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11 November 2013

Mrs Denise Edwards  
Headteacher  
Mrs Mary Ryan  
Executive Headteacher  
St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School  
Baugh Road  
Sidcup  
DA14 5ED

Dear Mrs Edwards

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 11 November 2013, 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.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses, following the section 5 inspection which took place in November 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 weakness 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 Director of Children's Services for Bexley and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Beckford-Hall  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better to raise achievement, especially in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that work is pitched at the right level for pupils of different abilities by making better use of information from checks made on pupils' progress
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - giving pupils time to work on their own
  - ensuring that any poor behaviour is tackled swiftly and effectively so that it does not hinder learning.
  
- Increase the impact of school's leaders on improving teaching and raising achievement by:
  - ensuring that the governing body holds the school fully to account for its work
  - ensuring that governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and its impact on the performance of pupils
  - ensuring that the whole-school approach to managing behaviour is implemented consistently
  - developing a clear analysis of the attainment and progress of all groups
  - evaluating the impact of the pupil premium funding on pupils' achievement
  - developing the role of the leaders responsible for subjects so they have the skills they need to improve teaching in their subjects.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 11 November 2013**

### **Evidence**

I met with you, the deputy headteacher, your subject leaders for physical education and science, a representative from the local authority and seven governors, including your Chair and Vice Chair. I scrutinised your school development plan, achievement data, minutes of governing body meetings, records of your monitoring of teaching and monitoring reports by the local authority. We observed teaching jointly and looked at the quality of pupils' work in their books. During my visit, your Year 6 pupils were away on your annual residential trip.

### **Context**

Since March 2012, the interim headteacher has left the school and a new executive headteacher and headteacher have been appointed. In September, three new teachers joined the school including two newly qualified teachers. There is one vacancy on the governing body.

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

You and your senior leaders are providing an ambitious vision for the school to become a good school. You are securing improvement in the whole-school approach to managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to improve their learning by responding to comments in their books. Senior leaders, advisors from the local authority and senior leaders from your Catholic partner schools are working well as a team to plan and deliver training sessions to help teachers with their planning and teaching. The whole-school improvement plan includes actions to address each area for improvement and you are continually refining success criteria and milestones to make certain that challenging targets are met.

Several subject leaders are new to their role since September. Leaders for physical education and science feel well supported by the senior leadership team and you are helping them to complete their subject action plans, currently in draft format. Your subject leaders are very keen to lead whole-school developments and they are benefitting from seeing how middle leaders work in other schools. Even so, their roles in leading teaching and embedding better practice in PE and science have not yet shown sufficient impact in improving these areas quickly enough.

The governing body has responded well to the findings from my previous monitoring visit. Governors have audited their knowledge and skills so that they can be more strategic in selecting which training courses to attend to meet their needs. Governors are more demanding in questioning reports from senior leaders and are testing out how quickly pupils' progress is improving. There is a sharper focus on the

performance of different pupil groups and a better understanding of why gaps in pupils' achievement must close to ensure the school exceeds national expectations. Governors are working effectively with consultants from the local authority and Diocese. The focus group monitoring meetings are robust and test how quickly the school is improving. Governors set demanding targets for the headteacher and are starting to ask how well other leaders are addressing the key areas for improvement. Nevertheless, they are not fully secure in judging the typicality of teaching over time, using the current Ofsted criteria for teaching and behaviour and safety.

Governors are developing their understanding of the impact of the pupil premium funding and analysing this with senior leaders. They and senior leaders need to tighten up the explicit recording of how different amounts of the funding are allocated and draw closer links between staff performance and the achievement of pupils who benefit from this funding.

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

- Senior leaders are using information on pupils' achievement with teachers more often to tease out how well teachers plan for the progress of learners in their classes. This is giving staff a clear message about expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. There are robust discussions in pupil progress meetings and teachers are given challenging targets to raise pupils' achievement.
- Achievement by the end of Year 6 is improving. In 2013, a higher proportion of pupils made good progress in English and mathematics than in 2012. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national average and more pupils attained Level 5 in writing and mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers are communicating higher expectations of pupils' behaviour and teachers are using the whole-school behaviour policy consistently. As a result, behaviour is improving in lessons and conduct around the school is much better. Pupils behaved very well coming into their Remembrance Day assembly and during the assembly behaved respectfully during silent reflection time.
- Governors have taken the mantle and are rising to the challenge of being much more demanding and insightful about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching over time. Great strides are being made but governors are aware that they need to be crystal clear in their analysis of the impact of pupil premium funding.
- The whole-school environment is much improved. Classrooms are vibrant, with more pupil work on display, more resources to promote literacy and numeracy in classes and along the corridors and rooms are more organised and conducive to good learning.

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

- In 2013, pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 in mathematics declined and fewer pupils achieved well in reading and writing.
- There is less teaching that is inadequate but teaching throughout the school remains inconsistent. Not all teaching is meeting the needs of pupils in lessons and over time.
- Gaps in pupils' achievement are starting to close and leaders are providing additional support for pupils who are not making sufficient progress. The information about pupils who are in the challenge group is monitored carefully but teachers are not using this well enough to set work at different levels for these pupils. More able pupils do not always receive harder work quickly enough in lessons.
- The quality and frequency of marking is variable. In some classes, pupils respond to teachers' comments and improve their work but others do not.
- The work of subject leaders is not securing improvement quickly enough. They are enthusiastic and committed leaders who are carefully reviewing how to improve the subjects for which they are responsible, but the action plans are taking too long to put in place.

## **External support**

The local authority and Diocese have taken much more strategic action since the first monitoring visit to make certain that leadership of the school is secure. The work of the executive headteacher from St John Fisher Catholic Primary School is effective in bringing about a more strategic approach to whole-school improvement planning and this is complementing the work of the local authority advisors. The regular focus group meetings are providing high levels of challenge to senior leaders and there is no complacency. The local authority and Diocese are aware that critical to the success of the school is a much higher proportion of consistently good teaching.