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Paul Hayes
Headteacher
Mabe Community Primary School
Cunningham Park
Mabe
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Cornwall
TR10 9HB

Dear Mr Hayes

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Mabe Community Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 16 September 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in May 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- make sure all teachers consistently adapt learning activities, the pace of learning and their questions to the differing needs of the pupils during lessons, especially for more able younger pupils in the mixed-age classes
- review leadership and management roles and responsibilities so that the headteacher is not having to lead on so many areas for improvement.

Evidence

During the visit, meetings were held with you, pupils, the Chair of Governors and a representative of the local authority to discuss the action taken since the last inspection. The school action plan was evaluated. We jointly observed teaching in all classes and I examined your information on the progress that pupils are making.

Context

Since the s5 inspection, two of the four teachers, including the subject leader for mathematics, have left. They have been replaced by new staff and you have taken on the mathematics subject leadership.

Main findings

Through its improvement planning and the actions it is taking, the school is now focusing more clearly on the progress being made by all pupils and the impact of teaching on their progress. Teachers are improving their use of assessments to plan lessons to match the range of needs of the pupils. This is most successful in the teaching of writing where pupils are given individual targets to help them to know what to do to improve their work. While teachers are making better use of the school's progress information to plan lessons for the different stages reached by the pupils, they are not consistently adapting the learning activities, the pace of learning and their questions to the differing needs of the pupils during lessons. This leads to uneven rates of progress across the different groups.

The headteacher's accurate evaluation of the progress being made by pupils in each year group shows that older pupils in the mixed-age classes are making more progress than the younger pupils. Joint lesson observations with the headteacher showed that more able younger pupils were not challenged enough, especially in mathematics. The gap in achievement for pupils supported by pupil premium funding is closing in reading and writing, but not in mathematics. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs appears to slow down in Key Stage 2. The headteacher has rightly introduced regular progress meetings with teachers to discuss how they can improve the progress of underachieving pupils. He now uses the progress data alongside a good range of monitoring activities, including monitoring lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' books, to evaluate the impact of teaching on the progress being made by all pupils.

The governing body is aware that the headteacher carries out too many of the leadership roles and responsibilities in the school, including coordinating mathematics, and that this needs to be reviewed. The governing body has appropriately reviewed its own roles and responsibilities to increase its effectiveness in challenging and supporting the school. This was as a result of a recent review of

governance carried out by the local authority. It is now better informed about the progress pupils make and the quality of teaching and is, therefore, beginning to hold the school to account for the standards pupils reach.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The school is drawing on a good range of external support provided by the local authority including a review of governance and also support from another headteacher who is a local leader of education. The support is helping governors to question the school's performance information more rigorously. This is in order to help the headteacher in identifying priorities for improvement and to evaluate progress in these areas more frequently, to accelerate pupils' progress.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Cornwall.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater

Her Majesty's Inspector