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Ms Jo-Anne Callow
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Ms Callow

Short inspection of Werrington Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 March 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 July 2012.

This school continues to be good.

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

You are the executive headteacher of both Werrington and North Petherwin Primary Schools. Since your appointment in 2012, Werrington has grown from 28 to 57 pupils, which reflects the school's growing popularity. Large proportions of current pupils have joined the school since their Reception Year. You and your staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils settle quickly, develop positive attitudes to learning and behave well. You ensure that staff meet all pupils' social and emotional needs as a priority and that there are robust processes and systems in place to support vulnerable pupils.

Relationships within the school are strong and supportive. Pupils are welcoming and polite, both to visitors and to each other. Together with governors, staff and other leaders, you ensure that this is a happy, caring school which serves its community well. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers express their absolute confidence in the school, with 100% of those who responded through Parent View saying that they would recommend this school. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say that they feel safe. They know that if they have a problem a trusted adult will 'sort it out'.

In January 2016, the school joined the An Daras Multi-Academy Trust. This has strengthened the quality of teaching through sharing best practice and cross-school moderation of pupils' work. Staff value the opportunities such as shared moderation

and training that the trust gives them. You, your governors and other leaders are rightly proud of what you have achieved. You know the school's strengths and what needs to be improved. You have rightly identified that writing is a key focus for improvement across the school. The whole team is committed to improving their own practice to ensure the best outcomes for pupils.

Improvement since the last inspection is clear to see. At that time, inspectors identified that pupils' achievement in mathematics needed to improve. As a result of your actions and those of other leaders, the quality of mathematics teaching is much better. Pupils achieve well. Work on improving handwriting and presentation is ongoing and you are clear about the need for leaders to continue their focus on this area.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your team have worked effectively to establish a very strong culture for safeguarding in the school. All safeguarding systems and arrangements are fit for purpose. You have ensured that, through training, staff are vigilant and systematic in reporting any concerns about pupils. You are confident to follow up any concerns. Your positive relationships with families mean that this follow-up is effective and helps to keep pupils safe and well.

Pupils feel safe and well looked after when they are at school. They know whom to talk to if they have a problem and show kindness and respect towards one another, welcoming new pupils openly. The school's actions to address the poor attendance of some pupils has resulted in improvements. However, leaders are aware of the need for continued focus in this area.

Inspection findings

- The first area of focus for the inspection was how well the school promotes reading and how this has an impact on outcomes in writing. In the early years, children share high-quality texts with each other. Teachers are effective in developing children's early love of reading. The school has invested in high-quality materials, books and schemes which engage pupils in reading. Pupils read with enjoyment and demonstrate a love of reading. Attitudes to reading are positive; even when pupils find texts challenging they persevere. Pupils respond positively to reading rewards. In addition, leaders' determined actions have been effective in raising the profile of reading at home with parents.
- Teachers make sure that reading activities link with different subjects. This is engaging more boys in reading by appealing to their interests. Leaders have established effective whole-school approaches to developing reading. End of key stage tests in 2017 reflect improvements in pupils' reading progress. In addition, the number of pupils reaching the expected standard for their age increased. Current pupils continue to make good progress in reading.
- However, leaders' checks on the teaching of reading and writing are not yet precise or urgent enough to bring about rapid improvements. School leaders have changed the approach for teaching spelling, punctuation and grammar but

pupils do not consistently use what they know when writing independently or in subjects other than English. Teachers' assessments and the next steps they set for pupils are not precise enough. There is still more room for stretch and challenge to help the most able pupils achieve higher standards in reading and writing. Sometimes, staff do not deal with misconceptions in a timely manner. This slows some pupils' learning.

- Second, the inspection looked at the development of phonics and early reading and writing. Phonics is taught through a consistent approach. Teaching helps pupils to develop a secure knowledge of the alphabet code. Children and pupils are enthusiastic about phonics and reading. Pupils use their phonic strategies accurately as a default when tackling unfamiliar words. In 2017, more pupils met the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check than in 2016. Work in pupils' books shows that they are on track to, at least, maintain the improvements made last year.
- Sometimes teachers do not promote the link between reading and writing strongly enough. When younger pupils attempt to spell more complex words, they misspell some of them. Children in the early years often do not form letters correctly. This sometimes leads to inaccurate spelling.
- Leaders' actions in mathematics have resulted in an uplift in outcomes in 2017. The mathematics leader uses a variety of indicators and support from the trust and external providers to develop a secure understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. Formal and informal training is helping more staff to follow a consistent approach to teaching in mathematics. Teachers now follow an agreed planning structure. This means that teachers are teaching sequences of lessons that build on what pupils, know, can do and understand. Pupils report that mathematics is fun because 'it makes us think'. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching now require greater precision so that they can act quickly to ensure that pupils make swifter progress.
- The final area of focus was pupils' attendance, which has been below the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is also higher than the national average. However, your actions are leading to improvements in pupils' attendance. Pupils have responded well to initiatives such as class rewards. Leaders are developing a positive culture for good attendance.
- School leaders have worked effectively with pupils, parents and the school's educational welfare officer to improve attendance; this work is ongoing and leaders, including governors, are aware that there is more to do.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- improve the quality of pupils' writing and presentation by making sure that pupils apply what they have been taught when they write independently and in other subjects
- continue their robust work with pupils and families to improve attendance further

so that it is at least in line with the national average

- develop more precision and rigour when checking the school's effectiveness to bring about more rapid improvements in pupils' outcomes.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the An Daras Multi-Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Miller
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

At the start of the inspection, we agreed the timetable, key lines of enquiry and activities for the day. We scrutinised pupils' work and conducted observations of pupils' learning. I also looked at records relating to safeguarding, behaviour, the curriculum and the school's assessment information. I had discussions with school leaders and governors, along with the chief executive officer of the An Daras multi-academy trust. I observed pupils reading and talked with pupils about their learning and life in the school.