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Mr Cornally  
Headteacher  
Blessed Thomas Holford Catholic College  
Urban Road  
Altrincham  
Cheshire  
WA15 8HT

Dear Mr Cornally

Ofsted 2008-09 survey inspection programme: good practice in the development of leadership skills and effectiveness

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 June 2009 to look at the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and in one of your partner schools.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence included: lesson observations, scrutiny of selected pieces of documentation and meetings with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, support staff leaders and a group of pupils. In addition, evidence was also used from my visit on 3 June 2009 to one of your partner schools.

#### Features of good practice

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders is outstanding. You have successfully created a common vision based upon shared leadership responsibility, high expectations and a relentless pursuit of excellence.
- Your strong interpersonal skills and high level of emotional intelligence enable you to recognise leadership potential, instil confidence and motivate people to develop their skills.
- Leaders at all levels feel trusted and empowered to make decisions.
- Staff and pupils feel highly valued for the leadership contributions they make to the work of the school.

- There are many opportunities for all staff, regardless of age or experience, to develop their leadership skills through external courses and the school's own programmes.
- Teamwork and support are strengths of the school.
- The achievement and well-being of all pupils are firmly at the centre of all decisions made and actions taken.
- High quality leadership skills have enabled the school to play a very effective role in the development of leadership in other schools.

#### Area for development

- Expand the leadership capacity to meet the increasing demands of the school's outreach work with the Greater Manchester Challenge.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your work in this area.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers  
Her Majesty's Inspector