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Dear Michelle Cuskelly and Jayne Geran

### **Requires improvement monitoring inspection of St Oswald's C of E Academy**

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 9 May 2024, 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 has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous graded (section 5) inspections.

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, I discussed with you and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the deputy CEO, trustees and governors the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I also visited lessons, spoke to subject leaders, spoke to pupils, and looked at pupils' work. I looked at documents relating to the actions that have been taken since the last inspection, including the school self-evaluation and the school improvement plan. 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 become good.**

## **Main findings**

Since the last inspection, there has been some changes in leaders' responsibilities. There is a new special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) coordinator (SENCo). You and other leaders, together with a committed staff, have driven forward several improvements to make progress towards becoming a good school.

One of the main priorities, initially, was to ensure there was a positive learning environment. Together with your staff, you quickly established high expectations for both learning and behaviour. A clear behaviour policy with rewards and sanctions is now in place and is applied consistently by adults. The pupils understand the rules and respond positively to the clear example set by staff. There is a highly respectful culture between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. This is clear from the way they cooperate in class and play together during social times. In most classes, pupils now learn without interruption. Pupils who find the classroom routines a challenge are well supported to manage their emotions.

You have worked alongside the trust, external consultants, and leaders in the school to review the curriculum across a range of subjects. Clear progression documents now outline explicitly the knowledge and skills that the school wants pupils to know and remember. In core subjects, there are also clear lesson structures and systems for assessing pupils. The clarity that has been created is supporting teachers to know what to teach and when to teach it. In addition, the focus on providing effective ongoing professional development has also ensured that staff are developing their confidence in how to teach the curriculum. As a result, pupils are building their knowledge across a range of subjects.

In mathematics, a new scheme and ongoing training is ensuring that pupils receive a more consistent approach to the subject. Teachers' modelling and explanations are improving. They are using resources with increased sophistication. This, in turn, is supporting pupils to gain a better understanding of mathematical concepts, number, and is improving their ability to reason. In lessons visited, pupils were able to give clear explanations about how to find fractions of amounts and how to calculate missing angles, and they accurately recognised equal amounts from visual representations.

Reading is now a high priority across the school. Staff have received ongoing training to support their delivery of phonics. As a result of this training, staff's expertise in delivering the school's phonics programme is improving. For instance, staff now follow the programme carefully. However, you and your leaders recognise there is more to do and have already taken action to address this. Furthermore, you have ensured that there is a clear structure to reading lessons across key stage 2. In lessons visited, pupils demonstrated a clear understanding of the plot and themes in the texts they were reading.

The SENCo continues to work with staff to ensure that all pupils with SEND have individual learning plans and targeted support. This work is starting to pay off. Staff now have a better understanding of pupils needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND are learning the curriculum more effectively and are more engaged in lessons.

You have worked with leaders from the trust and governors, to ensure appropriate action plans have been implemented. These plans have focused on the right actions and in the right order. Regular monitoring and quality assurance from the trust is ensuring that you continue to make improvements at an appropriate pace, and where required, you take any additional actions to further improve the school.

You have found the support from some external consultants and the local mathematics hub useful in developing staff expertise and supporting middle leaders.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the CEO of the Diocese of Coventry multi-academy trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Coventry, 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

Helen Forrest  
**His Majesty's Inspector**