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Mrs Wendy Cording  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Cording

### **Short inspection of Eggbuckland Vale Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 2019 with Tonwen Empson, Her Majesty's Inspector, 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 May 2016.

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

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and aspects that require further work. You have built a strong team of leaders around you. The school's action plan focuses on the right aspects for improvement. The inclusion leader, phase leaders and core subject team undertake their leadership roles with precision. Their actions result in notable improvements because they work closely with staff to rectify any weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievements when they appear.

Leaders assure themselves, through their checks and monitoring, that all staff uphold the highly inclusive nature of the school. This is a prominent strength. Staff provide strong, caring support. Staff are uncompromising in ensuring that all pupils achieve well, and that they meet pupils' social, emotional and academic learning needs.

Pupils are respectful and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in class. They are polite and present good manners around the school and at social times.

Many pupils join the school with knowledge and skills well below those seen typically. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of key stage 2, the proportions who have the knowledge and skills that are expected are broadly in line with those seen nationally. In key stage 1, leaders' actions to increase the

proportions of pupils who have reading, writing and mathematical knowledge above that seen nationally are proving successful.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

Safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Staff training is up to date. The school's checks when recruiting new staff are in line with national requirements to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

Staff apply their training confidently so that pupils' risk of harm is minimised. Staff know how to refer concerns should they consider a child to be at risk of harm. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils at risk get the support they need.

Day-to-day systems to keep a record of the school's safeguarding work meet requirements. However, some administrative aspects of the school's safeguarding records require strengthening.

### **Inspection findings**

- Inspectors looked at the quality of teaching in Nursery and Reception because the proportions of children who reach a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year have decreased over time. Teaching across the early years is strong. There is a precise focus on developing children's early language skills in Nursery. Staff's attention to detail to ensure that children develop and use a wide range of vocabulary is impressive. They use their assessments to ensure that their teaching builds on what children already know. Therefore, children make strong progress in their language and communication skills and show high levels of independence for their age. Children in the Nursery are well prepared for Reception.
- Children make strong progress in Reception. They gain a love of books and stories and sustain their concentration successfully. Children learn to form letters and begin to write sentences alongside learning phonics and beginning to read. This systematic approach to learning to read and write is successful. Classrooms are a busy hive of activity and children are motivated and curious to learn.
- Another aspect which inspectors looked at was the quality of phonics teaching in key stage 1, to ascertain whether the trajectory of improvement in this aspect of the school's work had been maintained. Leaders' actions to strengthen phonics teaching in key stage 1 are highly successful. Consequently, the proportions of pupils who read with the accuracy and understanding expected for their age has continued to increase this year. Current pupils who have previously struggled to read catch up well in Year 2.
- Inspectors reviewed the impact of leaders' actions to improve the teaching of reading at key stage 2. Leaders' actions are beginning to pay off. The introduction to more explicit teaching of reading including studying high-quality fiction is helping pupils to gain a greater understanding of what they read. However, some teaching of reading in lower key stage 2 does not enable a

minority of pupils who have previously low attainment to catch up sufficiently. Teachers do not use their assessments well enough to modify their teaching and interventions to accelerate pupils' progress.

- An inspector reviewed the teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff adapt teaching well so that pupils with SEND can continue to be included in lessons alongside their peers while having the intervention and support they need. Pupils have appropriate specialist resources to help them learn. Teaching for pupils with a hearing impairment is excellent. Pupils with SEND make strong progress over time.
- An inspector looked at the impact of the pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils benefit from much support to develop their emotional and social well-being. Teaching assistants and teachers show strong subject knowledge and a precise understanding of pupils' needs. Increasingly, disadvantaged pupils make progress, particularly in mathematics over time. They build their fluency of number and staff challenge them to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. However, a minority of disadvantaged pupils without SEND are not challenged in their learning consistently well. As a result, a minority of these pupils do not achieve their potential.
- Another aspect we examined was the impact of mathematics teaching on pupils' learning over time. Leaders' actions have improved teachers' subject knowledge and ensured that all aspects of the mathematics curriculum are prioritised. Most pupils are making strong progress in mathematics, including in problem-solving and reasoning from one sequence of learning to the next. However, on occasions, teachers do not use their assessments of what pupils know and can do precisely to modify their teaching to address pupils' misconceptions as soon as they arise.
- Finally, we reviewed the impact of the school's leadership systems to raise pupils' progress and achievement. The school improvement plan is tailored carefully to the right aspects for improvement. As headteacher you have ensured that the full work of your extended leadership team is bringing about improvement while maintaining the many strengths of the school. Leaders monitor the impact of teaching and provide specific feedback to staff.
- Governors are proactive in their work. They visit the school and hold meetings to gather information about the progress that the school is making against its planned actions. They do not shy away from asking challenging questions and in doing so assure themselves that the school is continually moving forward in its work. Examples include holding meetings with the inclusion leader and core subject leaders to ascertain the impact of leaders' current work. These actions provide them with an accurate picture of the school's performance. Nevertheless, relative weaknesses in leaders' action plans – the absence of timely milestones and evaluation criteria – make it difficult for those responsible for governance to check that actions are taking place and having the intended impact.

## **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors strengthen systems for holding leaders to account for their actions by checking the impact on pupils' achievement, and to ensure that disadvantaged pupils meet their potential
- teachers use their assessments precisely to modify their teaching so that they address pupils' misconceptions as soon as they arise
- pupils in lower key stage 2 with previously lower attainment read with accuracy, fluency and understanding for their age.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Plymouth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Carrington  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

## **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, inspectors spoke with you, other school leaders, and three governors. An inspector held telephone conversations with two representatives from Plymouth local authority SEND department. She reviewed the quality of education for pupils with an identified SEND need.

An inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust. Inspectors made visits to lessons alongside leaders to observe pupils' learning and to scrutinise their work. An inspector met with two groups of pupils. I also talked to pupils in lessons and listened to their views about the school.

Inspectors considered a range of documentary evidence, which included the school's self-evaluation reports, development plans and school performance information. Inspectors also looked at monitoring records for teaching, learning and assessment, your analysis of pupils' attendance, and safeguarding documentation.

In addition, I took account of responses to the Parent View online survey and the free-text messaging service. I gathered the views of staff through discussions during the inspection and the online survey.