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Nichola Day
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Dear Mrs Day

Monitoring inspection of a school not in a category of concern of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 5 February 2025, 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 took place because the school meets the monitoring threshold as set out in the [Monitoring Inspection Handbook](#).

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, 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, I discussed with you and the head of school the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. I also met with staff, pupils, local governors and trust leaders. In addition, I carried out lesson visits, scrutinised curriculum plans, looked at pupils work in English, mathematics, science, history, art and RE and scrutinised the school's plans for improvement. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but some aspects of the school need further improvement.

Main findings

Since the previous inspection in December 2023, staffing has now stabilised. This has helped to give pupils a more settled education. Those teachers new to the profession have been supported well in the early stages of their career. The number of pupils on roll has increased in Reception Year, resulting in a change of class structure. The school has adjusted the curriculum to ensure pupils build knowledge in a logical order.

Together with the head of school, you have been determined and ambitious to improve the quality of education for all pupils. Careful consideration of staff workload and their well-being has ensured that staff are united in the ambition of putting pupils at the centre of the school's work.

You have prioritised the development of staff's subject knowledge and expertise. For example, you are working to embed the trust's 'principles of teaching' to support staff to teach the curriculum consistently well. Alongside this, you have organised training from subject experts across the trust and beyond to ensure staff develop their practice further. The impact of this work can be seen in the teaching of phonics. Pupils are supported well to learn to read, showing security in the sounds they know when reading new words. They are given the time they need to practise to become confident readers. This is reflected in the phonics screening published outcomes in 2024 that were above the national average.

You have worked with staff on the systems to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. This is closely linked to the knowledge the school expects pupils to learn. Staff use these checks to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils know these systems well. For example, teachers provide feedback that helps pupils to understand how well they are learning new knowledge. However, some of these checks need further accuracy. Sometimes, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified precisely enough and so future learning does not help some pupils to secure important knowledge. Where this is the case, these pupils do not progress as well through the curriculum as they do elsewhere.

You have made sure that the plans for school improvement are precise and measurable, with clearly defined 'milestones' to track the success of planned actions. This clarity ensures your leadership team, along with those responsible for governance and the trust, are clear about the impact of the identified 'transformational priorities' in the school. The trust has provided the necessary support for the school to continue moving forward at pace. You value this to secure continued progress and improvements. As a result of this work, pupil outcomes at the end of key stage 2 are rapidly improving.

You have worked on preparing pupils for life beyond the school. You have woven through opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge of the fundamental British values. For example, to support democracy, children in the early years are taught how to vote fairly for the story of the day. Staff teach them to respect the views of others that may be different to their own. As a result of this work, pupils across the school are becoming better prepared for life in modern Britain.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of Plymouth CAST Multi-Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Plymouth, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Devon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Esther Best
His Majesty's Inspector