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27 February 2017

Mrs Susie Evans
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Evans

Short inspection of Wembury Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 7 February 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 November 2011.

This school continues to be good.

You and your leadership team have maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. This is due to your proven ability to identify the right priorities for development that remedy weaknesses and promote further improvement.

Leaders fully support your drive for continual improvement. Governors visit the school frequently and often join staff in checking the work of the school. As a result, leaders at all levels play an effective role in bringing about improvement.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors noted several strengths of the school. These included a calm and harmonious atmosphere and the pupils' good behaviour and pride in the school. Inspectors also recognised the interesting learning experiences provided for the pupils and their good achievement on leaving the school. This inspection affirms these continuing strengths and notes the enriched early years provision that enables children to learn well in their first year at the school.

The previous inspection also identified that governors needed to improve safeguarding procedures and hold the school to account more rigorously. Governors have successfully addressed these matters and now fulfil these and other statutory duties effectively.

You continue to accurately evaluate the work of the school and are embedding improved procedures to record pupils' progress. You are able to explain clearly the school's strengths, as well as areas that still require improvement. Together we examined your evaluations of pupils' learning, which accurately reflected evidence gathered during the inspection, such as the work produced in pupils' books.

Although improving, we agreed that some teachers had needed to be even more consistent in the levels of challenge offered to middle-ability and higher-ability pupils. We identified that teachers increasingly deepen pupils' ability to explain ideas to extend writing and problem-solving skills. However, this approach to enable pupils to achieve greater depth in their learning has not yet been in place long enough to have full impact in all classes.

Safeguarding is effective.

A strong culture of safeguarding is evident in the school. For example, staff know the pupils well and sustain an effective extra 'watching brief' over those considered to be vulnerable. All staff participate in regular training and know what to do and whom to contact if a referral about child protection should arise. Staff also raise pupils' awareness about how to stay safe and keep others safe, including at breaktimes while new fencing is constructed.

Senior staff, leaders and governors work effectively as a team to keep all safeguarding procedures up to date and fit for purpose. For example, the governors have responded to parents' concerns and have strengthened the security of the school site to keep pupils safe.

Parents agree that their children are kept safe at school. Pupils who spoke to me also readily said that they feel safe and well looked after at the school. They told me that behaviour is good. School records and inspection observations support this view.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to examine how you ensure that teachers across key stage 2 set suitable levels of challenge in the work presented to pupils, especially in writing.
- I found that you and your staff continue to promote pupils' good progress through key stage 2. Leaders, including those responsible for leading subjects, share their expertise to sustain a good quality of teaching. This is strengthening the way teachers use assessments of what pupils know and can do to set work that meets their different needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers.

- Teachers in key stage 2 nurture pupils' interest and deepen their understanding by challenging them to talk about and explain their ideas. This is evident, for example, in pupils' writing books. This work confirms how their increasing ability to check their work is enabling them to improve their progress. Similarly, work in pupils' mathematics books shows that they are beginning to use their improving reasoning skills to explain how they tackle mathematical problems. These developments are rapidly improving pupils' skills. However, you know that some pupils, including those of middle and higher ability, are not yet making full use of their reasoning skills to deepen their ability to solve mathematical problems.
- My second line of enquiry investigated how effectively leaders and teachers are raising standards at the end of key stage 1.
- I identified that you have taken action to rectify inconsistencies in the quality of teaching in key stage 1 that led to some pupils not making the progress expected of them last year. You have provided additional training for teachers and teaching assistants to raise expectations of what pupils should achieve. These actions are raising the level of challenge in the work planned for pupils and are improving their engagement in learning. However, these developments are still relatively new and some of the most able pupils, in particular, are not yet making sufficient progress to reach the highest possible standards.
- My next line of enquiry examined the degree to which the range of learning experiences enables boys and girls to achieve equally successfully.
- The inspection found that you ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with a stimulating range of memorable learning experiences. Pupils have many opportunities to investigate topics that encompass art, geography, history, music and science. Topics, such as the Victorians, are specifically presented in a way that interests boys as much as girls. Pupils also learn well during a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These now include significantly increased numbers of sports clubs, such as that for cross-country running, which capture the interest of both boys and girls. Pupils' experiences are further enriched by being able to perform in several music and performing arts festivals.
- My final line of enquiry examined what actions you and the governors are taking to keep pupils safe and to reduce persistent absence.
- I identified that since the last inspection, you and the governors have improved the way you check and implement safeguarding procedures.
- In recent years, you have also worked more closely with parents and the educational welfare officer to promote better attendance. These actions have reduced persistent absence. Consequently, pupils' attendance so far this academic year matches the national average and continues to improve.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers in key stage 2 further develop pupils' reasoning skills, especially for middle-ability and higher-ability pupils, so that they are better able to solve mathematical problems
- teachers in key stage 1 maintain the increased levels of challenge needed to make sure that all pupils, especially the most able, achieve to the best of their ability.

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

Yours sincerely

Alexander Baxter
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you and with the deputy headteacher and other staff with leadership responsibilities. I also met with members of the governing body. I visited classrooms with you and together we scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books. I talked with individual pupils and support staff during the morning and lunch breaks. In addition, I met several parents before and during the school day. I examined a range of documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance and progress, and the school's self-evaluation and development plans. I also took account of the 58 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View.