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Dear Parents

'The school is on an improving journey'

I am pleased to now be able to share with you the outcome of our recent inspection by OFSTED, and feel the report reflects the on-going hard work and commitment of our staff and children. There is much to be celebrated, some of which I will highlight below, but I urge you to read the full report, which is available on the school website today, and will be on the OFSTED website from 7th November. If you would like a paper copy, please collect one from the Office.

Since the school's last inspection in 2012, it has faced challenging circumstances and, whilst recognising the significant improvements that have been achieved in the last year, the school was judged overall as: Requires Improvement.

The report needs to be read in the context of the very difficult situation the school was in when our Headteacher, Miss Dunne, took up her post as an Interim Headteacher in September 2016. The inspectors acknowledge that 'following four turbulent years, with unstable management and safeguarding risks, the school is back on an improving journey'. They recognised that a clear vision and a strong sense of direction is in place, that Miss Dunne has made 'a significant impact on the school's standards since her arrival' and that pupils' results have improved in English and mathematics in both key stages.

We are delighted that after safeguarding and behaviour were found to be a serious concern in an Ofsted visit in June 2016, these areas are now recognised as a strength of our school. The inspectors rightly identified that 'pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good'. St Joseph's pupils are a credit to you and the school, and we are proud of the way they made the inspectors welcome, and how they conducted themselves during the visit. We are extremely proud to be recognised for our high-quality arrangements for safeguarding and pastoral support. The report highlights that pupil welfare is paramount and that areas such as attendance are making a difference for our pupils in terms of days in school and improved outcomes.

We are very pleased that OFSTED have confirmed our school self-evaluation processes and agreed that we are a school with many strengths, focused on achieving the very best for our pupils and families. We will be reviewing the key actions that OFSTED have identified in the report and, in fact, the development areas that have been identified are ones that we were already aware of and are working on currently.

Obviously, inspectors also highlighted a number of key areas which require improvement. We will continue to prioritise rapid progress in the following areas, highlighted by the report.

These include:

- Governors need to strengthen their ability to lead strategically.
- Leaders and governors must ensure that they:
 - provide a plan for the use of PE and sport premium to provide training to staff and teaching to pupils
 - develop and support the middle leaders so that they improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in their areas of responsibility
 - improve leadership for the Early Years Foundation Stage so that activities lead children to make good progress in their early learning goals.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - pupils' mathematical skills improve so that they reason, calculate and solve problems proficiently
 - pupils develop technical skills and stamina for the end of key stage tests in writing
 - the most able pupils in all year groups, including those who are disadvantaged, are provided with learning that is sufficiently challenging and deepens their thinking
 - middle leaders have the capacity and skills to monitor the work of teachers so that progress is more rapid and teaching is consistent.

All staff in the school are committed to providing the best education for the children of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. With the publication of the report, now is the time to look forward and continue our good work in addressing our areas for improvement so that the children of St Joseph's receive the high quality education that they deserve in a safe environment where all children are supported to reach their potential. We hope that you as parents will continue to support us with this aim.

On behalf of the Governors, I would like to thank Miss Dunne and all her staff, teaching and non-teaching, for their tireless efforts over the past year to bring about so much improvement and, as recognised in the report, 'work determinedly to make this a good school'.

If you have any comments or queries about our OFSTED report, we welcome them and appreciate feedback. You can do this by emailing the office or writing directly to me at school.

Yours faithfully

Rev Tim van Kroonenburg
Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Governing Board

