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Mr Chris Gould
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Gould

Short inspection of Chacewater Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 6 November 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in December 2010.

This school continues to be good.

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

As headteacher, you have developed an ethos where everyone sees themselves as a learner. Pupils, leaders, staff and governors are all keen to develop their knowledge and understanding so they can perform at the highest possible level. Over time, this has led to strong outcomes for pupils, high-quality teaching across all phases of the school and effective leadership at all levels. This focus on learning and development extends beyond the school. Your work with other schools within the trust and across the Cornwall and West Devon Maths Hub is proving beneficial in sharing best practice and further strengthening the school's provision.

You lead the school with passion and an infectious enthusiasm. During my time in the school, it was clear that you lead by example. You have high expectations for what staff and pupils can achieve. People feel valued, and during the inspection pupils and staff were keen to express their pride in being part of the Chacewater community.

You are very well supported by a team of highly skilled senior and middle leaders. Together, you have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas that require further improvement. Over recent years, you have placed great importance on the professional development of both leaders and staff. The impact of this work is clear to see, both in the knowledge, skills and understanding of middle leaders and in the consistency and quality of teaching.

Pupils enjoy attending the school. They speak very highly of their teachers and of the support that they receive. Pupils were particularly keen to talk to me about the school's work to improve their approach to learning. They talked knowledgeably about 'the four Rs' of resourceful, reciprocal, reflective and resilient learning, as well as the effect that these are having on their learning. The impact of this work was also evident during our visits to classrooms.

The Truro and Penwith Academy Trust provides strong strategic leadership and an effective balance of challenge and support. Trust leaders have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, they recognise that a lack of precision in the school's development plans, for example around monitoring arrangements and success criteria, is preventing leaders from being held more rigorously to account for the school's outcomes.

The local governing body has an in-depth knowledge of the school. Governors play an active part in school life and are proactive in gathering information about the school's performance. For example, governors have spoken with pupils to provide themselves with information about girls' attitudes to mathematics. Governors talk positively about being part of a trust and welcome the opportunity that this brings. However, they have also ensured that the school has retained its identity at the heart of its community. For example, pupils play an active part in contributing to the parish council's development plan for the village.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Nearly all parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, said that they would recommend the school to another parent. Parents are especially positive about the school's community feel and the range of opportunities that you provide. Comments, typical of those expressed by parents included, 'The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is dedicated and passionate about providing great outcomes and opportunities for our children' and 'The school is extremely well led, and the excellent staff team provide a warm, nurturing environment for the children to learn and thrive in.'

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The designated safeguarding lead has made sure that the school's policies and procedures are in line with the latest statutory guidance and implemented consistently across the school. She is well supported by a knowledgeable and skilled governor and, together, they maintain an assiduous approach to safeguarding.

Training is up to date and staff have an appropriate understanding of the vulnerabilities faced by pupils in the school. This includes aspects such as child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and the 'Prevent' duty, as well as local concerns such as county lines.

Pupils feel safe. This is a view shared by every parent who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. However, they are

confident that any incidents would be dealt with effectively. The school has established strong partnerships with parents and a range of external professionals.

The school goes to great lengths to ensure that its pupils are as safe as possible both inside and outside of school. For example, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children are regular visitors and all pupils benefit from visits from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution to discuss beach safety.

