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Mrs J Mitchell
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Mitchell

Ofsted 2010–11 good practice survey: safeguarding in schools

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 28 September 2010 to look at work in safeguarding.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about good practice in safeguarding in schools. The publication will include case studies about individual schools. If Woodston Primary School is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment before publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

Features of good practice

- Your clear leadership ensures that all staff work well together to create a safe and caring school community where pupils' safety is a high priority. All staff are fully committed to safeguarding pupils and share a common desire to ensure that the school is a safe and happy place for its pupils. Clear expectations of all staff ensure that there are consistently well applied policies to treat all pupils with care and respect.
- Roles and responsibilities for the different aspects of safeguarding are very clear. All staff know what is expected of them and how their work contributes to safeguarding. Good relationships between staff and between staff and their pupils are positive features of the school and contribute to the very warm and caring ethos. There is a strong focus on regular and relevant staff training. All members of staff, for example, have received training in first aid and child protection. The arrangements for vetting staff, volunteers and contractors are thorough.
- Communication between staff is very good and ensures that they have detailed, up-to-date knowledge about pupils, their families and their needs. Record-keeping is thorough in detailing all relevant issues related to the care and safety of all individual pupils. Information is shared

appropriately with external agencies who talk very positively about the quality of information held by the school.

- Strong partnerships are a key factor in keeping pupils safe. The school has extremely positive and productive relationships with external agencies, such as the police and health workers. The staff seek and act on their advice for the benefit and welfare of the pupils. Other professionals speak of how easy it is to work with staff at the school. Another productive partnership has ensured that the ongoing building work has been managed very effectively to ensure the safety of the pupils. There have, for example been regular, monthly meetings involving the chair of the governing body, you, local authority representatives and contractors. Routines have been adjusted to minimise risks to pupils.
- There are particular strengths in the pastoral support that is provided for pupils, particularly by the learning mentor. While this is carefully targeted at the most vulnerable, all pupils are able to self-refer. Her role is described as a 'professional friend' and she has an open door policy. Pupils state that they like the fact that she organises friendship groups and pupils say having friends in school makes them want to come to school
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for at school. They understand the need to be careful when moving around the school. For example, they know that the fences around the building work are there to keep them safe. They comment that they understand that the smaller play area is to ensure that they are kept safe and that the play space will be better in the longer term for all of them to enjoy. They know that they have to use the playground safely for the benefit of all pupils. Pupils talk about the benefit of having a swimming pool on the site; they know that learning to swim and learning about water safety will keep them safe. Pupils know about the dangers of inappropriate internet use.
- Pupils state that one of the reasons they feel safe is because others at the school are very well behaved. They understand that this is because the staff set them clear expectations along with clear consequences for any misdemeanours. A recent development, to introduce pupils to the idea of their rights and responsibilities, is worthy of note. Each class group has agreed a short series of rights and responsibilities and how this should translate into their behaviour in classrooms and around the school.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop safeguarding in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector