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Mr Paul Towe
Executive headteacher
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Dear Mr Towe

Short inspection of St Mewan Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 June 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 the school was judged to be good in May 2014.

This school continues to be good.

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

Together with the headteacher, other leaders and governors, you provide pupils with a caring and supportive environment in which they can thrive. The leadership team is effective in steering the school towards high standards of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Your drive and determination have established a culture of continuous improvement. Leaders and governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You use this information well to identify the right steps for improvement. This has resulted in leaders taking effective action, supported by a well-designed programme of staff training to improve pupils' outcomes. Leaders are open and honest about what is working and what still needs to be done, and have recognised that the school's curriculum needs further development.

You have cultivated a strong sense of belonging in the school community. Parents and carers, and pupils, appreciate how school staff listen to their views. Teaching pupils about the values of respect and tolerance is at the heart of the school's ethos. You focus effectively on pupils' personal development and establishing effective learning habits. As a result, the behaviour of pupils during the school day is impressive and attitudes to learning are strong. Pupils show respect to each other, staff and visitors.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have created a culture where safeguarding and support for pupils' welfare are uppermost. Staff and governors are well trained in safeguarding. Staff are vigilant and, when they have any concerns, they take timely and appropriate actions to keep pupils safe. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that other agencies fulfil their duties fully.

Leaders ensure that all mandatory pre-employment checks and recruitment procedures are robust. Processes to ensure thoroughness and consistency have been developed across the Peninsula Learning Trust and staff work well together to ensure pupils' safety. For example, safety inspections and fire drills are carried out diligently. Governors are knowledgeable and attentive in monitoring leaders' work around safeguarding. For example, they have been proactive in managing risks related to site security.

Parents support the view that their children are kept safe in school and the majority of those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, believe that their child is well looked after at school.

Inspection findings

- At the time of the last inspection, leaders were asked to improve the quality of mathematics. You have been successful in addressing this aspect of the school's work. Pupils' progress and attainment in 2017 were above the national average at both key stage 1 and key stage 2. However, girls did not achieve as well as boys, so we focused on this aspect during this inspection.
- The mathematics leader has a good understanding of provision across the school. He has used assessment information effectively to track pupils' progress and ensures prompt and precise interventions for further improvement within the subject. For example, girls' achievement has been identified as an area for improvement and action taken to improve their outcomes.
- Leaders have introduced new ways of teaching mathematics to improve overall pupil achievement and ensure that girls engage more with the subject. They have provided staff with appropriate support and training. Teachers are now ensuring an increased emphasis on problem solving that requires pupils to reason and apply their mathematical skills. For example, Year 6 pupils had to apply their understanding of percentages, decimals and fractions to work out the best answer. Evidence in books and internal assessment information confirm that an increased proportion of pupils are making good progress in mathematics.
- Leaders and teachers have worked effectively to improve girls' confidence and attitudes to mathematics. As a result, girls engage well and are learning to be resilient when faced with difficult tasks. Girls say that they enjoy mathematics and are confident to ask for help when needed. Girls are now making better progress than boys in some year groups and the attainment gap between boys and girls has closed in the majority of classes.

- We also looked at the wider curriculum beyond English and mathematics, as part of the inspection. This was because the school's curriculum information on its website was incomplete and because, at the previous inspection, leaders had been asked to improve opportunities for pupils to apply mathematics in a wide range of subjects and situations.
- Teaching across the school is typically characterised by high expectations in English and mathematics, strong relationships with pupils and productive classroom environments. However, work in pupils' books indicates that expectations are not so consistently high across all other subjects. In subjects other than English and mathematics, there is variation in the quality of work in different subjects and classes.
- Leaders had identified these discrepancies and have begun to address the issue. During our scrutiny of work, we identified some examples of where pupils are achieving well across the wider curriculum. For example, evidence in science books in upper key stage 2 showed that pupils are making good progress in science and are able to apply their literacy skills within a different context. However, in some aspects teaching, in history and geography for example, there are indications that teachers' expectations are not consistently high across the whole curriculum.
- Teachers are ensuring that pupils are given opportunities to apply mathematics in other subjects, but this is at an early stage of development.
- The impact of good curriculum planning can be seen in some areas. For example, planning for computing is comprehensive and music provision is strong. However, the curriculum is not planned or delivered in sufficient depth in all subject areas. Nevertheless, the current curriculum is enhanced by carefully crafted visits through which pupils develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils say that they enjoy and appreciate the visits offered by the school and that these help them to learn.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they plan the curriculum so that pupils can develop their skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding across the full range of subjects
- teachers have consistently high expectations for learning in all subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-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

Janet Ross
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I visited classes together with you, the headteacher and assistant headteacher. We looked at the work in pupils' books during lessons, as well as looking separately at samples of work. I talked with pupils during our visits to the classrooms, as well as in informal situations and on the playground.

I met with you and members of your leadership team during the inspection and spoke with your administrators. I also met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body, and looked at minutes from governor meetings.

I took account of 111 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. I also considered 44 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

I reviewed the school's website and information about the school's academic performance. I considered a range of documents, including your summary of the school's effectiveness, the school improvement plan, as well as other documents and reports. I also looked at documents related to safeguarding.