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18 November 2013

Mr Stephen Barrand  
Headteacher  
St Jude's Catholic Primary School Wigan  
Worsley Mesnes Drive  
Worsley Mesnes  
Wigan  
Lancashire  
WN3 5AN

Dear Mr Barrand

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Jude's Catholic Primary School Wigan, Wigan**

Following my visit to your school on 15 November 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 September 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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

- Revise the action plan to include measurable milestones that allow the governing body to check how the plan is working during the year.
- Ensure the curriculum committee meets at points in the year which will allow it to make timely checks on pupil progress and evaluate how well the school is doing.

**Evidence**

During the visit, I held meetings with you, senior leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority and Archdiocese of Liverpool to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school's action plan was evaluated and other documents relating to school improvement were checked. We visited lessons to look at some of the changes implemented since the inspection.

**Context**

Since the inspection, an additional member of staff has been appointed to support the delivery of PE and to deliver afterschool sports coaching.

## **Main findings**

The Headteacher and Governors have accepted the judgements from the last inspection and have taken prompt action to address the areas for improvement. The school's action plan builds upon the work started last year and addresses the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection. It contains long term targets but milestones are not measurable so that senior leaders can assess and make regular checks on progress.

You are working hard to improve teaching and provide continuity and consistency. For instance, action has been taken in Key Stage 1 to minimise the effect of long term absence on the quality of teaching and learning and pupil progress. The work of a Specialist Leader in Education is helping to improve the teaching of phonics and spelling, grammar and punctuation. By working together in small groups, teachers are more able to share and develop good practice in teaching. This has led to improvements in the matching of tasks to meet the learning needs of pupils, in particular the more able. Partnerships with other schools are supporting improvements in teaching and learning in English and mathematics. Teachers have visited these schools to observe good and outstanding practice. This has led to them providing increased opportunities for pupils to learn more independently. Support staff have been deployed to make best use of their skills and expertise. This is having positive impact on the progress pupils make in phonics in Year 2.

You are being well supported by the National Leader in Education and a headteacher from a neighbouring school. Through this, leaders have reviewed and developed the way in which staff track and record pupil's progress. The system is being used to plan appropriate support for pupils and record its impact on their learning, although this at an early stage of implementation. Senior leaders and Governors recognise the importance of using this tracking system to address underperformance, especially the more able and those in receipt of pupil premium funding.

The governing body acted quickly following the inspection and have recently completed the external review of governance identified in the inspection report. They set up training in the use of data to allow them check how the school is improving and hold senior leaders to account. They are also seeking other governing bodies to visit and learn from. This should be treated as a matter of priority.

Currently it is the curriculum committee's responsibility for monitoring school effectiveness against the action plan. However, they do not make best use of information available from the school's half termly pupil assessments.

## **External support**

The Local Authority is providing appropriate and effective support through the work of a National Leader in Education and Specialist Leader in Education.  
An external review of governance has been completed

The Archdiocese of Liverpool is aware of the school's needs and is working closely with the Local Authority to target support where it is appropriate.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Wigan and the Archdiocese of Liverpool and as below.

Yours sincerely

John Nixon

**Her Majesty's Inspector**