
 - sharing best practice in teaching more effectively.
- Review curriculum provision to ensure that it fully meets all requirements and meets the needs of all students, particularly at Key Stage 4.