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Ms Caroline Jarrett
Head of School
Grampound-with-Creed CofE School
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Dear Ms Jarrett

Short inspection of Grampound-with-Creed CofE School

Following my visit to the school on 26 February 2019, 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 2015.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of good as a result of this inspection.**

You have successfully maintained a positive environment for learning. The productive relationships that pupils enjoy with each other and with the staff help to promote their self-esteem and good behaviour. You work well with parents and carers, for example in improving pupils' attendance. Parents praise you and the staff for the good quality of care and attention you give to their children's welfare and personal development.

Children in the early years foundation stage are particularly motivated to learn by the innovative use of the indoor and outdoor spaces, including the story garden. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is increasing year on year in line with the national average. Pupils' achievement in the Year 1 phonics screening check is also rising and is above average. At the end of key stage 1 last year, more pupils than nationally achieved the higher standard in reading, although none achieved it in writing or mathematics.

Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is not rising year on year in line with the national average, and particularly at the higher standard. While attainment remains average, the gap between the pupils' results and the national average is widening. This is because pupils are not making consistently strong progress across

the year groups. In addition, disadvantaged pupils and the most able are not making as much progress as others. Not enough pupils achieve the higher standard, especially in writing and mathematics. Attainment at the higher standard and the level of challenge for the most able pupils were identified as areas for improvement in the last inspection. You and other leaders have not yet tackled these areas successfully.

Pupils' progress across subjects is also inconsistent. Pupils make least progress in writing. The work of current disadvantaged pupils throughout the school shows that gaps in their language development are a barrier to their learning. The strong progress that the most able pupils are making in writing in the early years foundation stage, and, currently, in key stage 1, is not sustained across key stage 2. Some pupils reported that they are not regularly given work that challenges them. In mathematics, pupils' reasoning skills are not being developed well. Consequently, too few pupils are reaching the higher standard in writing and mathematics.

A key factor in the variation in pupils' learning is the lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluating the progress of individual pupils and groups throughout the school. The new monitoring system provided by the multi-academy trust (MAT) and the effective challenge and support from your new school improvement partner are supporting you in improving the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' progress. The evaluation of progress is not yet robust enough to inform improvements in teaching and learning in all year groups and subjects or to ensure that trust directors have an accurate view of pupils' progress.

Effective coordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is provided through the MAT. It includes rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' progress and identifies accurate priorities for improvement. This strong leadership is successfully supporting teachers and teaching assistants in improving the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND. Consequently, the pupils' progress is improving strongly across year groups and subjects.

Safeguarding is effective.

MAT directors and the monitoring council have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and in preventing extremism and radicalisation. This gives them the secure knowledge and confidence to identify and address potential issues. You are vigilant in making sure that pupils are supported effectively, including by external agencies when necessary. You work closely with families and support them well in keeping their children safe. Records are maintained appropriately, including the single central record of the required checks on staff. Pupils say they feel safe in school and parents agree.

Inspection findings

- To ascertain whether the school remains good, my first line of enquiry was to check how successfully leaders and managers are addressing the variance in progress of pupil groups across the school. In particular, my enquiry focused on how effectively teachers use assessment to improve the progress of boys, disadvantaged pupils and those with high prior attainment. Over time, these pupils have not made as much progress as others.
- You and the teachers have successfully revised the curriculum themes and class readers to engage the boys more in their learning. Consequently, boys made more progress than girls in 2018. The new monitoring system is helping teachers to identify gaps in learning and to set clear expectations for pupils of what they can achieve. However, weaknesses in disadvantaged pupils' vocabulary and sentence structure are not being addressed effectively to enable them to make strong progress. The pupil premium is not being used well to improve their learning and progress.
- The most able pupils are not being challenged enough across year groups in key stage 2. Consequently, too few are achieving greater depth in their learning. The MAT coordination of provision for pupils with SEND includes accurately identifying gaps in their learning and ensures that teachers and teaching assistants address them well. Leaders are not yet rigorously monitoring and evaluating the progress of pupils other than those with SEND to ensure that it is consistently strong across the year groups.
- My second line of enquiry was to check how well leaders and managers are improving pupils' uneven progress across subjects, particularly in writing. I also wanted to know if the proportion of pupils reaching greater depth in their learning is improving. My enquiry included a focus on the reasons for the pupils' stronger achievement in phonics and reading than in writing and mathematics.
- In key stage 1, the teaching of writing is improving and, with the exception of disadvantaged pupils, most current pupils are making better progress. However, sentence structure in writing and reasoning in mathematics are not being taught systematically across key stage 2. The pupils are not making enough progress, particularly at the higher standard. Teachers' subject knowledge is not up to date in these areas as there are no English or mathematics leaders in this small school. You have accurately identified the need to extend pupils' thinking and verbal responses in order to improve their writing. You have recently introduced a suitable initiative for this purpose. However, it is too soon to see any impact on pupils' progress.
- Improvements in the teaching of phonics and comprehension, together with regular reading homework, continue to promote stronger progress in reading than in writing or mathematics, especially in key stage 1.
- With the exception of the leadership of SEND provision, leaders are not monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress robustly enough to inform improvements in teaching and learning across subjects. Weaknesses in

evaluation are not enabling trust directors to gain an accurate view of progress across year groups and subjects.

- My third line of enquiry related to the effectiveness of your strategies for addressing persistent absence. Persistent absence was above the national average in 2018, particularly for pupils with SEND who were receiving support. I also wanted to know how well pupils behave. This is because the rate of fixed-term exclusions was above the national average in 2017. Again, this involved pupils with SEND.
- You have substantially reduced the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent. Your effective strategies include robust tracking of pupils' attendance, challenging parents not to make medical appointments in school time and awarding pupils for full attendance. Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. You provide effective support for those who have behavioural needs. This enables them to learn to manage their anger and to focus on their learning. There have been no exclusions since 2017.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching secures consistently strong progress for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and most-able pupils, across year groups and subjects by:
 - addressing systematically gaps in pupils' language development, particularly in their sentence structure and vocabulary
 - developing their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - challenging more pupils to achieve the higher standard
 - drawing on expertise in the leadership of English and mathematics within the MAT to keep teachers' subject knowledge up to date
- leadership improves through:
 - building on the effective MAT coordination of provision for pupils with SEND
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels rigorously monitor and evaluate the progress of individual pupils and groups across all year groups and subjects
 - using the findings to inform improvements in the quality of teaching and learning
 - enabling trust directors to gain an accurate view of progress, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and most-able pupils, across year groups and subjects
 - ensuring that the pupil premium is used effectively to improve disadvantaged pupils' learning and progress.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of Celtic Cross Education Multi-Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Truro, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, your new school improvement partner, the MAT special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader and the teacher for the Year 1, 2 and 3 class. There are no designated English and mathematics leaders in this small school. I also met with a director, members of the monitoring council and the chief executive officer of the MAT. I met a few parents informally.

Together, you and I observed pupils learning in each of the three classes. Your school improvement partner joined us in examining a sample of writing and mathematics books from each year group. I listened to small groups of pupils reading. I also observed pupils at break, lunch and in the after-school club, and spoke informally to them and to staff.

I examined a range of documents, including your self-evaluation, improvement plan and documents relating to pupils' progress, attendance and safeguarding. I took account of the nine responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and four written responses from parents. I also took into consideration the seven responses to the pupil survey and 10 responses to the staff survey.