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13 June 2015

Mr S Welch  
Headteacher  
St Stephen Churchtown Community Primary School  
Creakavose  
St Austell  
Cornwall  
PL26 7NZ

Dear Mr Welch

### **Special measures monitoring inspection of St Stephen Churchtown Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 13 June 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2015.

### **Evidence**

During this inspection, I held meetings with you, the interim Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors and a representative from the local authority. I evaluated the local authority's statement of action and the school's action plans. You accompanied me on a tour of the school and together we made short visits to each class.

### **Context**

Since the inspection one teacher has left the school. An interim Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed by the local authority and two new members have joined the governing body. Five governors have left.

The school has had a meeting with the Department for Education about becoming an academy. A meeting is shortly to take place with a possible sponsor.

## **The quality of leadership and management at the school**

Following the inspection, you drew up an action plan to address the areas identified for improvement in the report. While the plan includes details about how the leadership team of the school will monitor the proposed improvements, it does not address all of the individual points in the report which state what the school needs to do to improve further. The plan is not written with sufficient precision and detail to show how the school will improve the quality of teaching. Also, the link between this and expected outcomes for pupils is not always evident.

You have recently introduced revised arrangements for leadership across the school in order to create teams which will be responsible for improvements. A number of new and experienced staff have been appointed for September and you are increasing the time for the inclusion leader to work on her role. The outcomes of these actions are now critical for the school and it is important that their impact is measured precisely.

The local authority had already brokered support from a National Leader of Education from January 2015. He, together with a number of external consultants, is working to improve the quality of teaching and learning. However, the impact of this is not yet evident and the percentage of pupils who are predicted to make good progress from their starting points is likely to remain below national averages. Following the inspection, the local authority acted quickly to draw up a statement of action and commissioned a review of the pupil premium, the additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils. A detailed action plan on the pupil premium is being implemented. The school has presented data to show that the progress of those pupils in receipt of this funding is beginning to speed up. The local authority has already carried out its first formal monitoring visit to the school and provided a helpful report. It recently commissioned a financial audit which identified weaknesses in the school's management of its finances and a governors' committee is now addressing these rapidly.

Following the inspection, a highly experienced National Leader of Governance was appointed as the interim Chair by the local authority. She has acted swiftly and decisively and has conducted an audit of governors' skills. Through this process she has identified where weaknesses exist, has established revised roles to monitor the work of the school and has begun to provide guidance and training for the governing body. A very comprehensive governors' action plan now exists and the interim Chair is providing valuable support in showing governors how they can hold the school tightly to account. She is ensuring that all governors understand the need to play a more active role in the life of the school. She is confident that by the time she

relinquishes her role the governing body will have the capacity and necessary skills to be able to provide strong governance. Given the current audits, it is entirely appropriate that the required review of governance does not take place until the autumn term.

Following the monitoring inspection the following judgements were made:

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's action plan is not fit for purpose.

I have requested the school to revise this action plan prior to my next visit to make clearer:

- the actions which it will take to improve the quality of teaching
- how it will address the needs of the disadvantaged pupils
- the outcomes which the proposed actions will be expected to show in relation to pupil progress.

The school may not appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Marcia Headon  
**Additional Inspector**