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12 October 2017

Mr David Reardon
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Dear Mr Reardon

Short inspection of Trekener Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 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 June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. Your plans to improve the quality of teaching are carefully thought through. The effective leadership of the school is supported by a realistic school development plan which identifies the correct areas for improvement. Your monitoring records and the evidence from the inspection show that pupils currently in the school are making good progress. Leaders express high aspirations for their pupils and are well informed about all aspects of school life. There is a sense of teamwork across the school with a joint focus on improvement. Governors articulate clearly what the key priorities are to improve the school. They hold leaders to account for provision and outcomes.

All parents who responded to Parent View, the online inspection questionnaire, would not hesitate to recommend the school. Pupils and parents show a sense of united pride in their school and community. One parent summed this up, saying that Trekener is 'a wonderful school that encourages a real community feeling amongst children and parents'. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and want to do their best because teachers set work that encourages and inspires them. Teachers expect these same high standards of care for the learning environment.

Outcomes for pupils have fluctuated over recent years but they are now improving. In the 2016 key stage 2 national tests, outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics were below average. However, some caution needs to be taken when interpreting this information due to the very small number of pupils in Year 6. In

2017, key stage 2 outcomes were affected by a high proportion of pupils who entered school late in the key stage. While they made good progress during their time at Trekenner, there was much lost ground to catch up on. Nonetheless, the work in pupils' books and the school's own assessment information shows that all pupils currently in Year 6 are making strong progress from their starting points, with almost half working at the higher standard.

In 2017, outcomes for pupils in Year 2 were considerably stronger than previously, and this improvement typifies the improving standards being achieved by the school. Effective teaching in the early years has resulted in improving outcomes. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development is now in line with national standards. Achievement in subjects such as history and geography is strong across all year groups due to the thought-provoking activities used to deepen pupils' understanding and skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

You, your staff and governors have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are robust and fit for purpose. Governors carefully consider serious case reviews and high priority is given to ensuring that pupils are kept safe. This was confirmed by pupils who talked with confidence about how to stay safe when using information and communication technology. Responses from parents and carers also indicated that they were confident that their children are kept safe.

Pupils know about different forms of bullying. They report that bullying is rare and is taken seriously by their teachers. They say that staff are approachable and that they would have no hesitation seeking help if they had a worry or concern. The school works closely with a wide range of agencies to gain support for children and their families.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry focused on the impact of leaders' actions to improve standards in mathematics. This was because the previous inspection report stated that the most able pupils needed sufficient opportunities to focus on the more difficult aspects of mathematics. I explored what you and your teachers were doing to remedy this and checked to see if current pupils were making better progress.
- Your work in this regard is highly effective. You have introduced a mathematics programme of work which enables teachers to teach systematically the knowledge and skills that the pupils need to learn as they move through the school. You, the staff and your pupils refer to this mathematics approach as promoting 'deep learning'. Pupils of all abilities are effectively supported by highly skilled teaching assistants and through an investment in practical resources.
- The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, thrive on solving complex mathematical problems. This has improved the progress pupils are making throughout key stage 2. Inspection evidence confirms that the most able pupils use accurate terminology for some advanced mathematical concepts. As a

result, almost half of the current Year 6 pupils are working at the higher standard.

- Pupils in key stage 1 know how to use calculations effectively in mathematics. For example, they can count forwards and backwards with accuracy. They are also able to sort and classify a variety of shapes into groups. However, their problem-solving and reasoning skills are underdeveloped.
- My second line of enquiry explored the effectiveness of leaders' actions in improving outcomes in reading, including phonics. This was because in 2016 only half of the Year 2 pupils reached the expected standard in reading and none achieved at greater depth.
- Your phonics screening check for 2017 is showing another year where the difference between the school's result and the national average is diminishing. Teachers plan reading activities that are interesting and that allow pupils to develop their reading fluency in other curriculum subjects. However, teachers do not use precise assessments of pupils' phonic progress consistently well enough to inform their choice of appropriate reading books.
- Pupils across key stage 1 make good progress in reading. Ambitious teaching sets high expectations for pupils and, as a result, academic standards are rising. Reading outcomes improved significantly and rapidly in 2017, with a third of pupils in Year 2 working at the higher standard.
- My third line of enquiry explored how effectively the curriculum supports and develops pupils' independence and research skills. This was a focus because your previous inspection report identified it as an area for development.
- The curriculum is rich and stimulating. It has been developed to meet the needs of the pupils in this school and is enriched with a wide range of additional experiences that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Many opportunities are provided that help pupils to develop an understanding of democracy, respect and tolerance and these help pupils to become effective citizens in modern Britain.
- A wide range of new information and communication technologies is used effectively within the curriculum. Pupils evaluate their own learning experiences and engage in dialogue with their teachers and classmates about how they can further improve. Pupils' discussions are purposeful and help to develop good listening and speaking skills, as well as providing the opportunity to share ideas and different approaches.
- Mathematics activities are used effectively to raise standards across key stage 2 through an enquiry-based approach to learning. The recent focus on including mathematics and engineering to support technological study is also having a positive impact on outcomes in science, with all Year 6 pupils achieving the expected standard at the end of key stage 2 in 2016.
- My final line of enquiry focused on the impact of the school's systems to ensure that pupils' attendance is good, particularly in relation to persistent absenteeism.
- During recent years, overall attendance, and specifically that of boys, has sometimes been below levels found nationally. Leaders' own detailed analysis of

attendance records shows that the higher rate of persistent absence of boys in 2016 was due to a very small number of pupils. The school worked effectively with other agencies to resolve any attendance issues at the earliest point.

- Leaders have acted successfully to improve attendance and current rates are in line with national averages. Maintaining high rates of attendance remains a priority for the school.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the precision of assessments in phonics improves, particularly with respect to providing appropriate reading material
- pupils across key stage 1 are provided with more problem-solving opportunities to develop their mathematical thinking and understanding
- high rates of attendance are maintained.

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

Susan Costello
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met regularly with you as part of a professional dialogue. I also met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I spoke informally with other members of staff. Together, we undertook a walk through all classrooms, focusing on learning in lessons. We spoke with pupils about their work and examined pupils' work, focusing on mathematics, English and science. I heard some key stage 1 pupils read to me. Before the inspection, I examined a variety of documents, including the school's website, published performance information and a summary of its self-evaluation. I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including minutes from governors' meetings and case files. I also considered 25 responses to the online survey, Parent View.