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Mr Lee Bacchus  
Headteacher  
St Teath Community Primary School  
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Dear Mr Bacchus

### **Short inspection of St Teath Community Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 December 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 2012.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since 2012, St. Teath School has radically changed: it has become considerably larger. Many more pupils have joined the school, often in the later stages of key stage 2. You have restructured your leadership team to reflect this growth and the federation with St. Breward School. Furthermore, the restructure of the leadership team also reflects the change in your responsibilities now that you are also the headteacher of Camelford Primary School. During these developments, you, your staff and the governing body have successfully maintained strengths identified at the previous inspection. These include the high standard of pupils' behaviour, welfare and other aspects of personal development. Pupils are enthusiastic about their school. Most parents also value the school and give it considerable support. Nevertheless, a few parents reported to me that communications between home and school are not always as strong as they would like them to be.

You have improved the school in some key aspects. You and your staff have developed a new assessment system, which now allows you to check pupils' progress accurately. This, in turn, helps staff to determine which pupils would benefit from additional support. You have used pupil premium funding to pay for additional staff support for the small number of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers have benefited from training opportunities, which have helped to make their teaching more effective, for example in mathematics. Governors have become more

knowledgeable about the curriculum and pupils' learning. Consequently, the governing body is now better able to both support the leadership and challenge it to justify its decisions.

When the school was last inspected, you and your staff were asked to ensure that a higher proportion of pupils made better-than-expected progress. In order to achieve this, the inspector recommended that you work with teachers to make sure that they more consistently pitched work at the right level for pupils. Supported by your staff, you have made progress in tackling these issues, although you recognise that further improvements are still necessary.

Pupils feel safe in school. They feel that their teachers are kind, very supportive and look after them well. Most parents agree with their children. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above average. They would recommend the school to their friends.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

You have made sure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. I talked to teachers about safeguarding procedures; they know their responsibilities and how they should respond if they have any concerns. I looked at the detailed and high-quality records that are in place. These show how conscientiously you and your staff identify and support vulnerable pupils.

Staff and governors have had appropriate training to update their knowledge of potential issues surrounding child protection and other aspects of safeguarding. For example, you and your staff have addressed the more recent concerns that have arisen about the dangers of radicalisation and internet abuse. You have tried to increase parents' awareness of these issues. For example, you have given them and their children the opportunity to express online any safeguarding concerns they might have, however small.

One of the reasons that attendance is good is because pupils feel safe. You check attendance patterns carefully. You also give pupils the opportunity to discuss any possible concerns about bullying in assemblies and in lessons.

The successful efforts that you, other staff and governors make ensure that there is a strong and sustained culture of safeguarding. This underpins pupils' personal development and gives pupils a positive environment in which to learn.

### **Inspection findings**

- My first line of enquiry was about the rate of pupils' progress throughout the school, especially in writing. I looked at published information about achievement, pupils' work and the school's records of attainment and progress. Published information about achievement has to be treated with caution, because year groups are small and pupil groups vary in size and ability year on year. However, the school population, although still small by national comparisons, has

risen considerably in recent years. For example, in 2017, over half the pupils who took the Year 6 national tests had joined the school after Year 4. Therefore, I focused a lot of my time during the inspection looking at the work of pupils currently in the school. I discussed progress with you, other leaders, staff, governors and the local authority.

- Children join Reception with varying levels of skills, personal development and knowledge. Often, they are relatively weak in basic language, communication and numeracy skills. Outcomes for these children are improving. Staff are teaching phonics more skilfully, and children in Reception are making better, and often good, progress.
- Progress in key stage 1 has not always been as good as it should have been. This has been evident, for example, in the phonics check, which the school undertakes each year. However, progress is improving. I heard several pupils in Years 1 and 2 read, and most pupils read with confidence and fluency. They talked with interest about their reading.
- The progress of pupils in key stage 2 has been variable, and the Year 6 writing assessment results in 2017 were disappointing. This was partly due to factors very specific to this particular group of pupils. One of these factors was that only a minority of pupils being assessed had been in the school throughout key stage 2. Progress has now improved for all groups of pupils. This is because you and your staff have recognised the need for improved attainment and progress. You have put measures in place to achieve this.
- Despite improved progress, you recognise that more can still be done. You acknowledge in your development plan that progress in writing should be improved further for pupils of different abilities, including the most able. This applies not just to work in English but also to pupils' writing in other subjects, such as science.
- My second line of enquiry focused on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. These were judged as good at the last inspection, and you have maintained the strengths in teaching. Pupils said that they enjoy their lessons and clearly have respect for teachers, whom they see as having their best interests at heart. As a result, pupils have a positive attitude towards learning.
- Teachers use resources well and deploy teaching assistants effectively to support those who need additional help with their learning. Staff have benefited from improved arrangements for their own professional development. More systematic monitoring and assessment have sharpened teachers' awareness of what pupils should be achieving.
- You recognise that teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve, both in individual lessons and over time, although generally high, need to be consistently so. There has been improved teaching of mathematics and development of pupils' reading skills as a result of raising staff awareness of expectations. However, teachers' expectations of the range and depth of pupils' writing are not always high enough, especially in subjects outside of English lessons. For example, tasks in topics with an historical or geographical focus are sometimes not challenging enough for older pupils in particular.

- My third line of enquiry focused on the capacity of leadership to bring about further improvement. You have maintained previous strengths. You are now assisted by more knowledgeable and active governors. Relatively recently, as the school has grown in size, your restructuring of the senior leadership team has helped to make the monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress more effective. These developments show that not only has the school improved in some key respects, but it has the capacity to improve further.
- A recent development has been the appointment of subject leaders of English and mathematics. They have demonstrated their enthusiasm for their role in leading other staff to further improve pupils' core skills. You recognise that these are key appointments, and it is your aim to develop middle leadership further in other subjects. This should ensure a greater emphasis on the appropriate development of skills and knowledge across the curriculum as pupils move upwards through the school. You recognise the importance of developing this middle-leadership role as part of current school improvement, in order to consolidate and build on gains already made.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers provide more opportunities for all pupils to write in a greater range and depth both in their English work and in other subjects, thereby further improving the quality of writing
- the role of middle leaders is strengthened and embedded so that they can play a more effective role in monitoring and strengthening teaching, learning and progress in the subjects for which they are responsible.

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

John Laver  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your deputy and several members of staff, including subject leaders. I accompanied you to all the classrooms to briefly observe pupils' learning and behaviour. I met governors, including the chair of the governing body. I had one telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority, and another with a parent.

I met several older pupils, to talk with them about their experiences of school. I

listened to some key stage 1 pupils reading. I looked at pupils' books. I considered the school's self-evaluation, and looked at records of achievement for current pupils and the school's planning for improvement. I also looked at information about attendance and various documents relating to safeguarding.

I took account of 30 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I also read several comments written by parents. I analysed the results of both the pupil and staff questionnaires about the school.