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16 November 2016

Mrs Denise Gladwell
Headteacher
St Breock Primary School
Tremarren Road
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Cornwall
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Dear Mrs Gladwell

Short inspection of St Breock Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 2016, 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 school was judged to be good in June 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You, staff and the hub councillors (who perform a role similar to governors) have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas that need further improvement. Your plans to improve the quality of teaching are carefully thought through. Your monitoring records and evidence from the inspection show that pupils currently in the school are making good progress.

There have been a number of changes since the last inspection, not least that the school has joined Aspire Academy Trust, which has provided robust challenge and good support to improve the outcomes for current pupils. The recent promotion of two assistant headteachers to be joint heads of school has secured strong leadership. Your lead role in developing sport enables you to share best practice across the trust's schools.

Improvements to the monitoring of pupils' progress have ensured that disadvantaged pupils are making rapid progress, particularly in key stage 1. Staff are well deployed to meet the particular needs of this group of pupils. You keep a close eye on pupils' progress. The overall picture at the end of key stage 2 over the last few years has been one of attainment above or in line with the national average, and this is continuing as a result of the good progress being made by current pupils from their starting points. The dip in performance in 2016 was associated with the high proportion of pupils who entered the school late in the key

stage: while they made good progress during their time at St Breock, there was much lost ground to catch up on.

Safeguarding is effective.

The systems overseen by the academy trust and careful monitoring by the hub council and trust leaders have ensured that safeguarding systems are robust. Procedures to vet staff before starting to work at the school are thorough. The same strong systems are in place for volunteers. This ensures that all who wish to work with children are suitable and carefully considered so that pupils are kept safe.

Regular update training and checks by leaders mean that all staff are aware of the potential risks that pupils face. Leaders carefully consider serious case reviews and provide briefings for staff which pick out the salient points, meaning they are well informed. Staff know the pupils and their families and are sensitive to, and protective of, children who may face particular challenges.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school and parents who responded to Parent View were overwhelmingly positive about the school. As one parent, typical of a large number who responded to the questionnaire, commented: 'I feel fortunate that my children attend such a safe, caring and good local school'.

The arrangements for pupils who attend Restormel Alternative Provision Academy in St Austell are strong. Leaders receive timely reports about pupils' attendance, behaviour and progress which they review to ensure the arrangements are working well.

Inspection findings

- Pupils behave well. They are polite to one another, staff and visitors. They show real care for each other. Staff work hard to build pupils' emotional health and this is improving pupils' appreciation of others' needs as well as their own self-confidence. Their behaviour in the bistro at lunchtime is exemplary.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress. Staff accurately identify the barriers that disadvantaged pupils face and plan work to help overcome them. For example, their work in key stage 1 shows impressive, accelerated progress in pupils' writing. There is also demonstrable improvement in the quality of their work in key stage 2, with disadvantaged pupils' work matching and sometimes bettering that of their peers.
- Children are making good progress in the early years. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased each year for the last three years and is now above the national average. Children enjoy well-equipped classrooms and outdoor spaces which help their development.
- Over recent years the number of pupils reaching the standards expected for their age in the Year 1 national check on phonics have been in line with the national average. By the end of Year 2 almost all pupils meet the standard.

- Boys are writing in a wider range of styles with increasing complexity, reflecting the raised expectations and greater challenge in the teaching. They are also writing more and their spelling is improving. Consequently boys across the school are now making the same good progress as girls in their writing. However, some gaps in their punctuation skills remain.
- The focus on improving the reading and writing of the most able pupils is beginning to pay off. The most able pupils who read to the inspector did so fluently and with intonation. Pupils take a systematic approach to unfamiliar words using their phonic knowledge. However, over time, improvements have been too slow. Teachers' assessments of what the most able pupils know, understand and can do have not been precise enough to plan for their next steps.
- In mathematics, pupils enjoy the challenge of the daily arithmetic tasks. This is because they can see the progress they are making as their fluency improves and they are able to identify and remedy any gaps in their knowledge. Boys demonstrate particular improvement in the accuracy of their calculations as a result of the tasks set.
- In most classes there is growing evidence of effective problem solving in mathematics, but the planned activities are not sufficient to deepen the understanding of number or the thinking skills of the most able pupils, for whom the work is still too easy.
- The school's work on sport continues to be a strength. Pupils, without exception, commented that sport is their favourite activity at school. They enjoy the wide range of sports that they participate in as well as representing the school in competitions. Pupils particularly value the way they can learn about other cultures through sport. Similarly, they talked about their understanding of people with disabilities as a result of the sports designed for athletes with severe impairments they have played, such as boccia.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- more able pupils make more rapid progress to reach higher standards in both writing and mathematics
- the precision of boys' writing improves, particularly with respect to their accurate use of punctuation.

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

Iain Freeland
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I visited classrooms and outdoor spaces to look at pupils' work and talk to them about their learning. You accompanied me on these visits. I looked at a sample of books from pupils across the school and heard key stage 1 pupils read. I met with groups of children and observed them playing at breaktime and while eating their lunch in the bistro. Meetings were held with senior leaders, the designated safeguarding lead and two hub councillors (representing the academy trust). I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation and development plan, safeguarding and child protection records, risk assessments and the school's assessment information. I took into account the views of 63 parents who had responded to Parent View and one letter received from a parent.

This short inspection focused on

- the school's work to improve the attainment of the most able pupils
- the quality of teaching across the curriculum, particularly mathematics, writing and grammar, punctuation and spelling
- the progress made by boys
- differences in progress between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils
- whether safeguarding was still effective, and pupils' safety.