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Ms J Gidzewicz
Tintagel Primary School
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Dear Ms Gidzewicz

Ofsted monitoring of schools with a notice to improve

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 12 May, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided during my visit. Please pass on my thanks to your staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils who found time to talk to me during my visit.

Since the last inspection in September 2009, one staff member has left the school and another appointment made which became effective in January 2010. Nine new pupils have joined the school since March.

As a result of the inspection on 28–29 September 2009, the school was asked to:

- raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by ensuring that activities are matched to pupils' needs and interests, assessment is consistently used to plan learning, and marking improved to ensure pupils understand how to improve
- ensure leadership and management, including governors, implement effective monitoring and evaluation procedures
- enable parents and carers to better support their children's learning
- help pupils to understand the range of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom by giving them opportunities to engage actively with children from different cultures.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

The quality of teaching has improved over the last eight months and is now good. This is also evidenced by the school's own regular monitoring and by observations carried out by external professionals. The school has embraced a wider, more

exciting curriculum. It involves far more practical activities and, in science and mathematics in particular, is focused around the exploration and investigative elements of the curriculum. These activities successfully motivate the pupils and ensure their attention is sustained during lessons. Teachers use information from assessments well. This means that lessons are planned more effectively to ensure that activities are carefully matched to meet the pupils' needs so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. As a result, pupils are making better progress in their learning and have largely made up the underachievement identified in the previous inspection. Marking has improved and is now good. Pupils said that it tells them how they can improve their work and also where they have been successful. The comments made by teachers are constructive and helpful, identifying strengths as well as what the pupils can do to help them improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own learning using carefully defined success criteria. An element to address is the matter of pace. Occasionally, the pace of learning drops a little because sometimes teachers talk for too long or give pupils too much time to discuss ideas with their groups or talk partners.

Leaders and managers have embarked upon a robust programme of monitoring the work of the school. This includes a range of strategies from lesson observations and learning walks to examining pupils' work and teachers' planning. The school is tracking the progress that pupils are making more closely. As a result, actions to counteract possible underachievement are put into place much more quickly. These involve specific one-to-one tuition, targeted support and pupil conferencing. The evidence shows that underachievement has been almost eliminated and pupils are now making the progress they should, and a reasonable proportion are doing better than this. The governors in particular have grown in confidence and taken on their monitoring role with more rigour as a result of extensive training on how data can be used and interpreted. The data governor provides them with excellent information which gives them a very good base from which to ask questions and challenge the school's performance. The school now has a more accurate idea of how well it is doing. It has a comprehensive school review file containing much useful information. The next step is to condense this into the more accessible, user-friendly document format of the self-evaluation form.

The school provides parents and carers with a range of information so that they can help their children with their work. The school has provided workshops in guided reading and information and communication technology. Information about topics is sent out to parents and carers half-termly and a parents and carers forum has been established where questions and concerns can be raised. The school has adopted the policy that when a question or concern is raised, it is put into the whole-school domain and the relevant information made available to all. Parents and carers are very pleased with the information provided and none expressed concerns.

The school has quite rightly made the first two areas for development the main priorities in their drive towards improvement. It has made satisfactory progress in addressing the fourth issue, providing more opportunities for pupils to mix with

pupils from a range of cultures. The pupils do have a sound understanding of the cultural diversity within the United Kingdom and spoke confidently to the inspector about this. They are well aware of the link being established with a school in Birmingham. As a short-term measure, the plan to invite school parties visiting Tintagel during the summer months to have their lunch on the school field with the pupils is a good example of seizing opportunities as they arise. The next step for the school is to fully implement the link with the school in Birmingham.

When they submitted their statement of action to support the school, the local authority was required by Ofsted to amend it to include an element, that of improving the quality of marking, that had been omitted. The local authority ensured that this was done. Throughout the last eight months, the local authority has worked very closely with the school and provided good support across all areas of concern. The assistance of consultants and advisers has raised staff confidence and competence and had a positive impact on the progress pupils are making. Support for the governors through data training in particular has given them the confidence to support and challenge the work of the school with greater authority.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Huard
Additional Inspector