

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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14 July 2017

Mrs Linda Emmett  
Headteacher  
All Saints Catholic College  
Birch Lane  
Dukinfield  
Cheshire  
SK16 5AP

Dear Mrs Emmett

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of All Saints Catholic College**

Following my visit to your school on 27 and 28 June 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help that you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the third monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in February 2016. The full list of the areas for improvement that were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

#### **Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.**

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that the school may appoint newly qualified teachers.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of schools for the Diocese of Shrewsbury, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Tameside. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Smart  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Annex**

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in February 2016.**

- Ensure that leaders, and the newly reconstructed governing body, build urgently on the initial systems put in place to improve the school, so that the quality of teaching and behaviour of pupils is at least good across all year groups, by making sure that:
  - leaders at all levels bring about swiftly the necessary improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and behaviour in classrooms and around the school
  - the use and the impact of the pupil premium and extra literacy support for weaker readers in Year 7 is sharply monitored, in order that it improves the progress of those pupils whom it is intended to support
  - subject leaders are effectively trained and supported in quickly overcoming the legacy of weak teaching and poor behaviour in lessons and around the school
  - leaders in charge of improving attendance intensify their work with families to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent, especially in Years 10 and 11
  - parents and pupils feel well informed about changes in a timely fashion and have the opportunity to express their views.
- Urgently improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics and the sciences, by:
  - raising the expectations that teachers have of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able pupils, so that they provide challenging and engaging activities in lessons and in homework
  - ensuring that teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' progress, set accurate targets and use the information in their planning to speed up pupils' progress
  - making certain that teachers mark pupils' work according to the school's marking policy, so that pupils receive the guidance they need to improve the standard of their work
  - insisting that pupils' skills in writing at length are of the highest quality across all subjects.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are not missed, by careful planning across subjects.

## **Report on the third monitoring inspection on 27 June and 28 June 2017**

### **Evidence**

During the inspection, meetings were held with the executive headteacher, headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, parents, members of the governing body, trust directors and the director of schools for the Diocese of Shrewsbury. In addition, formal and informal discussions were held with a range of pupils across both key stages.

As part of the inspection, the inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, moving to and from lessons and during break and lunchtime. Additionally, the inspector jointly observed teaching and learning across a wide range of subjects. Alongside leaders and middle leaders, a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work was undertaken. A range of documentation was also examined. This included the school's rapid improvement plans, safeguarding information, attendance information, behaviour records and documentation relating to teaching, learning and assessment.

### **Context**

Leaders are unrelenting in their pursuit of excellence for the pupils at All Saints Catholic College. Pupils, parents and staff are now proud of their school. This is clearly visible in the newly reformed parent teacher association. This group of parents is determined to support leaders in their work to overhaul standards. The school's pupils have also elected a pupil leadership team. They are charged with assisting the headteacher to drive further improvements from the ground up. Added to this, the school's reputation in the local community has changed for the better. It is clear that more parents believe in the school's leadership and recognise its potential to bring about positive change. In September 2017, a record 140 pupils will be admitted to Year 7. This is a significant increase on previous years.

Since the previous monitoring visit, governance has been strengthened further. This is to increase accountability. A new governor with expertise in finance has taken up office and an additional staff governor has been elected to serve on the governing body. Added to this, there have been relatively few changes to staffing. This is because staff morale is high. The use of temporary teachers, due to staff absence, has been all but eradicated.

Since the previous inspection, the Diocese of Shrewsbury has undertaken a section 48 inspection to report on the denominational education of the school.

### **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

The quality of leadership and management right across the school continues to grow from strength to strength. Under the direction of the headteacher, leaders in

all areas accept the vision that only ethical and sustainable leadership will do. This is clearly based on the premise that pupils must thrive at All Saints Catholic College. It is also underpinned by a keen desire to ensure that every change and every initiative is fully embedded. This is so that strategic changes make a long-term difference to the pupils and are not quick fixes. The leadership team also recognises the valuable contribution that the newly established team of dedicated, hard-working and unquestionably passionate staff make to the pupils of the school. Leaders have built a school from scratch. As a direct result of this, all staff know, understand and embrace the core purpose of this school. They are determined that their pupils will be examples of the school's mantra to 'be inspired, be excellent and succeed'.

The executive headteacher continues to support the headteacher to realise this mantra. Together, they have strong focus on strengthening further leadership across the school. The partnership between the executive headteacher and headteacher is built on a strong set of principles and values. Both leaders entered into the school when it was at its lowest point. Their commitment, dedication and determination have lifted the community to a new era of continuous success. Strong improvements have been made, for example, to pupils' behaviour and pupils' attendance. Outcomes for current pupils have also improved because of a higher standard of teaching, learning and assessment. The executive headteacher and headteacher have both led by example and are strong role models.

Senior leaders are also role models. They are inspired by the work of the headteacher and executive headteacher. So strong is the rate of improvement that senior staff have undertaken that other headteachers from around the country have visited the school to see the positive effect of their work. Other schools now receive the benefit of their wealth of experience. The headteacher has invested heavily to ensure that her senior team have access to quality ongoing professional training. The effect of this is that her team is highly competent, unified and unremitting in its pursuit to drive up standards with enthusiasm.

In addition to senior leaders, other staff are equally developed at all levels. Leaders and teachers are empowered to make a difference. Leaders' rapid improvement plans are a clear example of how leaders at all levels drive significant change. Rapid improvement plans have a sharp and precise focus. Key improvement priorities, for example pupil leadership, raising pupil aspirations, raising the attainment of Year 8 disadvantaged boys and problem-solving in mathematics have clear, quantifiable measures of success. Staff meetings, staff training days and the daily activities undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the school provide plentiful opportunities to measure and celebrate success. No stone is left unturned. That is why, since the last monitoring visit in March 2017, leaders, teachers and other staff in this school have maintained a rapid rate of improvement. For this they must be congratulated.

The governing body, the trust directors and the diocese also play a crucially

important role in holding leaders to account in this school. The governing body is outward-facing and knowledgeable, and stringently holds leaders to account for the quality and the impact of their work. This year, the governing body has expanded its capacity by strengthening further its monitoring and evaluation of the effect of spending on pupils' outcomes. A new member of the governing body has been appointed with additional financial expertise as the school is still subject to a financial notice to improve.

Middle leaders know that they are valued by senior leaders, governors and, most importantly, the school's pupils. They are driving up standards, for example to the quality of teaching and learning. Middle leaders are given a plethora of ongoing professional development opportunities to ensure that they can continue to grow into the very strongest leaders. They are now much more confident in holding teachers to account for pupils' progress. As a result, standards are much higher in Years 7 to 10. This is because the senior leadership team invests time in them. Middle leaders feel valued. They embrace change and undertake every aspect of their role with determination, integrity and courage. They are now very highly skilled practitioners.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Pupils talk knowledgeably about relevant issues, for example radicalisation and extremism. Those with protected characteristics, such as pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well cared for. Pupils are determined that everyone should be respected and loved for their unique gifts and their differences.

Partnerships with parents also continue to grow. Leaders remain steadfast in their commitment to re-engaging parents in their child's education. Communication between parents and teachers is much stronger. There does, however, remain a core group of parents who are still more reluctant to engage with the leadership team. This can have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress, for example when a very small minority of disadvantaged pupils are still reluctant to attend school more regularly. Parents sometimes do not wish to engage with school leaders to resolve the issue.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

Improvements to teaching and learning are at the heart of this school. The improvements that have been made since the previous monitoring visit are meritorious and praiseworthy. This is because of extremely strong leadership in this area. Enthusiasm for improving teaching, learning and assessment filters down from senior leaders into every classroom. As a result, there is a passion across the school to innovate and get it right for pupils. So impressive are the improvements to quality of teaching, learning and assessment that the school has been accredited by a local university to train new teachers to the profession despite being in special measures. That said, leaders know that the journey is ongoing. Now is the time to get consistently high-quality teaching to support learning across the school and

across key stages.

One way that leaders help teachers to achieve consistency is through the regular teaching and learning newsletter that is written for staff. This helps teachers to focus on what will have the most effect on improving pupils' progress. There is a regular focus on literacy development. Key areas for further improvement, for example stretch and challenge for the most able, also feature regularly. There is, however, still more work to do to ensure that teachers consistently plan lessons that meet the needs of the different groups of pupils in their classes, especially the most able.

Leaders recognise that teachers need support so that they use the information that they have about their pupils to plan more effectively for progress. This is especially the case for the most able pupils who do not yet make the progress of which they are capable. To address this concern, there are a number of action plans to focus specifically on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The 'novem' rapid improvement plan has been written to ensure that teachers receive training and support on how best to challenge the most able. The 'English as an additional language' (EAL) action plan focuses on helping teachers to ensure that EAL pupils make good or better progress in their learning. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is excellent.

The 'extended writing and literacy development' plan is further evidence of leaders' sharp focus on raising attainment. This effect of this plan is that most pupils now produce better quality written responses in their classwork. Teachers use carefully planned aids to ensure that pupils respond appropriately to examination-style questions. This is having a profound effect because pupils have developed in confidence and they know exactly what their teachers expect from them. The quality of written work has improved significantly since the previous monitoring visit. All staff see improving pupils' literacy as their responsibility.

Leaders and middle leaders have also secured more consistency in marking and feedback. They have also ensured that teachers' assessments of pupils' work are much more accurate. Without doubt, there is a more focused approach to ensuring that the school's policy is adhered to by teachers. Leaders recognise that they now must ensure that pupils are given further challenge questions where they get most of their work correct. Leaders also recognise that the level of work pupils now do is much harder and more thorough. This should be the standard that all teachers enforce right from the start in the new academic year.

During the inspection, there were some examples of very effective teaching, learning and assessment because pupils made strong progress. In history, pupils were fully engaged in mature discussions about 'Schindler's List'. In religious education and art, pupils made rapid progress because of high-quality planning, the teachers' secure subject knowledge and extremely high expectations. English remains a very strong department where pupils achieve extremely well. Pupils now

make better progress in mathematics and science.

Leaders recognise that to strengthen the quality of teaching further, they must focus on developing teachers' questioning skills. This is so that pupils deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding and so that misconceptions are addressed as they arise. Leaders also recognise the need to streamline teachers' approaches to how pupils redraft and improve their work. In English, pupils use special paper to complete their redrafting. This work is then clearly identifiable to pupils as their final piece on the topic. It is also an accurate source of information from which pupils can revise.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Pupils' behaviour across the school and in every classroom has improved beyond recognition. This is because leaders ensure that the school is calm, purposeful and welcoming. Pupils enjoy coming to school. This is clearly evident in improved attendance rates. For pupils in Years 7 to 10, their attendance is at the national average. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is now much better than the national average. This is a superb improvement and is inextricably linked to vastly improved teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders do acknowledge, however, that the next step is to raise further the attendance rates of disadvantaged pupils.

Another indicator of improved behaviour is the sharp reduction in the number of pupils who are temporarily excluded from school. The proportion of pupils who receive a temporary exclusion has halved since 2015. The number of pupils who are permanently excluded has declined by two thirds. During lessons, the number of calls made to senior staff to support teachers with pupils' behaviour has fallen dramatically. This is a major achievement. It is because the school is now built on purposeful, positive relationships. There is a culture of harmony, tolerance and respect.

A striking improvement in behaviour is how pupils now want to take responsibility for their school community. A new pupil leadership team is ably led by the school's head boy and head girl. In each year group, pupils have elected their representatives to ensure that pupil voice is a key driver for further improvement. When asked about the purpose of the group, pupils explained how they want to be integral to building a strong community where everyone is valued. Pupils talked about how they wanted visitors to recognise All Saints Catholic College as an oasis of calm, underpinned by the value of human worth. This is spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in action. Pupils have high expectations of their school and each other. They are now becoming truly aspirational.

A further way that leaders are determined to build on pupils' enthusiasm for their education is through high-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance. From Year 7, pupils are engaged in visits to universities, colleges and

industry partners. Some pupils have been inspired by Cambridge University. Others know what they need to do to secure a place on their chosen course in more local universities. Fostering such aspiration, drive and determination at such a young age helps pupils to see the value of working hard and being successful at secondary school.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

Pupils' progress across the school is now much stronger. The quality of work that many pupils routinely produce is of a higher standard. It is increasingly more closely aligned to the standards expected nationally for pupils' different ages and stages. This is because leaders at all levels continuously and effectively monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders at all levels are regularly involved in reviewing the quality of pupils' work to share best practice and to improve outcomes for pupils. Pupils' progress in Year 7 is the most consistent. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress from their starting points.

Robust and effective monitoring processes enable leaders to be honest in their appraisal of what still needs to be done. Leaders are aware that across the school girls generally make stronger progress than boys. They know that they still have work to do to improve boys' progress. Leaders also recognise that where the best practice exists, for example in English, it is because of a relentless focus on high expectations. Teachers in English also plan consistently well for different ability groups within sets. They ooze passion for their subject. Across the wider school, however, leaders have not yet secured consistency across year groups. For example, in key stage 3 science, pupils can and should achieve more. To ensure that pupils make consistently good progress, teachers need to plan routinely for the different ability groups within their classes, including the most able.

In Year 10, there has been a notable improvement in pupils' progress. Leaders' own information shows that outcomes continue to move closer to the national average. There is robust evidence to support this view, not least in pupils' books. This is as a direct result of high-quality middle leadership. In science, the subject leader has secured much stronger progress in triple science by planning lessons that better meet the needs of pupils. In mathematics, pupils' reasoning skills continue to improve. Pupils' progress in religious education, art, business studies and design technology subjects is also good.

In Year 9, pupils' performance is particularly strong in English, science and religious education. In mathematics, leaders' assessment information shows that pupils still need more support and challenge to make more rapid and consistent progress. Notably in Year 9, the attainment gap between boys and girls is closing more rapidly than in other year groups.

Year 8 is the year group that still requires more focus. Leaders are aware of the gaps in knowledge, skills and understanding that need to be bridged. The issue is a



lack of challenge in some classes. Year 8 make the strongest progress in English, mathematics, computing, history, French and physical education.

Leaders also continue to be successful in diminishing the difference between disadvantaged pupils' progress and other pupils nationally. In Years 7 to 10, there is a strong focus on ensuring that barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils are removed. A detailed analysis of current disadvantaged pupils' work across the curriculum shows that significant progress is being made in this area. Most notably, a recent strategy to improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged boys in Year 8 has been very effective.

The use of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding is very effective. There is very strong evidence to show just how well pupils who enter the school below age-related expectations are helped to catch up. The success of these strategies is now being rolled out across other year groups in the school. Leaders in these areas are inspirational.

The library is the hub of the community. An increasing proportion of pupils are developing a love of reading. This is an invaluable improvement in preparation for the new GCSEs and assessments that pupils now face at the end of key stage 4. Improving pupils' literacy is fundamental to their success across the range of GCSEs that they study.

Despite a plethora of initiatives to drive up standards for the outgoing Year 11, outcomes are not likely to improve to above the government's minimum expected standard this year. This is because there were vast gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they entered into Year 11. Pupils in Year 11 have been failed by previous leaders and governors. In science, a whole course had not been delivered. Across a range of subjects, including English, pupils were taught by too many different temporary teachers. Undoubtedly, teaching in too many subjects, including mathematics, was inadequate. To compound the problem, Year 11 pupils' attendance was woefully low and understandably, for too many Year 11 pupils, their behaviour was not conducive to effective learning.

### **External support**

The leadership team continues to receive support from Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College, an outstanding school in Altrincham. Further partnerships have been brokered with other schools, for example in Bolton. The aim of these partnerships is to share best practice and develop successful and sustainable leadership. The headteacher continues to receive support, advice and guidance from a member of the Talented Leaders programme. The executive headteacher, who supports the leadership team on a part-time basis, is a national leader of education.