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24 January 2013

Mr Martin Burke  
Headteacher  
Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School  
Hedgefield Road  
Liverpool  
Merseyside  
L25 2RW

Dear Mr Burke

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education act 2005 to Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 23 January, 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 November 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) met with four members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated, and a range of documentation was reviewed, including, records of monitoring activities. Arrangements about teachers' performance management were discussed. The headteacher also took the HMI on a tour of the school.

### **Context**

There have been no staff changes since the inspection although the school has appointed three new governors. The governing body have and set up a new group with a specific focus on improvement. Together with the local authority, the governing body and headteacher have also set up a challenge board.

## **Main findings**

Although disappointed with the outcome of the recent inspection, governors and senior leaders accept there is still further improvement needed to achieve good at their next inspection. Leaders articulate an ambition to improve and have drafted action plans to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. However, the criteria by which leaders and governors can measure how much improvement is being made need to be sharp and precise to enable leaders, governors and teachers to have a clear understanding of what success looks like.

Since the inspection the governing body has appointed three new governors. This has increased the expertise on the governing body. They have formed a monitoring group with a focus on the areas for improvement identified at the inspection. Consultants in literacy and mathematics, brokered with the local authority, have already begun work to support staff in addressing aspects for improvement identified by the inspection. Activities are underway to check teachers' planning, the quality of teaching and pupils' work and these are timetabled regularly by senior leaders. However, leaders and governors agree that these need to develop a greater focus on the impact that actions are having on accelerating the pace of pupils' learning.

Performance management arrangements provide all teachers with individual targets focused on pupils' progress. However, the extent to which objectives are explicit about the improvements required by teachers needs to be clearer. Middle leaders are regularly checking the work of staff. However, they need ensure there is a more precise focus on the impact on pupils' learning.

Senior leaders and governors are taking 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:

- sharpen the criteria for judging progress in the school improvement plan so that leaders and governors are able to accurately evaluate the impact of the school's actions
- ensure that all monitoring activity conducted by leaders focuses on the impact these actions are having on the quality of pupils' learning.

## **External support**

The local authority has worked in partnership with the school to coordinate a range of useful support for staff. Senior leaders feel this is helping to improve the quality of teaching and strengthen the role of subject leaders. Local authority officers meet regularly through the challenge board to monitor the improvements at the school.

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

Yours sincerely

**Adrian Guy**

**Her Majesty's Inspector**