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Mrs Katy Quinn
Principal
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Dear Mrs Quinn

Short inspection of Teignmouth Community School, Mill Lane

Following my visit to the school on 9 March 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 the school was judged to be good in February 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have nurtured a highly skilled team of middle and senior leaders. Together, you have driven forward the improvements that you and directors have rightly prioritised. The number of pupils on roll has almost doubled as a result of the school's increasingly positive reputation and local housing developments. The influx of pupils to the school throughout the year has provided you with some challenges; for example, there are 60 pupils now in Year 6 and only 30 were with you at key stage 1. You are not complacent. Your team quickly identify the new pupils' needs and abilities so that they receive the support they need to make good rates of progress. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others. Typically, parents comment on the 'dedication of the teaching staff'. However, a few parents feel that senior leaders are difficult to contact and do not deal adequately with their concerns. You were disappointed to hear the few negative views of parents and immediately set about discussions with your leadership team to address these issues. I found that leaders were assiduous in following the formal complaints process.

Since the previous inspection, directors took the decision to develop provision for two-year-olds. This has paid dividends. Historically, a number of children have needed additional support with speech and language when they enter the school as three-year-olds. In admitting children earlier, you have ensured that these children are receiving the support they need sooner. Consequently, children entering the Reception Year are better prepared for learning.

At the previous inspection, you were asked to ensure that teaching in key stage 1 consistently accelerates pupils' progress. Until the blip in 2016, pupils' outcomes at key stage 1 improved year on year and were consistently above the national average. You have worked swiftly to successfully bring current pupils back on track.

The previous inspection report also identified the need to provide regular opportunities for teachers to share best practice. Work with other schools, such as those in the All Saints Teaching School Alliance, has been effective in developing teachers' talent. Your 'Directory of Effective Practice' has allowed teachers and teaching assistants to 'buddy up' and learn from each other. In particular, expertise in developing pupils' positive attitudes to learning has resulted in firmly established and successful systems for all to follow. Consequently, pupils speak proudly of their school and take great pride in their learning.

Safeguarding is effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Directors' considerable investment in a highly skilled safeguarding team reflects their resolve to ensure that pupils in the school receive the utmost level of care and support. Pupils have a strong understanding of 'child protection' and the right to be safe. They know the people to go to if they have concerns and express great faith in staff. The strong programme of personal, social and health education ensures that pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles. Pupils feel safe and show a clear understanding of risks and how to stay safe, for example when they are using the internet or when they are visiting the beach. Leaders have effectively sought solutions to support pupils' mental health, linking families with specialist providers. Attendance is good because pupils enjoy school.

Staff and directors receive appropriate training in safeguarding. As a result, all adults are alert to signs of harm. They respond positively to pupils and are well versed in recording and passing on concerns. Designated safeguarding leaders check referrals and take prompt action as needed. Leaders are diligent in maintaining records. They show an unwavering commitment to ensuring that pupils receive the support they need. For example, where agencies are slow to react, leaders provide challenge to the local authority's multi-agency safeguarding hub to ensure that action is accelerated.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on how leaders have ensured that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in key stage 1 leads to pupils making good progress. This was an area identified in the previous inspection. Outcomes from 2013 onwards reflect significant improvements. In 2015, outcomes in key stage 1 were a strength. However, you recognise that in 2016 there was a 'blip'. You had not anticipated the increased expectations in the new testing arrangements. In particular, a small group of boys did not make the expected progress in writing. The support you have put in place for these boys is paying dividends. They are making better progress this year. The impact of a programme started last year to

develop pupils' writing skills is now being felt. Current outcomes for Year 2 pupils suggest that a greater proportion are on track to achieve expected progress.

- Secondly, I looked at the progress of disadvantaged pupils in the school. The school's pupil premium report clearly identifies how funding was spent and its impact on pupils' outcomes, but only at the end of key stages. Although you accurately analyse outcomes, plans for improvement lack well-defined timescales and clear milestones. Consequently, there is a lack of rigour in reporting pupils' progress. This hinders directors' ability to provide the urgent challenge required. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points but few make rapid progress. Skilled teaching assistants provide timely interventions. However, you recognise that detailed and careful analysis of disadvantaged pupils' progress would help you to 'fine tune' this provision so that more disadvantaged pupils achieve high standards.
- Historically, pupils' outcomes in writing, particularly boys', have been lower than in other subjects. In 2016, achievement at both key stages 1 and 2 declined. In contrast, writing outcomes in the early years continued to be strong and the number of pupils meeting the expected standard continued to increase. You have taken robust action to ensure that the good start pupils receive in the early years is continued. Standards in writing are now back on track. Pupils are taking a stronger lead in choosing topics that interest them; for example, pupils are studying 'Robots' and 'Super heroes'. Leaders carefully check that work is matched to pupils' needs and that teachers' expectations are suitably high. Swift and comprehensive action by the English leader has supported improvements in pupils' writing. Effective training has resulted in teachers' improved subject knowledge of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Teachers have raised their expectations of pupils' handwriting. Accurate assessments across the school show that a greater proportion of pupils are on track to achieve the high standards this year. Pupils' workbooks in Year 6 demonstrate particularly strong progress.
- My final line of enquiry focused on the quality of the science curriculum in developing pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. In 2016, outcomes in science at both key stage 1 and 2 were below the national average. You had correctly identified this as an area for improvement. Teachers' plans cover science subject knowledge in sufficient depth. However, work in books is inconsistent in science. Although teaching develops pupils' subject knowledge, as for example in the water cycle, the solar system and plant life, there is less emphasis on the development of scientific investigative skills. Work to strengthen pupils' skills in science is just beginning.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- plans for improvement are sufficiently detailed so that leaders and directors can hold teachers more rigorously to account so that more pupils make rapid progress
- procedures to build pupils' investigative skills in science are developed further.

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

Yours sincerely

Tracy Hannon
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, your senior leaders joined me observing learning in key stages 1 and 2. We looked at a number of pupils' books. I spoke with pupils in lessons and met with a small group of pupils in the afternoon. Meetings were held with you, other senior and middle leaders and the chief executive officer for the Teignmouth Learning Trust. I also met with eight directors of the trust.

I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan, assessment information and safeguarding records. I considered the views of 43 parents who responded to Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires of 35 pupils and 27 members of staff.