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Mr Alistair Johnson
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Dear Mr Johnson

Short inspection of Perranporth Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 4 December 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2011.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Together with leaders from the trust, including governors and trustees, you and other school leaders are taking effective action to tackle identified weaknesses. Consequently, pupils' achievement is improving, with notable strengths in reading. Perranporth Primary is a vibrant, welcoming and caring school, where pupils are motivated to do well. Pupils, staff and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

You and your staff take the time to get to know every pupil well. Parents and pupils alike appreciate this. This ethos is further reflected during lessons. Pupils' individual needs are well catered for, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and the various activities provided through your 'immersive' curriculum. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes to learning.

Following the school's conversion to an academy in 2016, there have been significant changes to both leadership and teaching staff. You have worked diligently to ensure that staff are well trained and confident to undertake their different roles and responsibilities effectively. With the support of the trust, you have implemented robust procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning. For example, you focus on pupils who are at risk of underachievement and you hold teachers firmly to account for what their pupils achieve. This has enabled you to address areas for improvement arising from the last inspection for your predecessor school. In particular, teachers use assessment information well to provide clear next steps to guide pupils' learning.

However, you are fully aware that there are still some remaining challenges to meet. The most significant of these is continuing to raise achievement in mathematics, particularly for girls and middle-ability pupils. Furthermore, despite marked improvement, some disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND do not make the best possible progress in some classes or subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors are diligently focused on safeguarding. You have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Collectively, you are vigilant and quick to follow up concerns with external partners, including health, social care and the police. Your systems for gathering and recording information to protect pupils are strong. These enable you to monitor the well-being of pupils effectively. Staff know when and how to refer any concerns and show a good understanding of current requirements, including the 'Prevent' duty, children missing from education and whistle-blowing.

Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after. They interact positively and play well together. Pupils do not feel that bullying is a concern. They also say that they have confidence in staff to deal with bullying or anti-social behaviour on the very rare occasions that these may happen. Pupils also understand how to stay safe in different situations, for example when working online. They also appreciate the visits and information, through Royal National Lifeboat Institution, raising awareness of safety by the coast. However, although pupils know what to do in the event of a fire, there has not been an evacuation drill recently to refresh their memory or to inform any new arrivals of the school's practice and procedures.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the inspection, we agreed to evaluate the effectiveness of mathematics teaching and provision, particularly for girls, who generally do less well. This was chosen as an area to focus on because of the trend in pupils' mathematics test results over time and the dip in them in 2018. A wide range of evidence, including observing parts of lessons and interventions, reviewing work in books, talking with pupils and scrutinising assessment information, shows that you are taking effective action to raise achievement.
- Your carefully considered plan to improve pupils' calculation and number skills is bearing fruit. Teachers are planning work that meets pupils' needs. Teachers are also rapidly identifying pupils who need additional support. This leads to immediate help that enables pupils to catch up. You had already identified mathematics as an area for improvement before the inspection and teaching is consistently reflecting your expectations.
- Effective teacher training and professional development are improving staff's confidence and knowledge to teach mathematics. For example, the calculation policy is well embedded. Teachers use resources to help secure pupils' understanding and fluency in number well, and they provide pupils with useful guidance to help them to be effective learners.

- However, there are still some remaining weaknesses to overcome. In particular, some pupils are still not secure in understanding the meaning of larger or more complex numbers. Pupils also sometimes lack confidence and speed in recalling number facts, including times tables. This impedes their speed and fluency for completing operations or solving problems.
- A second line of enquiry focused on how well staff identify and support vulnerable pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. This was because published assessment information shows that some of these pupils do not achieve consistently in line with other pupils nationally.
- You have clear actions and strategies in place for pupils with SEND. You are also clear how the school spends and evaluates the pupil premium grant. You meet with teachers regularly and ensure that all identified pupils have individual plans. Targets in pupils' individual plans are strongly reflected in classroom activities and learning. This is enabling pupils to make strong progress. Your monitoring ensures that you have a rigorous understanding of pupils' learning journeys.
- However, some individual plans, including for pupils with SEND, have targets that are not sufficiently precise or refined. This reduces their overall impact on pupils' progress.
- Finally, the inspection focused on how well all leaders, including the trust board and other officers, are securing sustainable school improvement. Leaders have a shared and compelling vision of improvement through the school development plan. This is agreed and monitored closely by local governors, as well as through formal monitoring visits by the trust. Governors and trustees are stringent in holding you and school leaders to account for the school's performance. As a result, improvements are seen strongly in the classroom.
- For example, to improve reading, you have implemented a vision that celebrates reading and places it at the heart of the school's work. The school now abounds in opportunities for pupils to read widely and often, including through using the improved library or reading chalet. Pupils are enthusiastic readers who enjoy the abundance of reading challenges or lively class displays, such as the high-quality feature in Year 3 on 'The lion, the witch and the wardrobe'.
- In addition, your chosen approach to immerse all pupils in reading, particularly disadvantaged pupils, is making a discernible difference to their progress. Pupils' progress in reading has risen markedly over the past three years from being significantly below the national average to in line with or just above average in 2017 and 2018.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- raise pupils' achievement in mathematics, particularly for girls, so that they are well prepared for secondary education

- continue to raise the achievement of vulnerable pupils, especially those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that their targets are more refined to meet the full range of pupils' needs.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stewart Gale
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

We agreed the timetable and activities for the inspection at the start of the day. I worked with you and other leaders, including the mathematics and English subject leaders, to sample a range of pupils' work and talk with pupils. I scrutinised safeguarding records and we discussed a wide range of related matters, including staff recruitment, training and vetting arrangements. I spoke to pupils, staff and some parents about their views of the school, including safeguarding. I evaluated evidence that shows how you work with other agencies to keep children safe. I met with representatives of the local governing body and reviewed school documents, including the school's self-evaluation summary, improvement plans and records of governors' visits. I took full account of the 78 responses on Parent View, as well as the free-text comments received. I also spoke with two trustees, including the chief executive officer, the director for education and the primary executive lead for school improvement.