

Serco Inspections  
Colmore Plaza  
20 Colmore Circus Queensway  
Birmingham  
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T:** 0121 679 9160  
**Direct email:** antony.grace@serco.com



7 March 2013

Wendy Steciuk  
St Philip Howard Catholic School  
St Mary's Road  
Glossop  
SK13 8DR

Dear Miss Steciuk

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection visit under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 to St Philip Howard Catholic School**

Following my visit to your school on 14 March 2013, 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 December 2012. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with the senior leadership team, middle leaders, the governing body, two representatives of the local authority and a small group of students. A tour of the school was undertaken and the school improvement plan was evaluated.

### **Context**

There have been no significant changes since the school was inspected in December 2012.

### **Main findings**

Following the December 2012 inspection, a range of measures have been quickly introduced to bring about improvement. These have included new approaches to ensure consistent lesson planning, a new marking policy and injecting greater rigour into the school's quality assurance procedures. Differentiated lesson objectives linked

to students' target grades are now normal, and students evaluate their progress at the end of each lesson. A formalised structure for lesson planning ensures that certain elements feature in all lessons. As a result of these changes, students are aware that their skills of self-assessment are improving, they know the grade they are currently achieving and what to do to make further progress. They also report more opportunities to discuss their learning and work independently from the teacher.

A sophisticated programme of intervention is now in place across the school providing extra tuition, pastoral support and mentoring to students who are underachieving or at risk of doing so.

Quality assurance processes have developed rapidly, and faculty leaders and key stage managers are now fully involved in them. Book scrutiny takes place regularly, and the evaluations are followed up both individually with the teachers concerned and more generally with feedback to the whole teaching staff. The quality of record-keeping in relation to this, however, does not support effective professional development or rigorous performance management. A constructive, written learning dialogue is now becoming more common in books. Students are encouraged to respond to marking, to make corrections and, less commonly, to extend their learning.

Staff and governors are now receiving more accurate data about students' progress. The school has rightly switched to a much more rigorous approach to monitoring progress from Year 7 onwards. Challenging targets are set for all students and progress against these targets is effectively tracked across the school.

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 recommend that further action is taken to:

- produce a concise executive summary of the current school development plan, linked to a longer-term strategic overview
- ensure that areas for development identified in lesson observations or through other quality assurance tasks are:
  - clearly identified for teachers
  - linked to professional development activities
  - followed up in future monitoring.

HMI will provide further support by:

- offering to contribute to a governing body and senior team training event around the most effective monitoring strategies for governors
- joining senior leaders in a joint evaluation of progress in teaching and learning during the summer or autumn terms.

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

### **External support**

The school has received consistently effective support from the local authority over the last few years. As a priority school in the local authority support protocol, it has received additional resources and dedicated consultant time. The school has not always taken full advantage, however, of the professional development opportunities offered to enable weaker teachers to improve their practice.

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

Yours sincerely

John Peckham  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**