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Andrew Shaw
Wigmore Primary School
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Leominster
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Dear Mr Shaw

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Wigmore Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 15 May 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 in response to a complaint made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. The complaint was deemed to be a qualifying complaint and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole school issues that were raised. In particular, I sought to establish whether:

- safeguarding arrangements are adequate
- the school has appropriate systems in place for identifying special educational needs
- staff are suitably trained to meet the needs of pupils with a range of disabilities and special educational needs
- leaders secure the confidence of parents, including those whose children have disabilities or special educational needs.
- appropriate information is provided to parents of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs
- leaders and governors are effective in monitoring and evaluating policy, practice and pupils' progress, particularly for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. I also evaluated a number of documents and written records related to the school's provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. Minutes from meetings of the governing body were reviewed. In addition, I looked at a range of information about pupils' progress, including those with special educational needs. I also visited lessons and looked at the work in pupils' books. Meetings were held with you and other senior staff as well as the director of the academy trust and three members of the governing body. I spoke informally to members of staff around the school. I met with a group of pupils and during break and lunchtime I spoke to pupils informally and observed the playground and the dining room. Meetings were held with several parents, including some whose children have special educational needs. At the end of the school day I spoke with parents as they waited in the playground for their children. One parent spoke with me on the telephone. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for this to be considered but the eighty three responses to the school's own recent parent survey were evaluated.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Context

The school is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below that in most schools. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils supported at school action and school action plus is similar to the average nationally.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour observed during the inspection was good. Pupils were polite and courteous and showed respect to adults. They moved around the school calmly and sensibly and at lunchtime they played co-operatively. In lessons, pupils listened well to their teachers and were focused on their work. The pupils I spoke to during the day said that behaviour is usually good, both in lessons and on the playground. They told me that they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult to talk to if they feel worried or upset. Pupils explained that incidents of bullying are rare and are always treated seriously by staff. The pupils that I spoke to have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and were keen to talk about what they had learnt on a recent internet safety day. Attendance is good. No pupils are persistently absent and there have been no exclusions in the last three years. Almost all parents who responded to the school's survey agree that their children are happy and feel safe in school.

The quality of leadership in and management of the school

Pupils' well-being and safety are rightly given high priority by leaders, governors and staff. Safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly updated and are well understood and followed by the adults in school. Leaders and governors ensure that the appropriate checks are made on the suitability of staff prior to appointment. Teaching and non-teaching staff have received suitable child protection training and staff meetings include regular updates. The school deals rigorously with any child protection issues that do arise. Clear records are kept of any incidents or concerns and the follow up actions taken. A family support worker is employed part-time to work with pupils and parents. One parent commented that she had found this support very valuable during a stressful time for the family. When appropriate, the school seeks the advice of other professionals, including social services. Cases examined during the inspection showed a clear evidence trail, indicating that appropriate action had been taken following any incidents or concerns.

Day-to-day procedures to keep pupils safe were observed to be appropriate. For example, any visitors to the school have to be admitted by a member of staff and are required to sign in and wear a badge. No mobile phones belonging to pupils or staff are allowed in school. During the inspection, levels of supervision at lunchtime and break were good. The school has clear procedures for checking if pupils are present at the start of the school day and following up any absence promptly.

The school has effective systems in place for identifying special educational needs. If teachers are concerned about a pupil's progress, or consider that a pupil may have special educational needs, they discuss this with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO provides advice and guidance on how the pupil's needs can best be met in the classroom. If the class teacher and SENCO agree that the child may have special educational needs and that further assessment would be helpful then this is discussed with parents. Teachers and the SENCO also follow up concerns raised by parents who think that their child may need extra help and support.

Teachers and teaching assistants have received suitable training to enable them to meet the needs of pupils with a range of disabilities and special educational needs. Staff meetings have included sessions on dyslexia, dyspraxia, autistic spectrum conditions and speech and language difficulties. Teachers have also received training to help them adapt their teaching and classroom activities for pupils of different ability and with different needs. In addition to formal training sessions, class teachers frequently consult the SENCO who has a very thorough understanding of the needs of current pupils with disabilities or special educational needs. The SENCO also seeks advice and support from a wide range of professionals from beyond the school. This includes the educational psychology service, the behaviour support team, speech therapists and specialist teachers for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions.

Almost all parents who responded to the school's survey said that they would recommend the school to another parent. During the inspection, most parents who spoke to me were very positive about the school and said that they believe it is well led and managed. Parents reported that the staff are friendly and approachable and that the school responds well to any concerns raised.

The large majority of parents who responded to the school's survey are happy with the information that they receive from the school. The parents I met spoke positively about regular communication between home and school through newsletters and the school website. Although the website does provide some useful information for parents, it does not currently provide access to all the documents and information required.

During the inspection I spoke with several parents whose children have disabilities or special educational needs. These parents said that they are kept well informed about their child's progress through termly parents' evenings and an annual written report. They spoke positively about the school's open door policy and about the Monday drop-in sessions when teachers and leaders, including the SENCO, are available to speak to parents. One parent explained that the SENCO had been particularly helpful in explaining a written report that she had received from a specialist concerning her child's special needs. Although parents were positive about verbal communication, two parents commented that the school does not provide them with regular written information about their child's progress and the support planned for them.

The school's written policy for special educational needs is regularly reviewed by staff and governors. It meets requirements but does not fully reflect current practice, including the schools' commitment to staff training and to partnership with parents. Governors' minutes do not record when the policy was last discussed and agreed, although governors know how to access a copy online through their governors' portal.

The school's detailed information about pupils' progress indicates that more pupils are now making expected or better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's predictions for pupils currently in Year 6 indicate that their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is likely to be in line with or above national averages. School information shows that progress is now good for most pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. The work in these pupils' books also showed evidence of good progress for most pupils since September. The SENCO reviews the progress of pupils with special educational needs each term and uses this information to plan a package of support and interventions for each pupil. Potential barriers to learning are identified and recorded along with the planned actions each term. However, no record is kept of the termly review carried out for each pupil and so the impact of the support provided cannot be fully evaluated.

Many governors have attended training to help them use and understand information about pupils' progress and attainment and they have received detailed presentations about pupils' achievement from the headteacher. However, governors do not all have a thorough and accurate understanding of the progress made by groups of pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs. Minutes of meetings of the governing body do not contain sufficient detail about pupils' progress and attainment and the information recorded is sometimes inaccurate.

External support

The school engages well with a range of external professionals. It also works in partnership with a cluster of local schools.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve governors' understanding of pupils' progress and attainment in comparison to national information, particularly for groups of pupils such as those eligible for support through the pupil premium and those with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Make sure that the minutes of meetings of the governing body contain a full and accurate record of the items discussed and record occasions when governors ask questions and provide challenge to school leaders. Minutes must also include information about any policies reviewed and agreed.
- Keep written records when the progress of pupils with disabilities and special education needs is reviewed so that the impact of provision and support can be evaluated. Ensure that parents have opportunities to contribute to these reviews and consider ways of sharing the written outcomes with parents.
- Ensure that information on the school website meets the current requirements.
- Revise the special educational needs policy so that it more accurately reflects the school's current practice.

I hope that you have found the visit helpful in promoting improvement in your school. I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services, to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Morag Kophamel
Her Majesty's Inspector