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9 July 2013

Mrs Caroline Jackson  
Executive Headteacher  
St Edward's Catholic Primary School  
New Road  
Sheerness  
Kent  
ME12 1BW

Dear Mrs Jackson

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of St Edward's Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 July 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. 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 recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in March 2013.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with you, the head of school, three representatives from the local authority and three members of the governing body. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans were evaluated. Other documents that you provided were also looked at.

### **Context**

There have been some changes of teaching staff since the previous inspection. By September all of the teachers will be new to the school, with the exception of those in Year 2 and Year 6. The Year 1 teacher left in May and the class has been taught since then by a supply teacher. The Reception class teacher is leaving at the end of term. A new teacher has been appointed to this post and has been working alongside the current teacher since May. Two teachers have been seconded from the federated school. All but one of the new teachers has joined the school this week as part of the transition arrangements for pupils to their new classes. One new teaching

assistant has been recruited. There have been no changes to the leadership or governance of the school and the number of pupils on roll has remained stable.

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

The governing body has established a team of three core governors to monitor the progress that the school is making towards raising pupils' achievement and the removal of special measures. This group has had a training session from the local authority to help them understand and ask probing questions about the school's performance information. However, they are uncertain how to fulfil their role efficiently and effectively. The local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans are not succinct or clear enough to help focus their work. Important information to help them hold the senior leaders to account for making improvements quickly is missing or unclear.

The local authority's statement of action includes the relevant priorities and appropriate support has been identified. Arrangements are included to review the progress that the school is making every six weeks. The statement of action has been modified since it was originally submitted to Ofsted to include more information about pupils' attainment and progress. However, it is not clear what progress pupils will be expected to have made by given points through the year if targets to raise pupils' achievements are to be reached. A table for this information is blank beyond term 1 in 2013 which is unhelpful to governors who need to hold senior leaders accountable for pupils' performance. These milestones would help governors, senior leaders and teachers to know precisely what is meant by the statement 'improving quickly enough' which is included in some of the plan's success measures.

A review of governance was commissioned by the local authority following the recommendations of the last inspection. The review has been slow and the outcomes only very recently received, which has rightly been a concern to the local authority. A development plan has been quickly drafted by the Chair of the Governing Body's core monitoring team in response to the review but it is too recent for the plan to have been finalised.

You and the head of school have invested a lot of time in writing a number of action plans since the last inspection. The raising attainment plan is linked to the local authority statement of action and includes the relevant priorities. However, expectations of the progress that pupils are expected to make in Key Stage 1 are not high enough and the standards they should reach by the end of Year 1 are unclear. This is a concern given that a lack of progress in Key Stage 1 was noted as a particular weakness in the last inspection. Some information in action plans, such as whether all of the pupils in some year groups have been included in the figures shown, needs to be checked.

After the last inspection you usefully met with all staff to devise individual action plans to help them improve. However, the local authority and governors have not reviewed the performance targets of senior leaders since the last inspection to reflect the urgency of improvements that now need to be made.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is not fit for purpose.

The school's action plans are not fit for purpose.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills for Kent. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jackie Krafft  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**