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19 June 2013

Mrs Carol Hind  
Headteacher  
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School  
Littledale Avenue  
Heysham  
Morecambe  
Lancashire  
LA3 2ER

Dear Mrs Hind

### **Serious weaknesses second monitoring inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school with Anne Seneviratne Her Majesty's Inspector on 18 June, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and findings of the inspection. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

This inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the section 5 inspection which took place in September 2012. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making reasonable progress towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Interim Executive Director for Children & Young People for Lancashire and the Director of Education for Lancaster Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Gornall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2012**

- Improve teaching so it is consistently good or better by:
  - making better use of time in lessons so learning moves at a quicker pace
  - making sure that work is at the right level for pupils' of different abilities
  - providing teachers with more training in how to develop pupils' reading and writing skills.
  
- Improve pupils' progress in reading and writing, particularly for boys by:
  - targeting support for families of pupils with low attendance
  - using a step-by-step approach to developing key skills in handwriting, spelling and punctuation
  - increasing pupils' ability to use and apply their reading skills in other subjects
  - teaching older pupils the skill of reading between the lines and to read with greater understanding
  - building pupils' stamina as writers so they are more confident in writing at length.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - strengthening skills in judging the impact each teacher has on pupils' learning and using this information to set targets for teachers' further training and support
  - ensuring senior leaders provide more support for subject leaders to develop their leadership skills.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 18 June 2013**

### **Evidence**

The inspectors met with the headteacher, the school's literacy leader, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body and two representatives from the local authority. They visited several lessons, including a joint observation with the headteacher, spoke informally to pupils and read their work. The school's updated improvement plan was considered along with pupil progress records, minutes of governors' meetings and evidence of senior leaders' monitoring of teaching. Inspectors also looked closely at the work the school has been doing to improve attendance and to help the learning of pupils that are frequently absent from school.

### **Context**

There has been a change of teacher in Year 1. A new teacher has been appointed to teach Year 3 in September 2013. Pupil numbers have remained steady since the first monitoring inspection.

### **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

The governors have a clear understanding of the school, including through regularly visiting lessons and speaking with staff and pupils. Their new committee structure is proving effective in enabling information to be shared, discussed and acted upon. The governors' standards and effectiveness committee meets regularly with senior leaders and a representative from the local authority to maintain a shared, comprehensive view of progress being made against the school's action plan. Governors are aware that teachers' performance management arrangements need to be strengthened.

The headteacher is working hard to secure the school's improvement. She maintains a strong focus on improving teaching while working hard with families and other agencies to encourage good attendance. Clear records are maintained of all aspects of the school's work. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and honest.

The deputy headteacher and subject leaders take their responsibilities seriously and continually try to find ways of making learning engaging for pupils.

### **Strengths in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- Teaching is improving. There is increasing evidence of good practice and occasional outstanding practice, such as in a highly effective religious education lesson in which the teacher's thoughtful questioning and stimulating choice of resources helped pupils to deepen their understanding of community membership. 'Non-negotiables' have been established for all classes, that provide pupils with

expectations regarding their work. Teachers insist that these are respected and they are resulting in work of which pupils are proud.

- The curriculum has been developed to provide pupils with more opportunities for meaningful writing for different audiences and purposes in various subjects. Pupils say that they enjoy writing and observation evidence shows that they are gaining independence as writers, as shown in a well-structured lesson where pupils paid great attention to choosing 'just the right language' in writing narratives and carefully sought the correct punctuation to give their work 'more precise meaning.'
- Increasingly, teachers' marking provides pupils with helpful feedback on how to improve their work. In the best examples, pupils respond to individual questions or suggestions set for them by their teachers as part of this marking.
- Teaching is effectively monitored through lesson observations, review of pupils' progress and scrutiny of their work. Teachers are provided with helpful developmental feedback.
- Pupils' progress is regularly reviewed, at individual group and class level. The school's data show that achievement is rising at both Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attendance is improving in response to the school's robust monitoring and careful working with families and other agencies. Stiffer penalties are being used to combat persistent absence. Pupils value the school's attendance awards and many are eager to earn bronze, silver or gold awards.
- Recent investment in resources, including online reading and mathematics programs, is helping pupils to work independently and will enable those who spend some of the school year travelling to reintegrate more readily into school on their return. New books have been purchased to motivate boys with weaker reading skills.
- Interventions to support pupils with special educational needs are effectively coordinated and result in individuals making good progress towards their targets. Improvements are being made to the school environment to enable further development of interventions for specific groups of pupils.

### **Weaknesses in the school's approaches to securing improvement:**

- There is not yet a close enough link between the outcomes of the school's monitoring of teaching and teachers' performance management.
- The role of subject leaders is not yet fully developed. They do not have sufficient opportunities to observe and advise on teaching in their areas of expertise. Plans have been made for more training on this area.
- The learning of pupils in Year 1 has been adversely affected by changes in staffing during the year and their progress is not as good as in other classes.

### **External support**

The local authority continues to provide the school with well-judged support that is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Advisers have moderated leaders' assessments of teaching and provided insightful reports to governors. Consultants have provided training for staff on the teaching of reading and writing, as well as

giving more general advice on developing pace in lessons. Senior leaders and subject leaders continue to work with colleagues within the local cluster of Catholic primary schools to develop their work. The headteacher has consulted with an outstanding school in the county to share good practice.