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Mrs Jo Anderson  
Saint Francis Catholic Primary School  
Dalby Road  
Melton Mowbray  
Leicestershire  
LE13 0BP

Dear Mrs Anderson

**Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to St Francis Catholic Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 29 September 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 March 2015. 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 in order to become a good school.

**Evidence**

During the inspection, I met with you and other senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority, to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. The school action planning was evaluated. I made short visits to lessons with the deputy headteacher and observed learning within Year 6, Year 5 and Year 3 classes. We also saw a small-group intervention session. Together, we reviewed achievement information.

## **Context**

Since the section 5 inspection, you have conducted a review of the leadership team. A deputy headteacher, Key Stage 1 lead and Key Stage 2 lead are now in post. The Chair of the Governing Body, new to the role when the school was inspected, has reviewed the committee structure so that there are more regular opportunities for governors to review pupils' progress. Members of the governing body now have an appropriate range of knowledge and expertise to hold leaders to account.

## **Main findings**

Leaders have put in place an appropriate plan of action to address the areas identified by the recent section 5 inspection. You have sharpened the way in which teaching quality is monitored – learning walks are a regular feature, as is the scrutiny of pupils' work. Training for teachers has focused on whole-school priorities, for example improving the accuracy of assessment by conducting external moderation with partner schools. In addition, individual teachers have been given targeted support to help them improve their practice. This approach has ensured that teachers are aware of the things that need to improve. Teachers are also aware of the support and training that they will receive. You said that training and the ways in which teachers are now held to account is coherent and that all staff are clear of your expectations of them.

The systems to manage behaviour have been reviewed and a new behaviour policy is in place. The pupils I met during the visit were polite, courteous and happy to talk with me about their learning.

We discussed the importance of ensuring that the policies accessed via the school website are the most up-to-date versions.

You have adopted a new method of tracking and analysing the achievement of pupils. Previously, you conducted termly meetings with teachers to discuss the progress of pupils within their class; you now conduct these meetings every half term because you want to check progress more regularly. Assessment is more accurate and the way in which the transition of pupils is managed as they move through the school is more effective. However, the way in which achievement information is used to plan learning is not precise enough. Some pupils are not making the progress they should and planning for learning is not sufficiently focused.

You and the Chair of the Governing Body spoke candidly about the 'legacy of underperformance' that you are still working to address in Key Stage 2, particularly relating to the quality of teaching and achievement in mathematics. We discussed the urgency required from leaders and the governing body in making sure that any

gaps in learning are accurately addressed so that pupils make the progress they should from their different starting points.

You recognise that although members of your leadership team are highly skilled, they are relatively inexperienced. You recognise that they have a critical role in making sure that planned improvements take place rapidly and that teachers are supported and held to account to make sure this happens. These new leaders require mentoring, support and training. We discussed the ways in which the local authority and partnership links could support this.

The governing body continues to provide extensive support to the school. The Chair of the Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the school becomes a good school at the next section 5 inspection. He is aware of the pace of improvement that is required. Governors are skilled and are not afraid to challenge leaders to make sure that they are focusing on the right things. Information presented to governors is too complex and needs refining. The Chair of the Governing body agreed that a review of governance would be a helpful process.

### **External support**

The school has links with the Melton cluster of schools, the Leicestershire Education Excellence Partnership (LEEP) and The STEP Alliance Teaching School. Productive support has taken place, particularly relating to external moderation. An evaluation is needed so that leaders are aware of the impact the support is having.

The local authority provides advisory support. The adviser believes that the school is on the correct trajectory to become a good school and is aware of the challenges you still need to address. The local authority adviser said he would ensure that an external review of governance takes place.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Leicestershire local authority. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Ashman

**Her Majesty's Inspector**