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Mrs Jan Woodhouse
Cape Cornwall School
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Dear Mrs Woodhouse

Special measures monitoring inspection of Cape Cornwall School

Following my visit with Carol Hannaford, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 24 and 25 April 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the school became subject to special measures following the inspection that took place in March 2017. The full list of the areas for improvement that were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures

the school's improvement plan is fit for purpose

the school may appoint newly qualified teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the interim executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kathy Maddocks
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection that took place in March 2017

- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - acting rapidly to secure the long-term strategic and operational leadership of the school
 - improving the skills of middle and senior leaders to raise standards
 - improving the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment so that expectations of teachers are consistently high and unambiguous
 - ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used appropriately to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - dealing with pupils' poor progress, particularly of disadvantaged pupils, caused by poor teaching
 - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve across the school
 - ensuring that assessment is accurate and it is used to inform teachers of what pupils know, understand and can do
 - ensuring pupils know how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - improving the attendance of all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils
 - eradicating the remaining low-level disruption so that all pupils are able to learn in a positive environment
 - improving pupils' attitudes to learning so that they engage with their learning and make better progress.

External reviews of governance and of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to improve these aspects of leadership and management.

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 24 to 25 April 2018

Evidence

Inspectors observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the executive headteacher, head of school, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, and the chair and vice-chair of the interim executive board (IEB). They spoke by telephone to the senior school effectiveness officer from the local authority, the supporting school's education partner and the chief executive officer of the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust.

Inspectors conducted joint visits to lessons with senior and middle leaders to observe pupils' learning and behaviour.

Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across a range of subjects and year groups. They reviewed a range of other documentation, including attendance data, performance information and minutes of the IEB meetings. Inspectors checked information about safety and safeguarding, including the attendance of pupils at alternative provision.

Context

A new special educational needs coordinator and site manager have been appointed. The special educational needs coordinator from St Ives School is overseeing the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in this school as well as St Ives School. A new head of mathematics is working in school for three days a week and will take up the full-time substantive post in September 2018. A deputy headteacher from St Ives School is continuing to support the science department for two afternoons per week. Another deputy headteacher from St Ives School works with the head of school on teachers' professional development. Interviews for a new leader for science are taking place in two weeks' time. One member of the IEB resigned.

St Ives School is part of the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust (TPAT). The school's conversion to a sponsored academy is yet to take place.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

The IEB continues to support and challenge the leadership of the school. The IEB meets formally once a month with school leaders and questions the progress on areas for improvement in detail. In addition, the IEB has held effective meetings with parents to appraise them of developments with regard to academisation and staffing structures. The board has taken on time-consuming and demanding issues extraneous to the operational workings of the school. In addition, the IEB is managing the finances. School leaders concentrate on improving pupils' progress and attendance. This is a successful working model.

The support structure provided by St Ives School, as part of TPAT, and the local

authority continues to be vital in determining a positive future for the school. The local authority continues its commitment to the school and remains unwavering in its resolve to make the school viable. TPAT leaders have worked intensively with senior education officials, government ministers and directors of the schools commission to ensure the academisation takes place imminently. The school's strategic long-term plans cannot be finalised until the outcome of the impending academy conversion is ratified.

The executive headteacher works extensively and effectively with the head of school at Cape Cornwall School. She has dealt successfully with staff recruitment against tight budgetary limitations. A full complement of staff is in place because of her skilful work.

The head of school has maintained the focus on the day-to-day operations successfully. The assistant headteacher is concentrating on improving attendance and behaviour across the school. There has been considerable success with the latter. A new policy and plan are in place to deal with attendance problems. The substantive middle leader for English, humanities and modern foreign languages has stepped up to her new leadership role effectively.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The deputy headteacher of St Ives School has completed the implementation of the school's assessment information system. Teachers at Cape Cornwall School have moderated work with teachers from two other secondary schools and teachers log pupils' progress accurately, now. As a result, the school has more reliable information to use.

In mathematics, teachers use the information from assessments to plan work effectively. Pupils are making better progress as a result. In other subjects, the use of data to improve planning is patchy. Leaders are using performance management systems and checking exercises regularly to improve consistency and encourage better practice.

Teachers are aware of the different needs of pupils and use seating plans to identify pupils accordingly. Although school leaders have provided teachers with strategies to support the work of disadvantaged pupils, too few teachers apply them. Differences in achievement and progress between disadvantaged pupils and their peers are not diminishing rapidly enough.

Leaders scrutinise the progress of pupils in Year 11 intently and pupils receive timely interventions to support their work when they fall behind. This level of attention is not yet developed in other year groups. Consequently, progress is not as rapid.

Cape Cornwall School teachers have benefited significantly from training with teachers from St Ives School. They are now more confident and feel less isolated as they have subject specialists nearby to work with.

More teachers are using the school's marking and feedback policy. However, too few understand that checking on pupils' work regularly is a necessity if progress is to be rapid.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Behaviour in lessons continues to improve. Pupils show a better attitude to learning and are diligent and industrious.

Substantive teachers manage pupils' behaviour confidently. Pupils' behaviour is not as good when they are taught by temporary staff. Fortunately, there are far fewer temporary staff in the school, now, so this situation is rare.

Behaviour at break and lunchtimes remains positive. Pupils are respectful of each other, although sometimes noisy. Fixed-term exclusions have reduced. This reflects the consistent application of the school's behaviour management systems and the raised expectations of teachers and other staff.

Attendance and punctuality are still an area of concern overall and for disadvantaged pupils in particular.

Pupils feel safe in the school. They know to whom to turn if they have any issues and are confident that teachers take action effectively. Staff have dealt with rare incidents of bullying very effectively. Pupils know about different types of bullying but are less secure about how to resolve bullying themselves.

Activities at tutor time are not supporting pupils in a meaningful start to the day.

Outcomes for pupils

The assessment systems are securely in place so leaders monitor progress across year groups effectively. The close monitoring of pupils in Year 11 has ensured that the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others has diminished. Predictions indicate more positive outcomes in examinations in 2018. However, the most able disadvantaged are not achieving as well as others, particularly in mathematics.

The accurate systems allow leaders to understand the differences in year groups and plan with teachers to eradicate them.

Pupils' progress in mathematics, English, French, history, art and design and technology is developing well. Teachers use assessment systems more effectively in these areas to provide precise steps for improvement. However, progress in other subjects is not as rapid.

The deputy special educational needs coordinator and manager of the additional resource base (ARB) manage the team of teaching assistants well. As a result, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities continue to make good progress, especially the pupils in the ARB.

The additional support for reading has spread to a wider group of pupils. Its success continues. The director of learning for English monitors progress well. Pupils are proud of their achievements in reading.

External support

The local authority continues to check on the school's progress regularly and provide efficient support and advice. The reports written are accurate evaluations of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Each report identifies clearly the areas on which leaders need to concentrate. In March, the local authority school effectiveness officer highlighted correctly that attendance and punctuality is an issue.

The external support provided by St Ives School is of a high calibre. The executive headteacher continues to manage the many evolving situations proficiently. Other members of the senior leadership team at St Ives School are providing extra capacity in supporting Cape Cornwall's School improvements.