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Mr Geoff Smith  
Headteacher  
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Kehelland  
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Dear Mr Smith

### **Short inspection of Kehelland Village School**

Following my visit to the school on 25 January 2018, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in January 2015.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since that inspection, the school has joined the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, consisting of 20 schools.

You lead a dedicated staff team that is rightly proud of the school's promotion of individual virtues. Pupils receive a high level of support for their emotional, behavioural and social needs, and every child is valued and cared for. You lead the school with calm authority, and parents and carers appreciate that you are always approachable if they need to discuss any issues. Staff feel respected and valued by school leaders and by the local community. The school is supported effectively by the multi-academy trust and through the strong links between school leaders and the availability of trust-led training opportunities.

At the previous inspection, school leaders were asked to ensure that all teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills through problem solving. You were also asked to improve the accuracy of pupils' spelling. You have made sure that high-quality training has been provided to improve the skills of teachers and teaching assistants in mathematics. This has led to significant improvements in pupils' outcomes in mathematics across the school as shown in pupils' workbooks. Teachers in all classes regularly challenge pupils to use their growing mathematical skills to solve problems, and this is helping to raise standards. Teachers are also making sure that pupils spell accurately when they are writing in subjects across the curriculum. Pupils described how they use 'spelling walls' in their workbooks to learn new words.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

You and other leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Training is up to date, records are well maintained and checks on teachers and other staff before they join the school are thorough. In your role as the designated safeguarding lead, you have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. You work effectively with external agencies to make sure that pupils receive the support that they need.

Pupils receive useful information to help them stay safe in school, outside it and when online. Pupils told me that they are well looked after at school. They said that bullying is very rare and they gave clear explanations of whom they would talk to if they were to have concerns. Nearly all parents who completed the online questionnaire stated that their children are happy and safe at school. One parent told me, 'The staff go above and beyond to ensure the children are safe, happy and confident.'

## **Inspection findings**

At the start of the inspection, we agreed the particular aspects of the school's work on which the inspection would focus.

- The first line of enquiry considered how leaders are ensuring that the most able pupils in key stage 2 are reaching their potential in reading. This has been identified as a key priority by the school and is in response to falling outcomes in reading in the 2017 national assessments for reading at greater depth.
- Your accurate analysis of pupils' current progress in reading shows that standards are rising in reading across the school, including reading at greater depth. Some of the most able readers from Year 6 were able to give me numerous examples of how the school has enabled them to read at more challenging levels. One pupil described how her teacher had encouraged her to broaden her reading choices, 'My teacher told me not to judge a book by its cover, so I don't anymore!' Another pupil described the library as being, 'jam-packed with exciting books'. You make sure that the library is the hub of the school and filled with reading material to suit all pupils. For example, you have created a comprehensive display of fiction and non-fiction books that have leading female characters. You did this based on current research that suggests there are few books of this nature for young readers.
- The next line of enquiry focused on how effectively leaders are ensuring that teachers challenge pupils to make the progress they are capable of in mathematics. Attainment in mathematics at key stage 1 was below the national average in 2017 and below average at key stage 2 for pupils working at greater depth. This aspect has featured on the school's improvement plan for the current year, and school leaders have secured effective support from the multi-academy trust. The leader of mathematics for the trust has provided effective training for the leading teacher of mathematics at the school. She has led school-based training that has significantly improved the quality of teaching across the school. Consequently, standards in mathematics are rising in each class, and a higher proportion of pupils work at expected levels and at greater depth.

- Pupils' workbooks show that teachers and support staff are challenging pupils to reach higher levels in mathematics. For example, the most able pupils in Year 5 are pushed in their thinking when working alongside older pupils to successfully tackle multi-step problems that involve fractions and decimals. In key stage 1, Year 1 pupils develop their understanding of number well when making good use of practical resources to find all of the possible solutions to problems and challenges set. Current initiatives are leading to a greater proportion of Year 2 pupils working at higher levels in mathematics, as shown by progress in workbooks since September 2017. However, you agree that these initiatives need to have further impact so that outcomes at key stage 1 match those seen nationally for pupils working at greater depth.
- The third line of enquiry assessed how well leaders check that additional funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for the most able disadvantaged pupils. In 2017, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils were strong compared with national averages for pupils achieving expected levels in reading and writing. However, none of this group reached the higher levels in these areas.
- You and your staff have a detailed understanding of how additional funding has been used effectively to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and to help them to overcome identified barriers to their learning. The most able disadvantaged pupils from Years 5 and 6 were able to show me how well they are improving by referring to their English and topic workbooks. There is clear evidence to show that these pupils are currently working at higher levels in reading and writing. Their rates of progress are similar to, or higher than, those shown by other pupils working at greater depth.
- School governors have a good understanding of the school's overall provision for disadvantaged pupils and of how this is helping pupils to attend more regularly and be more successful in their learning. However, governors do not have a detailed awareness of the effectiveness of initiatives paid for by the additional funding, particularly of how these initiatives help the pupils to achieve the levels that they are capable of. You agree that this hinders governors' ability to hold leaders to account for this aspect of the school's work and that this is an area for improvement.
- The final line of enquiry investigated what action leaders had taken to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils. In 2016, the rate of absence for pupils eligible for free school meals was well above national averages and in the top 10% nationally. Leaders have introduced a wide range of effective strategies to improve attendance. For example, you have used funding to provide music tuition and resources that have captured the imagination of a number of disadvantaged pupils. This has encouraged them to attend school more regularly and has improved their self-confidence and sense of value. The rate of attendance for this group is currently well above the national average for all pupils.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the percentage of pupils working at greater depth in mathematics by the end of key stage 1 increases to at least match the national average
- school governors carefully check that the school's use of additional funding is enabling

the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve the standards they are capable of.

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

Paul Hodson  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, I met with you, your staff, governors, the chief executive officer of the trust and a headteacher from the trust who has recently supported the school. We visited each classroom to observe learning and behaviour. We looked at pupils' workbooks throughout the school and talked with pupils in each class and at a separate meeting. We considered the school's information on the progress being made by current pupils across the school.

I reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and plans for improvement. I looked at various documents related to safeguarding, including the central record and examples of referrals made to external agencies.

We gathered views from parents and took account of 22 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. I received several free-text responses from parents. There were no responses to the staff or pupil questionnaires.