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Steve Wood
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Wood

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Clifford Road Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 11 February 2014, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children at the school.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding children and child protection arrangements. I met with you, a senior leader, the family liaison officer, a group of pupils, some parents, the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority. Documents relating to individual pupils were scrutinised and a walk around all the classrooms to look at the support for pupils was carried out with you and the family liaison officer.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Context

The school currently has 450 pupils, which makes it larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional government funding through the pupil premium is lower than in most schools, but is increasing.

The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is a little above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and whose first language is believed not to be English is slightly below average. One teacher has left the school since the previous section 5 inspection.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour, as seen during the monitoring inspection in lessons, at break times and when they moved around the school, was good. This is because the school's good behaviour management systems are consistently applied by all adults, and teachers have high expectations of all pupils. All staff know the pupils well, and work effectively with the family liaison officer to make sure pupils feel safe and that most are ready to learn when they arrive.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Leaders and managers take all reasonable steps to make sure the children are safe and well cared for while they are in the school. Pupils say they feel safe in school and the majority of parents who responded to Parent View think their children are safe. You and the deputy headteacher know the children and their families well and can show the progress all pupils make from their various starting points. If pupils are not making expected progress, staff can explain why this is the case and the impact of actions they are taking to help these pupils.

The family liaison officer has an exceptional knowledge of the most vulnerable children because she has developed good relationships with them and their families. Together with the special educational needs coordinator, learning mentor and teachers, she carefully monitors the ability of these pupils to settle into school, build friendships with other pupils and make good relationships with the adults who work with them. However, senior leaders have not given enough thought to how to make sure pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported from when they leave their homes to their arrival at school, so they settle down quickly and are ready to learn.

The single central register of checks on staff's suitability to work with children meets requirements. All staff are trained in child protection procedures, and you and the family liaison officer are trained to train the other staff. There is a useful display in the staffroom detailing the school's safeguarding procedures, and all staff are clear about these. Where there are concerns about a child, the school keeps very detailed records of how matters are dealt with. Governors review the arrangements to safeguard pupils at least once a year, as required. They are kept well informed about pupils' welfare and are therefore able to hold senior leaders to account.

External support

The local authority works with the school to take all reasonable steps to keep children safe. However, the support the school receives is not consistently good. This is because it is sometimes unclear why families are moved between different levels of support, and this information is not communicated to the school.

Priorities for further improvement

- Make sure there is a clear policy and procedures to help pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems to start the beginning of their school day well.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Suffolk, the Secretary of State for Education and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Julie Winyard
Her Majesty's Inspector