

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231  
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5 December 2023

John Pye  
Executive Headteacher  
Trinity Catholic School  
Guy's Cliffe Avenue  
Leamington Spa  
Warwickshire  
CV32 6NB

Dear Dr Pye

### **Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Trinity Catholic School**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on Wednesday 15 November 2023, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in January 2023.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's overall effectiveness, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Mel Ford, His Majesty's Inspector, and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the CEO of the multi-academy company (MAC), the director of education, the chair of the board of directors, the chair of the local governing body and other staff the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We also reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding information, spoke to pupils, visited lessons and reviewed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtime. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

**Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to be no longer judged as having serious weaknesses.**

**The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation**

The trust took strategic and highly effective action to restructure the school's leadership after the last inspection. As a result, there is now a strong and stable leadership team in place. You and the trust have high ambitions for the pupils and all who work in the school. You have worked closely with the trust to set challenging targets to achieve these ambitions. You, leaders and the trust are providing carefully targeted and bespoke support to enable the school community to move towards meeting those targets. This includes seeking advice and support from specialists outside the trust when required. You and your leaders have implemented key changes that have led to some significant improvements across the school, especially in behaviour, within a short amount of time. The trust actively seeks external validation of improvements to make sure that your evaluations are accurate. You, the trust and leaders have an accurate and extremely detailed understanding of the school's strengths and what needs to be further improved, such as pupils' attendance. The school development actions thus far have set strong and sustainable foundations on which to further improve the school.

Your leadership team has galvanised and brought together the staff who now work cohesively for the benefit of the pupils. You have stabilised staffing, and pupils speak very positively about the consistency of the teaching team now at the school. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working in the school and appreciate the support they receive to improve their practice. The professional development, support and coaching have been particularly successful in enabling staff to understand their roles and responsibilities and to carry them out with increasing confidence and expertise. Staff confirm that there is a culture of sharing professional practice in the school and across the trust. All staff feel that the improved communication with leaders, pupils and parents is helping to make their workload more manageable and, consequently, their well-being has improved.

Pupils' behaviour has transformed since the last inspection. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in classes and around the school. Warm, positive and respectful relationships between pupils and staff are clearly evident. You and your leaders have set high expectations for behaviour. You ensure that staff understand and consistently implement these expectations. This means that pupils now understand the rules and follow them. Without exception, every pupil we spoke to confirmed that behaviour has dramatically improved since the last inspection. Pupils are proud to be a member of the school community, and they enjoy coming to school. Pupils want to learn, and this was evident when we visited classes. You have ensured that the 'Refocus' room is used effectively to support pupils who, at times, have difficulty in managing their behaviour in class. Pupils are supported well in this provision, and it is helping them to regulate their behaviour and their return to lessons. The number of exclusions and suspensions has significantly reduced. The use of positive praise rewards is consistently high. We saw clear evidence to show that your actions to tackle poor behaviour have been highly successful.

You and your leaders have been tenacious in tackling poor attendance, including punctuality and truancy. The rates of punctuality have improved considerably, with the incidents of lateness halving. Nevertheless, leaders agree that the numbers are still too high. Leaders now have a more proactive approach to tackling poor attendance, and the

early intervention is helping to prevent significant declines in the attendance of some pupils. Leaders ensure that staff work closely with both pupils and families to identify the barriers to pupils attending school, providing targeted support, where needed, through a four-stage plan. Attendance plans are closely monitored, and staff escalate increasing concerns when more intensive support is needed to improve pupils' attendance. You and your leaders identified the need to employ a specialist to provide bespoke support to some pupils. This has been highly successful in re-engaging some pupils back into education. However, while your actions to improve attendance are carefully focused and well targeted, too many pupils still do not attend school regularly enough, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It will take more time to demonstrate that your actions are leading to sustained improvements in pupils' attendance.

You and the trust have provided significant support to develop the provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders have ensured that systems and processes are now clear. For example, pupil passports accurately identify pupils' needs. However, some staff are not using these plans to full effect to support pupils in class. This includes the way staff use resources to support pupils' learning. Leaders have ensured that there are effective identification and review processes in place, which in turn is supporting applications for external assessments when needed. Leaders are also working more closely with parents to ensure that they have a clear and shared understanding of their child's needs. While it is evident that the SEND provision has developed since the last inspection, leaders have identified, and have begun to tackle, the areas that need to further improve to ensure that there is a highly effective provision for pupils with SEND.

You, your leaders and staff have worked well to engage positively with parents. Parents feel more involved with the school and have much more positive views about the education their children are receiving. Complaints from parents have reduced significantly.

Leaders' review of safeguarding procedures and the subsequent changes made have further strengthened the arrangements to safeguard pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of directors, the CEO of the Our Lady of the Magnificat MAC, the director of education for the Archdiocese of Birmingham, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Warwickshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Ann Pritchard  
**His Majesty's Inspector**