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12 December 2012

Mr Andrew Poskitt  
Headteacher  
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School  
Springfield Road  
Wigan  
Lancashire  
WN6 7RH

Dear Mr Poskitt

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 December 2012, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report on the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in October 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with senior leaders, five members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. The school's monitoring records and minutes from the governing body meetings were also considered. The inspector was taken on a tour of the school to meet staff and pupils.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes to staff or the school's organisation since the inspection.

### **Main findings**

School leaders have a shared understanding of what the school needs to do to become good. There is a common sense of urgency and a determined drive to tackle weaknesses. Swift action means the school improvement plan has been amended and appropriate actions are identified to help the school improve teaching and pupils' achievement. The plan is purposeful. Nonetheless, the criteria to measure success are not precise enough to help senior leaders and governors measure the outcome of their planned actions.

Furthermore, there is not enough detail about the specific action the school will take to improve teaching.

Senior leaders have rightly focused on improving teaching. A whole-school focus on teachers' marking is beginning to lead to improvements in the feedback pupils receive. Highly effective action plans are in place for teachers who need support to improve. Precise feedback from lesson observations leaves teachers in no doubt about what they need to do to become consistently good. Frequent checks on pupils' workbooks are leading to greater consistency in pupils' presentation and application of school policies. However, not enough attention is paid to the progress different groups of pupils are making over time. The school is beginning to develop the role of subject leaders and to monitor the curriculum.

The governing body are ambitious and resolute in their desire to improve the school. They offer well informed challenge to senior leaders. This is because they have increased their visits to school to check on teaching and learning and they have established a monitoring committee to keep track of the school's progress.

Senior leaders and governors have begun to take effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Following the visit to the school, HMI recommends that further action is taken to:

- review the school development plan to ensure the criteria to measure success are more precise and link to pupil outcomes
- revisit the actions for improving teaching so it is crystal clear what the school is doing to make teaching the best it can be
- increase the focus on pupils' learning and the progress made by all groups of pupils as part of scrutiny of pupils' workbooks.

Ofsted will continue to monitor the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

The school have commissioned support from an external consultant to support the new subject leaders for mathematics. The school has accessed minimal support from the local authority up to this point. The local authority, through the school improvement consortia has reviewed the school's action plan and a meeting is planned before the end of term to identify how support will be tailored to the school's needs.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wigan and the Director for Liverpool Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**