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23 March 2015

Helen White  
Saint Peters Catholic Primary School  
Mill Lane  
Earl Shilton  
Leicester  
LE9 7AW

Dear Mrs White

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Saint Peters Catholic Primary School, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire**

Following my visit to your school on 20 March 2015, 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 November 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 that the school's improvement plan fully identifies:

- which actions are to be taken and when
- clear, measurable, success criteria for all actions
- who will monitor and evaluate the impact of actions and when
- how and when governors will check actions are accomplished and evaluate the impact.

**Evidence**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you and the other members of the school's senior leadership team. I spoke with the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority school improvement partner. I visited all classrooms, held discussions with pupils and looked at some of their books and other work. I evaluated the school's improvement and action plans and the school's literacy,

numeracy and early years' provision plans. I examined an additional range of documents including a self-evaluation report prepared by the school, records of performance management meetings and the minutes of governing body meetings held since the last inspection. I scrutinised attainment and progress data.

## **Context**

Since the last inspection the cover for two teachers on maternity leave has continued to be provided by temporary teachers. This will end in April 2015 when the school's permanent teachers return to take up their posts. One of these teachers will also resume leadership of the school's early years provision. The diocese is currently reviewing the structure of the school's governing body.

## **Main findings**

You and your leadership team, including governors, have responded well to the judgements of the last inspection and are now acting quickly to address issues raised. There has been a short period of reflection and consideration for leaders, followed swiftly by an urgent determination to effect changes where needed. There is clear evidence that actions being taken are having a positive impact on school improvement.

Your school improvement plan now has an additional post-Ofsted action plan and includes the necessary actions to bring about the changes and improvements needed. However, there are sections when it is not made clear who will lead actions and when some of these actions will take place. It is not always clear who will monitor and evaluate the impact and when this will be completed. In some places success criteria do not always include measurable targets, for example raising achievement in spelling and writing.

Leaders have rightly focused on improving progress in English. You identified quickly that the school's writing scheme provided limited learning opportunities for the more able pupils and addressed this immediately. Teachers now use it as a resource but adapt it carefully to match the learning needs of pupils. Leaders have introduced a new tracking system to record and monitor pupils' progress in phonics. This is ensuring that teachers are now held to account in the regular meetings that are held to discuss pupils' progress. The progress data is also enabling leaders and teachers to identify and act swiftly when pupils need additional support. Leaders have provided additional training for all staff to support pupils' phonics skills in order to ensure that support provided is of a consistently high quality. You have introduced a whole school approach to teaching spelling and are now tracking and monitoring the impact of this. Pupils excitedly showed me their work and how their spelling skills are improving much more quickly. Older pupils like having the new spelling tests 'because they are really challenging'. Early indications are that actions are having a positive impact on pupils' progress. You rightly understand the need to carefully

monitor the impact of all interventions and are currently recruiting for additional staff to support leaders' capacity for this.

There is evidence that most teachers have increasingly high expectations of pupils. Pupils told me that they are now 'expected to fly' in their learning and that teachers expect their work to be neatly written 'much more than before'. Pupils proudly showed me how much their handwriting and the presentation of their work had improved recently. This is reinforced in the large number of displays of pupils' work throughout the school. Pupils were also very keen to show me their new 'learning logs' which they use to complete work at home. They like these because they are better organised which helps them to complete the work. Homework tasks are now short, sharper tasks and provide additional activities to support deeper learning for the more able pupils. Leaders, including governors, must ensure that all staff share and maintain consistently high expectations for pupils. You know this and are planning a monitoring schedule which includes regular, focused scrutinising of pupils work and a close monitoring of teachers' planning for learning activities.

Leaders have begun to revise the performance management arrangements for staff so that measurable targets are set for teachers which are closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement. Some of the revised targets need to be refined further and the process must now be completed quickly and with the involvement of the governing body.

Governors are well organised and have a firmly established ethos of 'no excuses'. They have responded promptly and effectively to the previous inspection report. Governors have identified quickly where information needs to be presented in greater detail so that they can fully hold leaders to account, for example progress information about children's development in the early years. They have audited support staff skills and knowledge to ensure that staff are deployed effectively and training needs identified. There is extensive evidence that they challenge and question school leaders about all aspects of the school's performance and that this has increased further since the previous inspection.

You are concerned that the current review of the governing body carried out by the local diocese may lead to a restructuring. This upheaval may impact negatively on the capacity of the school to improve at this critical time. I share these concerns.

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**

You are receiving extensive support from the local authority which includes practical advice, a programme of professional development for staff and partnership support from good and outstanding schools. School leaders are receiving leadership development support. The school's early years team are working closely with the

local authority early years' advisor. You are taking full advantage of all of the support being offered and there is clear evidence that this is having a positive impact on the pace and quality of the school's improvement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Nottingham.

Yours sincerely

Karen Gannon  
**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
- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools