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22 September 2011

Mrs T Davis  
Acting Headteacher  
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School  
Malins Road  
Parkfields  
Wolverhampton  
WV4 6AW

Dear Mrs Davis

### **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 21 September 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussion and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please pass on my thanks to the local authority link inspector and Chair of the Governing Body who gave up their time to talk to me, and to the staff and pupils who met with me during the visit.

Since the last inspection there have been three acting headteachers, with the current postholder having been in place since September 2011. A permanent deputy headteacher was appointed in April 2011 having been at the school in an acting capacity for a year. The governing body has found it difficult to recruit a suitable candidate but has clear plans to secure a permanent headteacher.

As a result of the inspection on 14 July 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.

Pupils' attainment is broadly average and rising steadily by the end of Year 6. Mathematics is a strength of the school and standards are higher than in writing. In 2011, over half of the pupils achieved the higher level in mathematics. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 improved in 2011 and is now closer to the national average after a decline for the previous two years. Standards in writing are lower across the school, particularly for boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Overall, this represents satisfactory progress. The quality of learning seen in lessons was satisfactory with a very small minority that was inadequate.

September 2010



Pupils respond sensibly to the tasks they are set and are keen to share ideas and talk about their work.

During the inspection, all lessons were observed jointly with the acting headteacher. According to the school's own records, there remains too much satisfactory teaching in core subjects and a few lessons which are inadequate. The acting headteacher has an accurate analysis of teaching and learning. In lessons, relationships are good and pupils keen to engage in their learning. However, the pace of learning in lessons is slow because teachers talk for too long. Too much time is spent on the introductory activity and, by the time pupils have copied down the learning objective for the lesson, there is insufficient time for them to focus on the main learning task. Learning objectives for the lessons are not always clear or precise. Although teachers have improved their knowledge of the levels pupils are expected to reach, they do not always provide tasks so that pupils work towards their targets quickly.

There were examples during the inspection where teaching assistants were deployed effectively to support groups of pupils to maximise their learning. This included focused groups in literacy and numeracy where the teaching assistant had a clear structure to work with from the teachers' detailed planning. Pupils were applying learning by using mini-whiteboards to share answers, and teaching assistants were quickly able to pick up on misunderstandings. This enabled pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the progress expected of them.

Very little progress has been made in using core skills in literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. The main focus for the school has been to introduce new reading schemes and daily phonics, alongside support from local authority consultants to help plan numeracy lessons. Marking has improved significantly. Pupils understand what the pink and green highlighted work means and what is going well and what needs improving or checking. Marking in numeracy is informative, so pupils can check their understanding. While some books from last year had writing targets, none were seen for numeracy.

Leaders and managers are becoming more effective and undertake a wide range of monitoring activities. There is improved use of data and pupil tracking, and a central database is being used more effectively to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Leaders and managers have a clear picture of how well pupils are doing in each year group and have pinpointed areas of concern. However, some of the monitoring undertaken is not evaluative and rigorous. Reports to the governing body from subject coordinators do not always give a clear picture about teaching and evidence gathered from book trawls. Some do not refer to the progress being made by pupils. Monitoring and evaluation is not always well-coordinated with actions being followed up. There has been insufficient progress in implementing actions to improve the school's understanding of community cohesion. Links with schools from other countries are being developed and assemblies have a strong

focus on the wider community. Some aspects of the school's progress has been limited due to the changes in acting headteachers. These have made it difficult to ensure continuity of actions and plans. Despite this, standards continue to rise and there is a clear agenda to drive improvements from leaders, the governing body and the local authority. Through consultants, the local authority has supported the school effectively to build a satisfactory capacity to improve further. Support from a local high-performing school provides opportunities for staff to see best practice.

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

Davinder Dosanjh  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Raise the quality of teaching and improve the progress of pupils, so that all groups achieve as well as they can by ensuring that:
  - teaching assistants are deployed more effectively in lessons to maximise the learning for all groups of pupils
  - accurate assessment data is used to plan work to match the prior attainments of all pupils, particularly the more able
  - pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given better targeted support in mathematics
  - core skills learnt in literacy and mathematics are practised across the curriculum
  - marking informs pupils of the next steps in their learning.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - developing the skills of middle managers to be more effective in embedding ambition and driving improvements
  - ensuring that monitoring is specific to identified areas for development and is focused on pupils' outcomes
  - training for new leaders within the school is established to secure its future leadership.
  
- Improve the school's understanding of community cohesion by analysing the school's context in terms of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics and implement an action plan to improve identified areas of weakness, particularly in the wider community.