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20 July 2017

Mr Adrian Massey, Executive Headteacher
Mrs Tamsin Preston, Head of School
Wadebridge Primary Academy
Gonvena Hill
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Dear Mr Massey and Mrs Preston

Short inspection of Wadebridge Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 27 June 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 academy was judged to be good in November 2012.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection and the school continues to improve.

You, the governors and staff are committed to your vision of an exemplary learning environment which motivates pupils and staff to achieve the highest standards. For example, you have established an exceptional curriculum which inspires in pupils a love of learning and motivates them to apply their mathematical skills and write about their learning experiences. Pupils and parents value highly the extensive range of learning opportunities provided. These include a wide range of extra-curricular sporting and artistic activities, and trips such as a residential to London and a meeting with the astronaut Tim Peake. You have successfully enabled boys who had previously been underachieving to excel through projects such as making and racing their own model cars in a national competition.

Your innovative development of the school site contributes very positively to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. For instance, pupils develop an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy eating through growing food in the polytunnel and cooking it in lessons taken by a nutritionist. A large number of pupils engage in exercise, inspired by facilities such as the multi-purpose track. In addition, pupils develop good social skills through the well-resourced playground activities. Those that need extra support learn to understand and control their emotions through a specific programme provided by highly trained staff.

You have improved provision in the early years foundation stage and developed a shared outside area that is exceptionally well resourced and used creatively by staff. For example, children in the Reception classes eagerly recorded the findings of their investigations into objects that float and sink while they were outside, having researched lifeboats when in the classroom.

The learning environment is enhanced by displays of pupils' work throughout the school, which are of high quality. They show particularly high standards in art work and improvements in writing, and support pupils' motivation and learning across a broad range of subjects. Given their very positive attitudes to learning and the progress they make, pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

You have tackled the recommendations from the previous inspection successfully. For instance, you have restructured the leadership team to enable more staff to be involved in driving improvement across the school. The leaders are very enthusiastic and motivated by the effective training and support they receive from the multi-academy trust. Several of them make good use of their expertise to support teachers in other schools in the trust. Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to apply their new skills across the curriculum to consolidate their learning. Also, teachers and teaching assistants make better use of assessment. As a result, pupils' progress is improving. However, some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or low prior attainment, including those who are disadvantaged, are not making as much progress as others.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and the governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. You have created a culture of vigilance with regard to safeguarding pupils. All staff and governors keep up to date with training, for example in safeguarding, safer recruitment and preventing radicalisation and extremism. This enables them to implement effectively the comprehensive policy and procedures that are in place. Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, including their attendance, are monitored rigorously and appropriate action is taken to address any issues. This includes working with external agencies when necessary. Incidents and absences are recorded well and followed up robustly.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They gain in confidence from the very positive relationships with each other and with staff. Parents and staff agree that the school keeps the children safe. Parents praise the caring ethos of the school and value the fact that the staff know their children well. Pupils learn how to keep safe, for example when using the internet or social media. Most pupils report that the few incidents of bullying are dealt with appropriately by staff. This is confirmed by school records.

Inspection findings

- To ascertain that the school remained good, the first line of enquiry explored how successfully leaders and managers are improving attainment at key stage 1 in

line with key stage 2. This is because published performance information in 2016 at the end of key stage 1 was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 was above the national average in 2016. We also looked at the progress of the most able pupils across key stages 1 and 2.

- The improvements you are making are underpinned by honest, accurate and rigorous self-evaluation. You, the trust and other leaders check pupils' progress systematically through observations of learning and scrutiny of pupils' work. You have an accurate understanding of the strengths and relative weaknesses and act on any areas for improvement quickly. As a result of leaders' actions, the quality of teaching across the school has improved; this is particularly the case in key stage 1.
- You have been successful in raising teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve. As a result, more pupils are exceeding the standards expected for their age. Pupils enjoy the more challenging work they now receive. For instance, one Year 6 pupil said that he liked the mathematics challenges involving reasoning, stating, 'They make my brain ache and when I get it right I am very happy.' The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are also making better progress in organising their writing into paragraphs and varying their sentence structure and vocabulary. They write in a neat, cursive style. They use a range of strategies, including phonics, to read unfamiliar texts fluently and with good comprehension.
- Current pupils in key stage 1 are making stronger progress this year. As a result, the school's assessment information shows that pupils' outcomes are improving. The proportion of pupils meeting the required standards in the phonics screening check has also increased this year. In key stage 2, the school's own performance information indicates that pupils' progress is good and continues to rise.
- A second line of enquiry was to see how well teachers are using assessment to improve progress across the school for boys, disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils with low prior attainment.
- Phase leaders hold teachers to account for the progress their pupils make and in moderating their assessments. Consequently, all staff take responsibility for pupils' progress across the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They use their accurate assessment to match activities and resources to the pupils' different starting points and needs. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning and make good, and sometimes rapid, progress, including in key stage 1.
- Most of the disadvantaged pupils are now making progress in mathematics, writing and reading, in line with the other pupils. However, their attainment is not catching up with the others quickly enough. They apply calculation skills in solving mathematical problems, use more complex sentences and adventurous vocabulary in their writing, and apply their knowledge of phonics in reading unfamiliar words. However, some of the pupils, including in key stage 1, are not reading regularly enough to tackle unfamiliar books fluently.
- While some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who have low prior attainment, including those who are disadvantaged, are making

good progress, others are not. This is because teachers are not identifying precisely enough the next steps in the pupils' learning. Some teachers do not yet have the confidence to adapt the national curriculum to ensure that they are filling the gaps in these pupils' basic skills while continuing to challenge the other pupils. These pupils are not secure in using calculation in solving problems. They are also not using a wide range of vocabulary and sentences when speaking and in their writing.

- The final line of enquiry looked at the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the attendance of specific groups of pupils. The low attendance of some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or low prior attainment, including those who are disadvantaged, contributes to these pupils' slower progress and results in the school's attendance overall being below average. However, attendance is gradually improving over time due to the wide range of strategies you implement. The strategies include rewards given in assemblies and staff collecting the pupils from home when necessary.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who have low prior attainment, make faster progress to catch up with others who have the same starting points by:
 - identifying precisely the next steps in their learning
 - filling any gaps in their basic skills in mathematics and English, including their ability to use calculation in solving problems and to use a wide range of vocabulary and sentences when speaking and in their writing
 - encouraging them to read regularly
 - continuing to work with their parents to improve their attendance.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, 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 this inspection, I spoke with you, the chief executive officer of the Bridge Multi Academy Trust, governors, other leaders and some parents. I made visits to lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning and to scrutinise their work. Together we examined a sample of work in pupils' books. I also heard some pupils reading.

I examined a range of documentary evidence, which included the school improvement plan and attendance, behaviour and safeguarding documentation. In addition, I took account of the 49 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey, the 36 responses to the online survey for staff and the 38 responses to the online survey for pupils.