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Mrs Alison Toward  
Headteacher  
Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School  
Rosecroft Lane  
Loftus  
Saltburn-By-the-Sea  
North Yorkshire  
TS13 4PZ

Dear Mrs Toward

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Saint Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School, Redcar and Cleveland**

Following my visit to your school on 14 July 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection 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 March 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. The school should take further action to:

- ensure there is a thorough induction and support programme in place for new teachers joining the school in September, so that they quickly work to the expectations set out in school policies
- check that teaching in all classes provides sufficient stretch and challenge for the most able pupils
- establish stronger procedures to check on the impact of additional support programmes for pupils making slower progress, so that leaders and governors know which programmes work well and which are less effective.

## **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. You accompanied me on a tour of the school to observe the learning environment, pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. I evaluated the school's plans for improvement and scrutinised a range of other documents, including records of governing body meetings, checks on the quality of teaching and assessment data. I also took account of recent reviews of teaching undertaken by external partners.

## **Context**

Since the inspection there have been no changes in staffing, although three teachers will leave the school at the end of the summer term. Three new appointments have been made to fill their posts from September 2014. The school has begun to work in partnership with a Local Leader of Education, who is the headteacher of Lockwood Primary School, and continues to work with other schools within the catholic academy trust. The school intends to convert to become an academy in October 2014.

## **Main findings**

The outcome of the previous inspection was a shock to everyone in the school and staff morale was adversely affected. Much work has been done to address this, and members of staff are now more positive about the work that needs to be done. You have put in place appropriate plans to address the areas for improvement. Your plans include milestones that set out what should be achieved at key points over the next year, and these will help governors to determine whether the school is on course to become a good school. You have successfully raised expectations and put in place good support to address weaker teaching. You also recognise, that in order to ensure all teaching is of a good quality, new members of staff will need high quality induction and support when they join the school in September.

Much support has already been provided for teaching that requires improvement. The deputy headteacher has provided support with lesson planning, so that teachers now take more account of the learning needs of pupils of different abilities. Some teachers have also had the opportunity to observe outstanding teaching in other schools. In addition, training has been provided on the features of outstanding lessons. Evidence from external reviews of teaching in June and July shows some teachers have responded positively and their teaching has improved, but in some classes the work provided still does not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently.

You have effective systems in place to assess pupils' progress and you review the data each half-term. You use this data to determine which pupils are in need of

additional support, to help them address gaps in reading, writing or mathematics. Whilst you provide a wide range of additional support programmes, you do not evaluate the impact of these programmes sufficiently rigorously to know which work well and which are less effective. You now track the progress of different groups of pupils more carefully. For example, leaders and governors have improved the way they check on how the pupil premium is spent and are developing better systems to know whether the funding is being effective in narrowing attainment gaps. Current data shows the gap between the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium and their peers is narrowing in some classes, but widening in others.

The governing body continues to be very supportive of school leaders and is ambitious for the school. Governors have recently established a committee that is focused on school improvement. The remit of the committee is to evaluate the impact of the school's improvement plan and to review pupil progress data. The governing body is therefore better placed to be able to assess for themselves whether the school is on course to become a good school. The external review of governance has not yet taken place, but is planned for September.

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**

Like the school, the local authority did not expect the school to be judged to require improvement and has subsequently increased the level of support. The local authority representative linked to the school has provided support to write the school improvement plan, and appropriate training for staff on the characteristics of good teaching. In addition, the local authority has brokered a partnership with a Local Leader of Education. Although this partnership is at an early stage, The Local Leader of Education has already contributed to your self-evaluation through an external review of teaching. This has helped to pin-point some aspects of teaching that require further development. There are also plans for teachers from your school to visit and observe good and outstanding teaching at Lockwood Primary School.

The local authority has also made arrangements for the external review of governance to take place. The review needs to look at all aspects of governance, including the use of the pupil premium, and result in an action-plan setting out how governance will be strengthened in the year ahead.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Redcar and Cleveland.

Yours sincerely

Chris Smith  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

The letter should be copied to the following:

- Appropriate authority - Chair of the Governing Body/Interim Executive Board
- Local authority – including where the school is an academy
- Contractor providing support services on behalf of the local authority - where appropriate
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school has a sixth form
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- The person or body responsible for appointing foundation governors if the school has a foundation
- DfE - Academies Advisers Unit [[open.FREESCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:open.FREESCHOOLS@education.gsi.gov.uk)] - for academies, free schools, UTCs and studio schools
- The Education Funding Agency (EFA) if the school is a non-maintained special school [[hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hns.efa@education.gsi.gov.uk)]