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23 May 2014

Lavinia Spong  
Interim Headteacher  
Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School  
173 Pampisford Road  
South Croydon  
CR2 6DF

Dear Ms Spong

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of Regina Coeli Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit with Teresa Davies, Additional Inspector to your school, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the findings. Thank you for the time you made available to discuss the actions taken since the school's previous monitoring visit.

This was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures in September 2013. The areas for improvement are set out in the annex to this letter. I am of the opinion that:

The school is making reasonable progress toward the removal of special measures.

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

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website. I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Croydon and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark.

Yours sincerely

Ann Debono  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## Annex

### The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in September 2013

- **Improve the achievement of pupils and increase the proportion of teaching that is consistently good and outstanding by making sure that all teachers:**
  - have consistently high expectations for pupils' behaviour and the work pupils produce
  - use assessment information to plan work at the right level for different groups of pupils and provide an appropriate level of challenge throughout each lesson
  - teach lessons at the right pace, motivate pupils to do well and encourage them to have positive attitudes to learning
  - provide high-quality marking and feedback that consistently supports pupils' learning
  
- **Strengthen the capacity of leadership and management at all levels to promote improvement by ensuring that leaders and governors:**
  - implement the recommendations in the recent review of governance so that governors challenge leaders effectively and support the school to improve
  - ensure that resources, including the pupil premium, are used effectively
  - establish rigorous and accurate monitoring of all aspects of the school's work to inform the school's self-evaluation and planning for improvement
  - establish effective procedures to manage the performance of staff so that all teachers and teaching assistants are accountable for improving teaching and learning
  - link their judgements on the quality of teaching seen in lessons more closely with pupils' progress and attainment
  - work more effectively with teachers to improve the quality of teaching by sharing good practice and meeting their professional development needs.

## **Report on the second monitoring inspection on 21 and 22 May 2014**

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, meetings were held with the interim headteacher, school leaders, members of the interim executive board (IEB) and a representative of the local authority. Discussions were held with pupils, parents, and an adviser from the diocese. Inspectors visited all classes with a senior leader. Documentation was scrutinised, including pupils' work, data about pupils' achievement, records about safeguarding the monitoring of teaching, behaviour and attendance. The school improvement plan and the local authority statement of action were evaluated.

### **Context**

Since the previous monitoring visit an interim headteacher has been appointed from the partner school, St James the Great Roman Catholic Primary School. The deputy headteacher left at Easter and the inclusion leader has been appointed as interim deputy headteacher. The recent recruitment for a permanent headteacher was unsuccessful. Agency staff cover three classes in lower Key Stage 2.

### **Achievement of pupils at the school**

Pupils' achievement is inconsistent. The school's data about pupils' current progress and the assessment of pupils' work show stronger progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1 and upper Key Stage 2. In Year 3 and 4 progress remains inadequate. The system used to track pupils' achievement is giving leaders a more accurate overview of how well pupils are doing. Leaders' analysis of this information confirms inconsistent progress. Leaders are starting to take effective action to remedy remaining areas of weakness.

The meetings about pupils' progress lead to robust discussion between leaders and teachers about variations in the progress of different groups of pupils. There is a clear understanding about which pupils are falling behind. This achievement information, however, does not feature prominently enough in lesson plans to ensure that pupils' underperformance is immediately addressed. Leaders do not refer always to this achievement information when evaluating teaching over time. This means that some judgements about teachers work tend to be over-generous.

In Reception and Year 1, achievement data, children's work on display and individual records about children's ability show that most children make good progress in these classes. Ambitious targets were agreed with school and local authority for the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 tests in 2014. Leaders and teachers have worked hard to meet this challenge and secure better attainment for all pupils but the rates of progress for all pupils are not yet rapid enough to secure higher results.

Pupils' writing is weaker than their reading or mathematics work. Teachers now mark more regularly, but the quality of their feedback does not always challenge all pupils to meet their targets and move on quickly enough. Evenso, teachers are beginning to understand that pupils can deepen their understanding and progress quicker by involving pupils more in the next steps to improve their work.

