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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Matthew Middlemore
Headteacher
Tregolls School – an Academy
Chellew Road
Truro
Cornwall
TR1 1LH

Dear Mr Middlemore

Short inspection of Tregolls School – an Academy

Following my visit to the school on 7 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 the school was judged to be good in July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in certain areas. This may indicate that the school is improving towards being outstanding. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

Since your appointment in 2012, you have worked relentlessly to improve the school and you have had excellent impact. The school ceased to require special measures in July 2014, when it was judged to be a good school. You demonstrate confident leadership, act as a professional role model and can show a proven track record of success. Pupils' achievement has been consistently high for the past three years. This is because you never rest on your laurels and you constantly look to improve aspects of the school's work.

You have successfully strengthened the capacity of the leadership team and middle leaders. You are the first to acknowledge that the school's achievements are a team effort. Staff morale is very high, as shown by the staff survey completed during the inspection. All staff agreed or strongly agreed that they feel proud to be a member of staff at the school. All staff are fully committed to doing their best for the pupils. This is because you encourage them to take responsibility for their work, develop their expertise and use their professional judgement. They feel trusted and supported by you and other leaders to do this.

Your outstanding practice is celebrated and shared widely with other schools. An

example is your innovative use of pupil premium funding. Your work to improve the achievement and well-being of disadvantaged pupils has been acknowledged nationally. You have ensured that pupils enjoy a school where the motto, 'Every child has the right to be astonishing', resonates and is reflected in its culture. Pupils are happy and proud to be a part of Tregolls School. You have listened to pupils, staff and parents and carers who, overwhelmingly, agree that you have significantly changed the culture of the school. Parents say that the school is unrecognisable from where it was when you took up post. One parent's comment was typical of many: 'Mr Middlemore came to the school when it was at its lowest and has turned it around. We will be forever thankful to him and his team.'

High-quality governance ensures that leaders are held to account for the standard of education and stay focused on the key priorities for improvement. Governors are closely involved with the school because they are highly committed to and passionate about their role. This is demonstrated by the visits they make to the school and the quality of feedback they give to leaders. They understand the importance of close working with parents and carers. Governance has continued to strengthen since you have been in post. Consequently, governors are highly adept at using different sources of information to celebrate improvement, while still holding you to account. They have capitalised on training to ensure that they ask the right questions, focusing in particular on the achievement of different groups of pupils.

You have taken effective action to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. You have correctly prioritised improving the quality of teaching to raise pupils' attainment further by the end of Year 6. Pupils' writing across a range of subjects is strong. Adults give them clear information about what they have to do to improve their work. However, you are not complacent and constantly want to ensure further improvements for the pupils. For example, you recognise that plans to ensure that the most able pupils achieve the higher levels in mathematics are not refined sufficiently.

Safeguarding is effective.

The designated school safeguarding team has a firm understanding of procedures and responsibilities. Leaders, including governors, maintain a robust safeguarding culture across the school and ensure that all arrangements to keep children safe are fit for purpose. Consequently, you have made sure that all staff have received timely and up-to-date training in child protection. Checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are comprehensive and kept securely.

Staff know the procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child, as this is checked regularly by your safeguarding team. Where this is not the case, staff are referred for more training to ensure complete understanding of the processes and practices to keep children safe in school.

The culture of the school helps pupils to understand risk and take responsibility for their own safety. They also understand the importance of being supportive of each

other. Pupils who spoke with me reported that they feel safe in school because, 'everyone has a trusted adult who you can talk to if you are worried'. They also reported that they 'don't tolerate bullying' and generally everyone gets on well together. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school and this view is supported by every parent who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to evaluate the teaching of English grammar, punctuation and spelling (EGPS), and the impact it makes on the quality of writing across the school. This was because the proportion of pupils meeting expectations in the Year 6 EGPS test in 2017 did not match the national average, particularly at the higher level. Leaders quickly identified that spelling was not as good as it should be and have given the matter very close attention. As a consequence, you made a wide range of changes to improve the teaching of spelling across the school. This included introducing research into how pupils learn spellings effectively into some staff's performance management targets. The school's spelling policy was adapted and closer monitoring of this was implemented across the school.
- The impact of this is that teachers have increased their monitoring of punctuation and spelling. This practice is incorporated into pupils' writing tasks across the curriculum and is more precise than before. Teachers then make careful and detailed assessments to ensure that key words are spelled correctly in pupils' work and in future writing tasks. Pupils' books showed that their writing across a range of subjects is of high quality.
- My second line of enquiry was to investigate how well leaders ensure that progress in mathematics in key stage 2 is as strong as progress in reading and writing. Published progress measures were significantly affected by the inclusion of pupils who did not sit the national tests in Year 6 in 2017. The school's own assessment shows that for many pupils, progress in mathematics was equally strong as in reading and writing. Lesson observations also revealed a high level of challenge for all pupils. Pupils I spoke with said that they enjoyed mathematics and liked being 'pushed further' by adults to try to attempt harder work.
- Mathematics is a current improvement priority for the school. Leaders conduct a weekly 'book look' with teachers to ensure that all pupils are making progress and to identify any gaps in learning. Pupils falling behind in their learning are taught individually so they can catch up. Teachers attended training in order to teach mathematics at greater depth in order to develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills more effectively. As a result, current pupils are progressing strongly in mathematics across the school. However, while assessment suggests that progress is improving for most groups of pupils, some of the most able pupils in Year 6 are not performing as well as they should.
- My third line of enquiry was to examine how effectively teaching, learning and assessment support good achievement for disadvantaged and most-able pupils. The progress of these groups was not consistent in some subjects and key stages in the end-of-year tests in 2017. You have made sure that there are secure systems and processes in place to support greater achievement for these groups.

For example, in mathematics, teachers and leaders have devised recovery lessons for pupils falling behind. Also, a specialist mathematics teacher teaches masterclass sessions for the most able pupils.

- In the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers provide a wide range of well-planned tasks for children in mathematics, as well as in speaking and listening skills. This ensures that disadvantaged children make rapid progress from very low starting points. Current disadvantaged pupils are making good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Parents value highly the support that staff give their children to help them succeed and excel in all aspects of learning. This includes the high-quality pastoral care which ensures that disadvantaged pupils play a full part in the life of the school in lessons, sports competitions, after-school clubs and residential visits to Europe.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continuously and rigorously evaluate the current rate of pupils' progress in mathematics in order to increase the proportion of most-able pupils attaining the higher levels.

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

Yours sincerely

Julie Jane
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I spoke with you, representatives of the governing body, parents, pupils and the school's improvement partner. I listened to a small number of pupils across the school read.

You and I visited lessons to observe pupils' attitudes to learning. We also scrutinised work in pupils' books together, along with your senior leaders.

A range of documentary evidence was scrutinised, which included the school's self-evaluation and school improvement plan. Together, we reviewed information relating to pupils' progress and attainment. Additionally, I scrutinised various safeguarding records, including the single central record.

I took account of 30 responses to the Parent View online survey, including text responses, and 12 letters from parents. I also took account of the 42 responses to

the pupil survey and the 31 responses to the staff survey issued during the inspection.