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Jamie Barry
Headteacher
Welford Primary School
Welford Road
Handsworth
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B20 2BL

Dear Mr Barry

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Welford Primary School

Following my visit with Michelle Winter, Her Majesty's Inspector to your school on 9-10 April 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 the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out following a request from the Secretary of State.

Evidence

Her Majesty's Inspectors scrutinised the single central register and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They checked systems for the recruitment and vetting of staff, including information available in staff files. They also sampled written work in pupils' books and work exhibited on display boards. They checked attendance and behaviour records, minutes of governors' meetings and information available on the school's website. They also scrutinised responses to a questionnaire completed by 18 members of staff. Meetings were held with the headteacher, two groups of pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, staff from the pastoral team, new staff, parents, governors and a representative from the local authority. Pupils and staff spoke with Her Majesty's Inspectors at break times.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements

The quality of leadership and management requires improvement

Context

This school is twice the size of most primary schools. Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic heritages and two thirds speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost double the national average. The proportion of pupils with a disability or special educational need supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Staffing is generally stable: the leadership structure is under review as part of a whole staffing restructure. This restricts the range of appointments that can be made made at this time.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils feel safe and well cared for and parents strongly support this view. They mix well and play together regardless of their heritage, gender or religion. Pupils know how to behave appropriately and they usually do. They help each other to sort out minor arguments and told Her Majesty's Inspectors that they often find their own solutions when disagreements occur. More serious incidents, such as fighting, are infrequent and exclusions are rare. When they do occur they are dealt with swiftly and followed up effectively by senior staff. Pupils with disabilities are not left out because a 'buddy' helps them to join in at playtimes. Racist comments are rare and pupils know that the school does not tolerate racism.

Attendance is below average but improving. Pupils appreciate the rewards and prizes awarded in recognition of good behaviour and regular attendance. They know that sanctions will follow if they misbehave. They are knowledgeable about e-safety because the school teaches it effectively and it monitors pupils' use of computers carefully to ensure they are safe when on-line. Pupils learn about democracy by electing school councillors and house captains through a voting system. Some pupils are representatives on the 'Young People's Parliament'. Pupils' friendships extend beyond the school day as they meet up for sporting events and clubs.

The quality of leadership and management

The headteacher is committed to putting the equality of opportunity, valuing diversity and promoting inclusion at the heart of the school's work. The school holds the view that pupils will only achieve their potential if they are well cared for and free from discrimination. Senior staff are alert to any racial tensions in the immediate

locality through good communication with the police. They have made appropriate referrals when parents have shown intolerance of others. However, the school is not well informed about the 'Prevent' strategy, a government funded initiative intended to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism, and more needs to be done to support staff in identifying and reducing risks associated with extremism.

Appropriate and decisive action is taken in response to concerns in relation to pupils' health, welfare and safety. Parents and carers appreciate the pastoral care pupils and their families receive, particularly through the work of the parent worker. They feel the school promotes tolerance and respect for all in its multi-faith community. Staff, governors and pupils also support the school's inclusive ethos. Behaviour is managed well.

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Staff are trained to the right level in child protection. All staff know who the trained designated senior professionals are for child protection and what to do if they have any concerns. Procedures for recruiting new staff and governors are suitable. Governors ask set questions on a standard form to find out if candidates sign up to the school's aims and values. Similarly, people interested in becoming community governors are interviewed before they are elected. Suitable arrangements are in place to vet new staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. However, some senior teachers and administrative staff are not sufficiently conscientious in completing paperwork on time and checking records thoroughly. They rely on the headteacher to prompt them.

Governors have discussed issues reported in the media about extremist activity in Birmingham and have responded quickly by arranging training for staff. While the governing body is alert to local risks they have not yet devised a whole-school strategy to respond to them. The governing body receives regular updates on safeguarding and forwards data to the local authority on a termly basis. Nevertheless, they do not yet monitor safeguarding and child protection, equality and inclusion with the same rigour as they do for achievement.

The curriculum promotes understanding, tolerance and celebration of world faiths in the school and beyond. Collective worship is regular. Parents are invited to class assemblies about festivals that are in the world faith calendar. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and be good citizens of the United Kingdom. Time is allocated for pupils' personal, social, and health education, including sex and relationships education. However, some pupils lack some confidence in discussing different types of families and relationships.

External support

The local authority provides light-touch support only. The school has withdrawn from the local authority consortium in favour of a cluster of schools, which includes local leaders in education. As a member of a teaching school alliance the school is working to improve the quality of teaching and learning. While the local authority

provides guidance on safeguarding, personnel issues and governor training, it has not provided the school with sufficient information about its local 'Prevent' strategy to help the school to keep its pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism.

Priorities for further improvement

- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved, focusing particularly on safeguarding.
- Develop and implement a formal whole-school strategy to protect pupils from the potential risks of extremist or intolerant beliefs.
- Ensure that all senior leaders and administrative staff follow the school's policies and systems for record keeping diligently and promptly.
- The local authority should provide the school with information about its Prevent strategies, including key contacts in the local authority and the police.

Her Majesty's Inspectors will continue to monitor the school and will consider this is in determining the timing of the next full inspection.

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

Yours sincerely

Linda Killman

Her Majesty's Inspector