## **The quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching remains inconsistent but there are signs of improvement in some teachers' expectations, pupils' attitudes to their learning and the challenge provided to pupils of different abilities in English and mathematics. These positive improvements link directly to the rates of pupil progress across school; where teaching is stronger, achievement is improving and expectations are higher.

Teaching is good when adults assess learning by observing and questioning pupils, when they mark work regularly and use this evidence to plan meaningful learning activities. For example, in the Reception classes an adult skilfully developed children's outdoor learning with bread crates into counting how many could fit into their imaginary house. In Year 1 children confidently explored measuring through practical tasks at different levels. Good challenge was evident in Year 6. Pupils applied their knowledge of time, using timetables to plan activities for their forthcoming residential school trip.

Teaching is less effective in Year 2, 3 and 4. Leaders are tackling weaknesses through intensive professional development and frequent monitoring of teachers' work. The executive headteacher is brokering support from local Catholic schools to develop better teaching. Teachers visit these schools to observe really good practice, and outstanding practitioners work alongside those teachers who need support. This is having beginning to improve teaching but for some teachers the new demands are too high. Staff turnover is inhibiting the drive to improve teaching in the short term.

In some classes, teaching assistants provide good support for pupils particularly in small group work. This helps pupils improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. The teaching of letters and sounds is effective; most interventions led by additional adults are improving achievement in spelling. In other classes teaching assistants are not sure exactly what they are doing to help pupils and they are less confident. Leaders have correctly identified appropriate performance management targets for these staff. Additionally, three new teaching assistants have been appointed in Year 2, 3 and 4 but are yet to benefit from focused induction to help them understand their role.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour in most lessons is good. When learning interests pupils, they work hard to complete their tasks. Leaders reward positive attitudes through new initiatives such as star of the week and as a result low level disruption in lessons is reducing. During an unplanned fire drill pupils behaved in a calm and orderly manner throughout the evacuation of the school.

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They think that behaviour has improved since the new headteacher started in January. Year 6 pupils take responsibility as monitors; younger children are helped to make friends through the 'Friendship Stop' in the playground. The incident books record bullying and poor behaviour but there is no recorded evidence that these are regularly monitored and or followed up by phase leaders.

The interim executive board are updating safeguarding and child protection policies. The local authority's review of safeguarding confirms that safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Leaders monitor the wellbeing of vulnerable pupils effectively.

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

Since the last monitoring inspection the interim headteacher and interim executive board have begun to improve the school's overall effectiveness.

The interim headteacher, although inexperienced in this role, shows tenacity and determination to tackle significant school improvement issues. Senior leaders are tackling inadequate practice through a combination of increased monitoring and staff development. Some teachers who were struggling have now improved. Systems for communicating with parents are improving and the website is updated regularly to help parents understand the actions leaders are taking to improve the school. A new parent's forum has been introduced and senior leaders are much more accessible to parents for example on the school gate each morning.

Leaders are addressing day-to-day matters in the school so that it functions more effectively. The interim headteacher is working with the interim executive board to secure better leadership capacity in the long term. Currently the programme of monitoring and evaluation linked to the school action plan is hindered by the lack of experience of some staff and leaders.

The interim executive board has a detailed understanding of areas needing rapid improvement. The board has developed effective ways to check how quickly the school is improving. Board members know the right priorities to tackle in the programme of school improvement. They show a strong commitment to fulfil their roles and responsibilities to improve the school urgently. They are reducing the

backlog of work to make sure that all statutory requirements are in place for governance and safeguarding.

### **External support**

The local authority and diocese hold regular review meetings to check the work of the school. The time frames and exact level of support provided by the executive headteacher, local authority and diocese is unclear in the school improvement plan or local authority statement of action. Leaders recognise that additional support is needed quickly to help all leaders lead change at a faster rate.

The plans for the future of the school are unclear given the difficulty in recruiting a permanent headteacher. The interim executive board, the local authority and the diocese appreciate the need to consider future options and solutions to this situation as a matter of urgency.