Inspection findings

- At the start of the day, we discussed the main areas of focus for the inspection. Firstly, we agreed I would consider the school's work to raise the mathematical attainment of girls in key stage 2. This was because 2018 assessment information had highlighted some underperformance by girls from their starting points at the end of Year 2.
- It was clear from the outset that you know this group of pupils well. You had identified their potential for weaker progress while they were in Year 5, as well as the factors that had contributed to this. Together with other leaders, you put in place a range of effective strategies to raise their outcomes and ensure that they made the strongest possible progress while they remained in the school.
- Many of these strategies, such as one-to-one support for girls, have remained in place for the current cohort of pupils. A scrutiny of the work in their books shows that they are making strong progress from their starting points. This is mainly a result of the high-quality teaching they receive. Teachers develop in pupils a secure conceptual understanding and provide pupils of all abilities with routine opportunities to think deeply about mathematics. Girls that I spoke with during the inspection told me how they now feel more confident with mathematics. They feel that this is empowering them to speak up more in class and discuss reasoning activities with greater conviction.
- Teachers' assessments for pupils at the end of key stage 1 showed that the proportion of pupils working at the expected standard in reading was not as high as the proportion of the same pupils who had met the expected standard in the phonics screening check a year earlier. Therefore, my second line of enquiry was to examine how effectively leaders are ensuring that, across key stage 1, pupils are making strong progress in developing key reading skills.
- Again, this is an area that leaders are fully aware of and have acted swiftly to rectify. Although the vast majority of pupils have a secure understanding of phonics, you have recognised that there has not been a sufficient focus in the past on developing pupils' higher-order reading skills, such as inference and deduction. This has prevented some pupils from being able to demonstrate that they are working securely within the expected standards at the end of Year 2. Across key stage 1, there is now a much stronger and earlier focus on developing pupils' comprehension skills. This was evident in the lessons we visited, as well as in pupils' written work. Additionally, pupils who I heard read were able to talk confidently about the texts they were reading.
- At the time of my visit, there was a limited amount of published information available for outcomes at the end of early years. We therefore agreed that I would

consider the progress of children currently in Reception, and especially the progress of those children capable of working at levels exceeding the early learning goals.

- Early years staff have a secure understanding of children's needs. They make good use of baseline assessments to identify what children can and cannot do. In activities where staff take the lead, they use questioning effectively to probe children's understanding and to challenge their thinking. They plan tasks carefully to address any gaps in children's skills. For example, in a mathematics activity children were using tweezers to estimate a number of objects. This was to develop their fine motor skills in readiness for writing.
- An increasing number of children start school with skills and understanding below those which is typical for the age. These children are making strong progress towards achieving the early learning goals and, consequently, a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year. However, we agreed that there needs to be a greater focus on those children who join the school with skills which are in line with, or above, those expected for their age. Development plans do not consider these children sufficiently, and in their independent play children do not routinely receive the guidance they require to challenge themselves and extend their learning. This is weakening the progress of middle- and high-attaining children.
- My final line of enquiry was to evaluate the quality of the school's curriculum and how effective it is in meeting the needs of pupils in the school. You have recently redesigned your curriculum, based on a clear rationale and a belief that it should enable pupils to 'flourish, reach and exceed their potential academically, artistically and physically'. Conversations with leaders, staff and pupils, as well as a scrutiny of work from across the school, demonstrates that you are being successful in meeting these aims. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning, and teachers ensure that pupils are developing both their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects. Parents also appreciate this work. As one parent commented: 'We are impressed by the innovative ways in which the school provides a wide range of opportunities for the children outside of the core curriculum.'
- In tailoring your curriculum to the needs of Chacewater pupils, you have placed great importance in upholding local traditions while also raising pupils' aspirations. This is being achieved through a range of activities. For example, you have invited a variety of speakers into school to talk about their careers and hobbies. Additionally, in the assembly we visited pupils were enthusiastically singing the 'St Day Carol', accompanied by a local Cornish music group.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- staff provide children in the early years with the guidance they require to demonstrate understanding and skills above the expectations for their age, particularly in their independent play
- school development plans contain precise information about what constitutes success and how, when and by whom the impact of actions will be measured.

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

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Dyer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and members of your leadership team. We discussed the school's self-evaluation, information about pupils' progress and improvements made since the school became an academy. Together, we observed pupils in classrooms and spoke with them about their learning. We analysed work in pupils' books from across the curriculum. I listened to a selection of pupils read and joined you in a visit to an assembly.

I had discussions with members of staff and seven governors, including the chair of the governing body. I also met with representatives from the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, including the chief executive officer. I looked at a range of written evidence, including documents relating to safeguarding. I took account of the views expressed by 67 parents who completed the online survey, as well as their written comments. I also considered the views of staff and pupils who returned their questionnaires.