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Mr Thomas Harman  
Executive Headteacher  
Manaccan Primary School  
Church Town  
Manaccan  
Helston  
Cornwall  
TR12 6HR

Dear Mr Harman

### **Short inspection of Manaccan Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 1 March 2017, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in October 2013.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since the previous inspection the school has expanded to incorporate a pre-school. Parents who spoke with me said they value the pre-school highly because you and your staff work closely with the pre-school staff to ensure a seamless transition for their children into the Reception class. Pupil numbers overall have reduced since the previous inspection. As a result, pupils in the main school are now being taught in two classes. You managed the transition from three classes to two well. Parents who spoke with me said they fully understood the need for the reduction in classes. They accept that the new teaching arrangements provide the best learning environment for their children.

The school continues to benefit from being part of a multi-academy trust (MAT). Staff say they appreciate the regular opportunities they now have to work with colleagues from other partner schools. The quality of the curriculum has strengthened because teachers are able to share best practice and learn from one another. Pupils are now able to take part in many more sporting activities, which in the past were often impractical because of the small numbers. As one member of staff aptly said, 'The isolation we all felt has now been taken away for pupils as well as staff.'

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

Pupils are safe in the school. A strong culture of safeguarding has been built around a secure knowledge of pupils' individual needs and any vulnerabilities they may demonstrate. Staff know the needs of pupils and their families well. They are vigilant in spotting any evidence that a child may not be thriving. You possess a very good knowledge of those pupils in your care whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable. The checks that are made on the staff's backgrounds and their suitability to work with children comply with legal requirements. Records show that staff and governors are well informed, appropriately trained and regularly updated on changes in safeguarding legislation. Directors regularly monitor the school's safeguarding procedures.

You have put in place a rigorous system to monitor pupils' attendance and effectively follow up on persistent absences. Your work with pupils and their families is removing barriers that impeded pupils' good attendance. The most recent published information indicates that overall absence this year is broadly in line with the national average. Parents who spoke with me at the start of the day agreed their children were safe and well cared for while at school. A typical comment written by a parent was, 'I couldn't be happier with my children at Manaccan School. Not only do I feel they do a great job teaching reading, writing and mathematics, but I feel they know my children incredibly well. When they are there they are part of a family.'

## **Inspection findings**

- One of my key lines of enquiry in helping me to decide whether the school remains good was to find out how well you have addressed the areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection. Staff work well together. Strengthened teaching provision has improved outcomes for pupils. For example, across the MAT teachers work in close collaboration to agree standards of pupils' writing. This has raised teachers' confidence and improved provision further. Teachers are able to accurately identify where pupils are on track with their learning and how pupils' achievements compare with national expectations. This detailed information is now regularly shared with directors, which allows them to understand how well pupils are achieving compared to national expectations.
- Together, we found plenty of good-quality examples of evidence in pupils' books and on displays within classrooms that show they have opportunities to write for a range of audiences. Middle leaders are working effectively together to ensure consistency in the way literacy skills are taught. For example, the joint work with a local partner school on a project to improve pupils' storytelling and writing skills has proved very successful. Staff have noticed that pupils' personal, social and emotional development has strengthened along with their literacy skills. Middle leaders have also successfully introduced a new spelling programme and handwriting guidance for all of the schools within the MAT.
- Another line of enquiry was to find out how well boys were being supported to

develop their writing skills. Work in pupils' books shows improved language development and that pupils now write for a range of audiences. Teachers were able to show how the curriculum has been imaginatively planned to include regular opportunities for boys to write. For example, key stage 2 pupils often use the local environment as a stimulus for writing. Teachers' expertise in using information technology allows pupils to incorporate media technology into their writing tasks. I saw a good example of this in a 'scary-movie trailer' that pupils had made. Together, we saw examples of pupils' writing for a range of audiences and purposes in their books. Pupils are provided with effective, practical strategies to help them develop and edit their writing. Throughout the school, most pupils are making good progress in developing their writing skills. However, not enough pupils are working at greater depth or mastering their skills.

- A further line of enquiry considered whether pupils are gaining a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics. The professional development of teachers has been enhanced. Their confidence in teaching mathematics has improved as a result of working alongside other professionals to develop their subject knowledge and skills. The teaching of mathematics within the school is imaginative and engaging. Pupils' learning is carefully tracked and pupils are fully involved in reviewing their learning. However, although pupils are benefiting from consistently good-quality teaching provision in mathematics few are working at greater depth.
- The final line of enquiry focused on how well governors and senior leaders are provided with sufficient and evaluative information to hold the school effectively to account. Senior leaders are working closely with directors to hone their self-evaluation strategies in order to better understand how well pupils across the MAT are learning. Senior leaders regularly check on the quality of pupils' work. Monitoring records show that the focus, frequency and impact of school improvement work is now firmly embedded in the school. For example, in the past academic year senior leaders have carried out regular checks on: how well pupils are applying their key skills when writing for a purpose, whether teachers' marking and feedback is linked to learning objectives and success criteria, and whether children take pride in their work and respond to their teachers' written feedback.
- Directors say they appreciate the improved quality of your reporting on the work of the school. They agree that the new format is helping them to better understand the work of individual schools within the MAT. In turn, directors are beginning to ask more insightful questions about each school, thereby demonstrating a more rigorous approach in holding each school to account. Directors have commissioned volunteers from within the community, known as 'partners in learning', to help them with their monitoring work. Partners in learning are regular visitors to the school and provide directors with written reports following each visit. Their written reports are detailed and appropriately focused on school improvement initiatives. However, these reports do not focus sufficiently on the impact of school improvement initiatives.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more pupils are enabled to work at greater depth in writing and mathematics
- all monitoring reports focus on the impact of school improvement work.

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

Yours sincerely

David Edwards  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met regularly with you and your assistant headteacher as part of a professional dialogue. Together we undertook observations of learning in lessons. I examined pupils' work, focusing on writing, mathematics and presentation. I met with members of the directors' governing body, including the chair. I talked with pupils and other staff informally during the day. I also met with pupils to hear their views on the school and I heard some of them read. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents including the school's website, published performance data and a summary of your school's self-evaluation document. I spoke with six parents at the start of the day and also took into account the results of staff survey responses, as well as the online survey, Parent View.