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Tuesday 2 June

Ms Lisa Newberry
Headteacher
Cury CofE Primary School
Churchtown
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TR12 7BW

Dear Ms Newberry

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Cury CofE Primary School

Following my visit to your school on Tuesday 2 June, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in February 2015. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- continue strengthening the effectiveness of the governing body through ongoing training and support
- ensure, through training and your robust and regular monitoring, that the agreed 'non-negotiables' are improving the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils learning.

Evidence

During the inspection, I met with you and with other senior leaders to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. I also met with the Chair of the Governing Body and six other governors, all teaching assistants and teachers, and three parents who have children at the school. I spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority. You accompanied me on a short visit to two classrooms to look at examples of pupils work in literacy. We met with all year six pupils to discuss their work in mathematics. We also undertook a scrutiny of the school development plan, governing body minutes and records of monitoring conducted by the school improvement partner.

Context

There have been no changes in staffing or governance since the last inspection. The number of pupils attending the school has increased by nearly one third.

Main findings

You and your senior leaders, governors and staff have put your disappointment with the findings of the recent inspection firmly behind you. There is now a clear determination on the part of the whole school community to rigorously tackle the issues identified and drive forward improvements. For example, you are improving teachers' subject knowledge through training and the introduction of a clear set of 'non-negotiables' has raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is enabling teachers to identify any gaps in pupils learning early and plan appropriate 'catch up' programmes. Parents reported a noticeable difference in their children's attitude to learning due to the more interesting and varied writing activities being planned such as the Roman magazine articles. The good range of written and mathematical work displayed around the school is a reflection of your renewed focus on identifying and celebrating pupils' achievements.

Teachers and teaching assistants are benefiting from a range of training opportunities. Your modelling and coaching of the effective teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is being used to improve teaching. Following visits to local outstanding schools teachers are now planning activities that are better matched to the wide range of pupils' needs. During our joint learning walk pupils were clearer about what they were expected to learn because teachers are focussing more closely on what pupils need to know, understand and can do. The rigorous checks you have introduced at the half termly 'pupil progress' meetings are ensuring that teachers are being held to account for pupils' achievement. These meetings are also being carefully used to identify next steps for staff training and pupils' learning.

The findings from an external review of governance have been used well to identify future training needs and to re-organise the committee structures and governor responsibilities. As a result, governors are developing their knowledge of how well

the school is performing in order to provide greater challenge to school leaders. They are increasingly involved in gathering first hand evidence to determine if teaching is improving and in turn securing similar gains in pupils' achievement. Governors, senior leaders and the local authority recognise that further training is required to develop a strong model of governance. This includes visiting a local outstanding governing body to see, experience and learn how to deliver highly effective challenge and bring about sustained improvement.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

Senior leaders and governors are drawing well on the support provided from the local authority including the initial brokering of the executive headteacher from Wendron Primary School prior to the last inspection. Your school improvement partner provides valuable external reports and training to improve the effectiveness of governors. You have benefitted greatly from the mentoring and advice you have received from a National Leader of Education (NLE) from King Charles Primary School in Falmouth. This work has sharpened your strategic and evaluative skills and helped you to shape the school development plan into a tight and cohesive document that is driving improvement well.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall and as below.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light

Her Majesty's Inspector

- Diocese – for voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools