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Julie Lamb
Headteacher
Troon Community Primary School
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Camborne
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Dear Mrs Lamb

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Troon Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school 28 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in November 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - extending teachers' subject knowledge in the teaching of mathematics
 - developing teachers' skills in assessing pupils' understanding during the lesson, addressing any misconceptions and promoting further learning for all.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, pupils, and several members of the Governing Body. A telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local

authority to determine the quality of external support since the last inspection. The school improvement plan and Ofsted action plan were evaluated, together with other relevant documents. We jointly observed mathematics lessons in all classes and examined pupils' mathematics and literacy books.

Context

Since the section 5 inspection, as Headteacher, you have also taken on responsibility for leading improvements in mathematics across the school. The school is to become a multi-academy trust with three other local primary phase schools on 1 April 2014.

Main findings

Improvements in teaching are leading to better progress for pupils, especially in mathematics. Pupils are guided well in lessons to ensure the right level of challenge for them. This means that more pupils are working at the higher levels. Pupils say that they are making better progress in mathematics because the teachers demonstrate and explain the methods more clearly. This was clearly evident in the lessons observed. Also, they are supported by an increased range of practical resources. The pupils enjoy solving problems in pairs and they work very productively. Through targets and teachers' marking, they know what to do to improve their work. Consequently, gaps in achievement are closing for more able pupils and for those supported by pupil premium funding.

Strengths in teaching include high expectations, attention to developing pupils' vocabulary and use of language, and good use of teaching assistants and resources, including information technology. Subject knowledge in mathematics is improving, although it is not yet consistently strong. Teachers now make effective use of assessment to plan work at the right levels for different pupils. Marking is detailed and there is evidence of pupils responding to teachers' comments. Not all teachers are assessing pupils' understanding enough during lessons to correct misconceptions and maintain a good pace of learning.

Due to the interesting curriculum, pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and their attendance continues to be above average. Pupils feel safe in school and the school's procedures for safeguarding are robust.

The effectiveness of the senior leaders is improving strongly. The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has ensured that improvement plans have more specific targets and tighter timescales that give a sense of urgency for improvement. This means that the senior team and governors can monitor improvements more closely during the year. The performance management of staff now focuses appropriately on improving pupils' achievement. The headteacher has also ensured that plans focus more precisely on how to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics.

Recently introduced family learning programmes in numeracy are also helping parents to support their children's learning.

Governors have carried out an audit of their skills and have reviewed their roles and responsibilities. This is leading to an improved focus on the priorities for improvement during their school visits and feedback to the full Governing Body. As a result of additional training, governors are now clear about their role in holding the school to account for the progress being made by all pupils. Minutes of their meetings show that they ask challenging questions, for example about the performance of more able pupils and those supported by the pupil premium. This helps the school to maintain the focus on these groups and, as a result, their academic achievement is improving.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The headteacher has been proactive in seeking support from a local school with outstanding provision in mathematics. In addition, she is drawing on a variety of other school-to-school support to good effect. The range includes identifying and adopting features of good and outstanding teaching, and developing pupils' literacy skills. In view of this strong leadership, the local authority appropriately provides light touch support. It monitors the school's performance closely and has provided an effective middle management programme for the English subject leader. The local authority has also conducted an effective review of the Governing Body.

The Chair of the Governing Body and the headteacher found Ofsted's 'Getting to Good' seminar very helpful. As a result of the seminar, the headteacher has sharpened staff performance management targets and has included support staff in performance management procedures. She is also supporting staff through coaching them more systematically. Consequently, the quality of teaching is becoming much more consistent, especially in mathematics, and is raising pupils' achievement.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector