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Tam Gambie
Acting headteacher
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Dear Miss Gambie

Short inspection of Newlyn School

Following my visit to the school on 14 November 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 April 2013.

This school continues to be good.

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

Newlyn School is a nurturing school that enables all pupils to achieve regardless of their backgrounds. At the heart of this community school is a strongly shared commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity. You work hard to ensure that you welcome and value all pupils. Most parents are positive about the work of the school. They describe the school as having an 'amazing community spirit' and fostering their children's self-confidence. Parents greatly appreciate the additional opportunities you offer, such as music lessons. Pupils say that they particularly enjoy the wide range of outdoor learning activities, including those on the local beach, which deepens the quality of learning.

You know the school well and are clear about its strengths and what needs to improve. For example, you know that standards in mathematics need to improve and that the more able pupils need a higher level of challenge across the school. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have a wide range of skills and professionalism. You value the support they offer. You and your leadership team, very well supported by the multi-academy trust, are focused on continuous improvement. Staff and leaders at all levels work hard to make sure that all groups of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with additional needs, receive a good quality of education.

You and your team share the drive to enable pupils to become resilient learners. Teachers use their subject knowledge confidently to prepare interesting, stimulating work. As a result, current pupils, regardless of ability and background, make good progress as they move through the school. The progress of a small minority of children in the early years foundation stage is particularly rapid. Pupils say that they enjoy the songs that help them remember number facts and times tables. One pupil said, 'The other pupils and the teacher help you to do things, they don't tell you what to do.' Pupils say that they enjoy work and their behaviour is good. Pupils work well with each other and are polite and respectful towards adults and one another. They say that they feel safe in the playground and have few friendship problems.

Since the last inspection the school has joined the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust. This enables teachers to share good practice more with other schools across the peninsula, and to take part in a greater range of continuing professional development. This has led to improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The school has an efficient system of assessing pupils' progress across the school. This allows you to monitor the pupils' progress carefully and provide support to pupils who are falling behind in their learning. You now clearly identify the most able pupils from an early stage and offer them an increased level of challenge. As a result, the proportion of current Year 6 pupils working at higher levels in writing and mathematics are broadly in line with the national figure.

Safeguarding is effective.

A strong culture of safeguarding is evident in the school. Governors take their responsibilities seriously, ensuring that policies, practice and procedures meet all statutory requirements. This includes the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers. Comprehensive risk assessments help ensure that pupils and staff are safe. Governors, leaders and staff check and ensure that the school's facilities and site are safe for pupils to learn and play.

Staff know and understand what they should do if they have concerns about pupils. You carefully record any concerns and follow them up rigorously to ensure that no child comes to harm. Where necessary, leaders work very well with external agencies to safeguard children's welfare and ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the support they need.

Pupils understand safety is about feeling safe in school and online as well as outside school. They reported that they do not use social media as they are not legally old enough, and that if pupils bring a mobile phone into school it is kept locked in the school office. Pupils feel safe. Most parents agree that their children enjoy school and are well cared for. Pupils I spoke to said that they would readily talk to any member of staff if they had any worries, but they generally felt safe and managed any problems with friendships calmly.

Attendance is improving in response to your work with parents to explain why good attendance is important. However, you recognise you have more to do to ensure that this improves further.

Inspection findings

- To establish that the school remains good, one of my lines of enquiry was to consider what leaders are doing to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment support good progress across the school. There was a dip in progress in the national tests in 2017 and outcomes were not as good as expected. Not enough of the most able pupils achieved the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics at the end of key stage 2. The school has identified this issue and is working to address it, although there is still more to be done. Teachers are giving pupils more challenging tasks in lessons and consolidating this learning in homework. The proportions of all groups of pupils making good progress is increasing as they move up through the year groups.
- You use pupil premium funding effectively to help pupils' achievement, including 1:1 teaching and small intervention groups, which helps those who are falling behind to catch up. Leaders and governors regularly assess its impact, resulting in the many disadvantaged pupils making as much progress as their peers. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported and make good progress.
- My next line of enquiry focused on the level of challenge in lessons to ensure that all pupils make progress, particularly the most able pupils. The previous inspection highlighted a need for lessons to provide sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities. Since then teachers and teaching assistants use questioning more effectively to deepen pupils' thinking and help them achieve at the higher levels. Teachers use displays in the classrooms to celebrate pupils' achievement and raise their aspirations.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils are now higher than they were previously. Measures are in place to ensure that all pupils receive a high level of challenge in lessons. For example, pupils have problems to solve in mathematics which they discuss together then explain their learning to each other and the class. Homework consolidates learning and provides pupils with further challenge and support. As a result, the proportion of the most able pupils working at higher levels is improving and is now broadly in line with national expectations in writing and mathematics in Year 6.
- A further line of enquiry focused on how leaders are ensuring that standards in mathematics are in line with those achieved in English. This was an area for improvement in the previous inspection. You and your team have made this a priority for the school. Your new mathematics leader has improved teaching and learning through the introduction of an engaging mathematics scheme and by providing effective training for staff. Teachers present pupils with problem-solving activities that boost their interest and confidence. You acknowledge that you need to sustain these very recent developments to ensure that all pupils, especially the most able, continue to make rapid progress.
- Pupils say that they enjoy learning mathematics and ask for harder problems to solve in their books. Pupils' work demonstrates that they calculate mentally, and explain their reasoning in solving problems with a high level of understanding. In the current Year 6 class, the proportion of pupils working at or above

expectations for their age in mathematics is broadly in line with those expected nationally.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the learning planned for pupils in English and mathematics provides greater challenge, especially for those pupils in key stage 2
- recent improvements in the teaching of mathematics is continued and extended through the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Jane
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I spoke with you and leaders responsible for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. I spoke to a group of pupils and individual pupils around the school as well as representatives of the governing body and the Truro and Penwith multi-academy trust.

We made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and took a learning walk around the school. We also scrutinised the work in pupils' books across a range of ages and abilities.

I considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, current progress information and pupil attendance information. I also considered safeguarding referrals, staff appointment documents and child protection records, including the single central record.

In addition, I took account of 30 responses to the Parent View online survey as well as a letter from a parent. I also had a discussion with a parent at her request.