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18 June 2013

Mrs Clare Campbell  
Headteacher  
St Charles' Roman Catholic Primary School  
Emlyn Street  
Moorside Road  
Swinton  
Manchester  
M27 9PD

Dear Mrs Campbell

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Charles' Roman Catholic Primary School, Swinton**

Following my visit to your school on 17 June 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 March 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

**Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you, teaching staff, a group of pupils, the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. I also had a tour of the school, led by three pupils and looked at a range of documentation provided by you.

**Context**

Since the section 5 inspection there have been four new appointments to replace staff who have either left or who will leave at the end of the summer term. A new Chair of Governors has been appointed; although she has already assumed the role, the position will be made substantive at the next full governors meeting in September 2013.

## **Main findings**

Improving the quality of teaching and as a result the progress which pupils make is clearly a top priority for the school. Senior leaders and governors, along with the local authority have produced an accurately targeted action plan. The plan is thorough and deals with the areas for improvement identified at the last S5 inspection. However, there is some overlap between actions and evidence and there is a need for success criteria to be more closely related to the attainment and progress of pupils.

You have taken steps to strengthen teaching in the school by appointing four new and experienced teachers. The recent appointments are all seen as very positive by the governing body and the local authority. They anticipate these appointments will add strength to teaching by creating 'core subject teams' led by senior leaders.

High standards have already been set in terms of teachers' planning; lessons take even more account of the learning needs of individuals. Older pupils are now clear about what they need to do to move to the next level and how they can improve their work to achieve their individual targets. This because of the successful introduction of 'passports for literacy' along with 'count me in' targets for mathematics. In addition the new marking policy is ensuring that children are clear about how well they are doing.

The governing body has also been strengthened with the appointment of a new and very experienced Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors is already providing you with objective support around the presentation of performance data to governors. Governors recognise the next step is to establish subject link governors in order to monitor more closely progress being made. The governing body would benefit from an audit of their own experience and expertise. This should enable them draw on their skills more systematically in challenging and supporting the schools rapid improvement to good.

You anticipate that Key Stage 2 pupils will achieve much better this year than last, with higher than average numbers gaining level 4 or above in English and mathematics. You have an expectation that reading will have improved significantly in Year 1 due to the impact of interventions over the year. You have also identified that some children in the Year 4 and Year 5 have major gaps in their learning. You have taken appropriate action, through new appointments and links with a National Leader of Education (NLE), to support these groups.

Senior leaders, governors and the local authority are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- Sharpen the action plan to ensure all actions can be evaluated against improvements pupils' outcomes.
- Use the expertise and experience of the governing body by matching their skills more closely to the aspects of the school they are monitoring.
- Closely monitor the impact on pupils' progress of improvements in the use of marking and the use of individual targets in lessons and over time.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

### **External support**

You have drawn successfully on a wide range of external support that is available to the school. For example teachers have benefitted from the Improving Teacher Programme (ITP) as a means of strengthening teaching. This is being supported by half termly monitoring by the local authority School Improvement Partner. Through your links with a local good school teachers have been provided with a coaching course as a means of sharpening their skills. Some underachieving pupils are already benefitting from external support through the Tutor Trust. You anticipate younger children will benefit from the links you have established with local schools demonstrating outstanding practice in early years. You are ensuring external support for the school is being used effectively to boost the improvement programme. You and the governing body should evaluate the various strands of support and give priority to those which make the greatest difference to the pupils' progress.

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

Yours sincerely

Drew Crawshaw  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**