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Mrs Helen Macfarlane
Executive Headteacher
St Keverne Community Primary School
School Hill
St Keverne
Helston
Cornwall
TR12 6NQ

Dear Mrs Macfarlane

Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools: monitoring inspection of St Keverne Community Primary School

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 23 November 2010, for the time you gave to our phone discussions and for the information which you provided before and during the inspection. Please also pass on my thanks to your staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, and pupils for their professional participation in the visit. The attendance of members of the governing body, your staff and the School Improvement Partner at the feedback session was also appreciated.

I noted that since the last inspection there have been some important contextual changes at the school. Notably, these include your appointment as the temporary executive headteacher. In addition, there has been a slight reduction in the number of pupils on the school roll and a reduction in staffing by 0.5 members of staff. The school has also contracted into two classes with all Key Stage 2 pupils now being taught in one class.

The school has ensured that the designated responsible person for safeguarding has been maintained with the change in executive headteacher and plans are in hand to ensure that when not onsite, there is a suitably trained and senior member of staff who holds this responsibility. The single central record adopts and exceeds recommended best practice and the school ensures that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard children.

As a result of the inspection on 13 May 2009, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.



Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school has made:

good progress in making improvements and,

satisfactory progress in demonstrating a better capacity for sustained improvement.

As a result of small and fluctuating numbers of pupils in each year group, the attainment of pupils on entry to the school can be variable, but tends to be below age-related expectations. Over the last three years progress has also been uneven in English and mathematics and pupils leave the school with standards that are stubbornly below the national averages, with very few pupils attaining the higher grades in these subjects.

As a result of robust tracking and monitoring of pupil performance introduced by the executive headteacher since July 2010, the school is better informed about the academic progress made by individual pupils in each year group and is able to target intervention and additional support more precisely and effectively. Every child now has their own personal targets in English and mathematics and key pieces of work encourage self-assessment by the child using the 'assessment ladders' which are also marked by the class teacher for accuracy. This is also complemented by more robust marking of pupils' work. In addition, classroom initiatives such as 'Story telling into writing', one-to-one tuition and flexible grouping arrangements have resulted in the great majority of pupils now making expected rates of progress relative to their starting points. The acceleration of progress for some pupils is significant in those year groups in most need of improvement, especially Years 3 and 4 and particularly in English. The focused targeting of individual tuition for these pupils means that they are making better than expected rates of progress. This investment is boding well for continued and future improvement, although it is currently, and understandably, based on limited assessments since both the tracking system and initiatives were introduced. As evidenced by this inspection and local authority school improvement support, the quality of teaching and learning, while improving in this respect, remains satisfactory overall and is not yet resulting in higher standards being attained in English and mathematics.

The school's priorities for improvement are informed by more robust and formalised monitoring of school performance using performance data and direct observation of teaching and learning. The plan is the product of wide consultation, including the governing body, all staff, parents and pupils, and sensibly focuses on the priorities for improvement from the previous inspection report in the short term. It then outlines a three-year strategic set of priorities on which to build success. Action plans are comprehensive and include clear success criteria and challenging performance targets. There is widespread support and understanding of the plan by the staff team and the governing body and this is generating a sense of common purpose and direction in the school. The executive headteacher has been



instrumental in driving forward this initiative and has secured a well-conceived cycle of improvement planning linked to formal monitoring and self-evaluation.

There is clear evidence that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have 'free-flow' access to outdoor learning opportunities as part of a planned curriculum. The area is safe and secure, sensibly suited with the onsite, pre-school provision and supervision was observed to be good. During this visit, children played and worked productively and cooperatively in building an elephant from big cardboard boxes and tubes while others worked independently. A small covered shelter in the area enables children to be outdoors in wet weather and it was also noted that plans are in development to further improve the outdoor space by locating a bigger canopy adjacent to the classroom.

There is a close partnership between the local authority and the school where advisory service and School Improvement Partner monitoring reports have been beneficial in securing strong leadership and supporting the progress of the school.

The school continues to have satisfactory capacity for further improvement. Undoubtedly, the school has focused on improving areas of weakness and the improvement in pupils' academic progress, relative to their starting points, is apparent. In addition, focused monitoring of performance and a shared ambition for improvement are supporting more honest and accurate self-evaluation. However, the impact of this is not yet realised in improved attainment of the pupils. Furthermore, the school is set to accommodate more significant change once decisions have been resolved about the strategic management of the school and staffing appointments yet to be made.

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

Yours sincerely

Kevin Jane
Her Majesty's Inspector



Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in May 2009

- Use marking and assessment information more constructively to improve teaching and learning and raise standards and achievement, particularly in literacy.
- Implement formal procedures for monitoring the school's provision and use this information to update the school's plans for the future.
- Provide better access to outdoor areas for Early Years Foundation Stage children.