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11 November 2011

Mrs Hoyle  
Headteacher  
St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School  
Norfolk Street  
Hull  
HU2 9AA

Dear Mrs L Hoyle

### **Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Charles' Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 10 November 2011, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. I also welcomed the opportunity to talk with other members of staff, pupils and the Local Leader of Education. Please pass on my thanks to all those involved.

Since the last inspection there have been considerable improvements to the learning environment. This is most evident outdoors where separate outdoor classrooms have been built for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A trim trail, a science garden and Eco-area with an allotment have also been created. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has continued to increase. Pupils from 10 different minority ethnic groups account for 61% of the school population. Similarly, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language has increased to 56%, with some 16 different languages represented. Many more pupils than usual join or leave the school throughout the year and this has a significant impact on the whole school community.

As a result of the inspection on 9 and 10 June 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.

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are well below those expected for their age. Almost all children make good progress but most enter Year 1 with exceptionally low starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. The vast majority of pupils continue to make satisfactory and often good progress taking their individual starting points into account as they move through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Compared to national expectations though, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 remains stubbornly low despite the strenuous efforts of staff and systematic and consistent approaches to raise it. The time that a pupil remains at the school is the most critical

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determinant of pupils' achievement and has a marked impact on their attainment and progress. Pupils who start the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage or at the start of Year 1 and stay until the end of Year 6 make much better progress overall and attain broadly average standards. Pupils' attendance is broadly average and a rising trend is evident because of the school's strong links with families and the relentless drive of staff to improve it.

The proportion of teaching that is consistently good or better has increased because of well-targeted actions and carefully considered development activities for staff. Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning appropriately and often. Staff are provided with good training and development opportunities and increasingly share best practice. Coaching and mentoring of all staff are used to good effect and have proved to be a key driver for improvement, as have the support and opportunities that the school provide for staff, such as teaching assistants, to gain qualified teacher status.

Teachers are making more-effective use of the information they hold on what pupils know and can do. They work hard to plan lessons that quickly present pupils with opportunities for active and independent learning and that meet pupils' individual needs and interests. They also incorporate plenty of opportunities to assess pupils' understanding and progress. This enables them to build on the foundations of pupils' earlier learning effectively. As a result, pupils settle quickly to their tasks and enjoy their learning. Consequently, the school's reliable assessment and tracking information shows that pupils are making at least satisfactory and often good progress in lessons and more pupils are on track to achieve their learning targets than in previous years.

Relationships throughout the school are excellent. School leaders have generated a palpable drive for improvement and taken carefully considered steps to ensure that other staff have moved with them. Consequently, there is a strong sense of purposeful action throughout the school. The leadership team has been restructured and there are clearer lines of responsibility. This is resulting in leaders at all levels checking more closely and robustly on the academic learning for which they are responsible. Strategies to monitor progress and manage performance, such as the recent scrutiny of the pupils' written work, are rigorous and proving highly effective in driving improvements. Pupil progress meetings are held frequently. The information gathered is used effectively; for instance, to provide carefully targeted support for individual pupils.

Leaders know their school well and have a precise picture of what future actions are needed. This is because they review and evaluate their actions sharply and honestly. This results in school improvement plans that are sharply focused with clear, measurable success criteria and a school that is demonstrably improving provision and outcomes for its pupils. Safeguarding and child protection procedures meet current requirements and are organised extremely well. Support from external agencies, such as the local cluster of schools and the Local Leader of Education has been good, effectively helping the headteacher to implement the actions needed to tackle the areas for improvement.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Ripley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

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

- Raise standards and improve achievement by:
  - ensuring that all lessons quickly present pupils with opportunities for active or independent learning
  - ensuring that teachers make more effective use of the information they hold on what pupils know and can do, to set tasks which meet their individual learning needs more accurately
  - ensuring that leaders at all levels check much more closely and robustly on the academic learning taking place in those areas for which they hold responsibility.