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14 March 2014

Louise Blair  
Headteacher  
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Corby  
Patrick Road  
Corby  
NN18 9NT

Dear Mrs Blair

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Corby**

Following my visit to your school on 13 March 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. 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 January 2014. 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.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, meetings were held with you and the deputy headteacher, three other members of staff with leadership responsibilities, and with the Chair of the Governing Body to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I visited all classrooms briefly and held discussions with some pupils. I read information sent to me by a representative of the local authority. The school improvement plan was evaluated. I scrutinised other documents, including records of observations carried out by leaders at the school, data on the progress of the pupils, and a report summarising the outcomes of an external review of governance.

## **Main findings**

You responded very promptly to the outcomes of the inspection. You focused unequivocally on the key issues relating to the quality of teaching and took action immediately. You and other leaders at the school have a clear and common understanding of the priorities for improvement, as indeed did the Year 6 pupils with whom I spoke.

Your work has been assisted by amendments that you made to the school improvement plan. The plan shows clearly how you are tackling the areas for improvement from the inspection. You are working systematically through the issues from the inspection. Several important improvements have been made already.

Within a week of the inspection, you put in place a completely revised curriculum for science. The result has been a significant increase in the opportunities for the pupils to learn about science. These opportunities have resulted in more-interesting and more-engaging lessons for the pupils.

You have taken effective action to ensure that the pupils are improving their use and understanding of mathematical vocabulary. The pupils were keen to show me the mathematical dictionaries you have purchased and explained how they use them in lessons, along with 'learning walls' and other displays that assist them with grammar and vocabulary. Training provided already for the teachers is leading to improvements in the teaching of grammar.

The pupils are very aware of the increased emphasis you have placed on reading. It was clear that the range of strategies you have introduced since the inspection is ensuring that they read more widely and are keen to do so. There are early indications in the data you have on the pupils' reading ages that the strategies are improving their reading skills.

You have changed the structure of responsibilities at the school, so that better use is being made of subject expertise. The members of staff with leadership responsibilities have been motivated well by the recent training and development opportunities which have been provided. The training has increased their skills and, as a result, they are already carrying out their responsibilities more effectively, for example in checking on the progress in improving the quality of teaching.

Governance has been strengthened by the recruitment of some new members. The external review of governance has been completed. The governing body is scheduled to meet next Monday to consider the report and agree an action plan. A further external review of the school's use of the pupil premium (additional funding from the government) is scheduled to take place shortly.

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**

The school has benefited from support by the local authority. For example, the support has assisted senior leaders at the school in gaining a sharp and accurate view of the priorities for improvement. A link has been arranged with a teaching school and a national leader of education, although the practical work from this link has not begun. Expert training, for example on the teaching of grammar, has supported improvements in the quality of teaching.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire and the Director of Education for the Luton Diocese.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**