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11 March 2015

Mr Kevin McEvoy
Bishop Challoner Catholic College
Institute Road
Kings Heath
Birmingham
B14 7EG

Dear Mr McEvoy

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Bishop Challoner Catholic College

Following my visit on 10 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school.

Evidence

The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and met with the Principal, other senior leaders, members of teaching and non-teaching staff, groups of pupils, seven parents, two members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.

In addition the inspector scrutinised relevant school policies and the staff code of conduct, the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum provision map for each subject area, attendance and exclusion records, case studies of referrals, records of staff training, governors' minutes, safeguarding information for staff and governors and procedures for dealing with staffing issues. There were insufficient responses for the inspector to take account of the online questionnaire, Parent View.

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 larger than the average-sized secondary school. There are 1215 pupils on roll including the sixth form. About a third of the pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which is Irish. A very large majority of all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium (pupils for whom the school receives additional funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is slightly above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below the national average. The level of stability of pupils is very high. Six pupils receive alternative provision at South and City College, Birmingham one day a week. Eight pupils are dual registered with other providers.

Leadership and management of safeguarding

Senior leaders and managers are highly effective in ensuring that they meet all their safeguarding and child protection requirements to keep pupils safe. Governors fulfil their role well to hold senior leaders to account with regard to their responsibilities. Policies and procedures are detailed and kept regularly up to date to take account of the latest national and local guidance and requirements. Staff and governors are well informed of these through regular training and information booklets provided to them on issues such as self-harm, female genital mutilation and the risks of extremism.

The school has clearly identified designated safeguarding lead officers who are well trained to carry out their roles. They take responsibility to ensure all staff in the school receive regular and up to date training. All adults spoken to during the visit knew who these were and what procedures to follow if they had any child protection concerns. The single central record meets all statutory requirements. It is kept securely but with back up arrangements in place through the Principal should both of the designated officers be unavailable. All required checks are made of staff, volunteers and regular visitors. Records are kept up to date in a timely way.

The school has a system of academic monitoring meetings on all pupils in the school to ensure that every individual is reviewed on a regular basis. From these priority case meetings are established where concerns have been identified for those pupils identified as potentially vulnerable. Leaders follow rigorous procedures for referrals and ensure a high level of confidentiality through password protected files with limited access. For pupils receiving education offsite the school ensures that in advance that all necessary health and safety checks have been carried out through risk assessments. They keep in regular contact with external providers to ensure pupils are attending regularly.

There has been a significant reduction in exclusions with just one permanent exclusion in the last three years. Fixed term exclusions have also been reduced and the proportion of repeat offenders is very small. Where pupils receive a fixed term exclusion work is set for them at home and parents are reminded of their responsibility to supervise their children. Thorough home visits checks are made to ensure that pupils are doing the work set. As an alternative to exclusion the school is part of a sharing panel with other local schools which according to pupils has had a positive impact on the behaviour of some pupils who spend a short time attending another school. The proportion of persistent absences has also reduced. Home visits are effective in encouraging regular attendance, as are the sanctions imposed and rewards offered to promote good attendance.

The school delivers key safeguarding messages through its PSHE programme which is taught through each subject. These are reinforced with curriculum days that focus on specific issues such as bullying and mental health. Racism and homophobia are challenged in religious education (RE) lessons. In Year 7 pupils have a cross curricular programme on managing risks such as peer pressure and use of mobile phones. British values are promoted through the Key Stage 3 history of Britain course which focuses on law, democracy, the constitution and how women campaigned for the right to vote. In English a GCSE unit linked to the novel 'Of Mice and Men' focusses on abusive and safe relationships.

The small number of parents spoken to said that overall they were happy with the safety and wellbeing of their children in school. They were kept well informed through a variety of means including texts and telephone calls. If any bullying incidents occurred, which they said were rare, they were dealt with straight away and effectively to ensure no repeats. Equally if parents had a concern they wished to raise with a member of staff they would always get a call back promptly.

Pupils spoken to knew what to do and who to speak to if they had any worries. They agreed incidents such as bullying or racist name calling were very rare. When they did occur they were usually reported and always dealt with effectively to ensure they did not happen again. A small minority of pupils said they were reluctant to report incidents to adults but would tell their friends instead. All pupils agreed that if they approached any adult it would be reported and taken up at a more senior level although some preferred to be able to report matters anonymously. Pupils, including sixth formers, welcomed very much the external counsellors and advisers available to whom they could talk to in addition or as an alternative to members of staff. The school supports a student social worker programme which means that they regularly have a number of student social workers on site.

The large majority of pupils said they felt very safe in school but a small minority were not as confident and said they did not always feel safe. The split lunchtime arrangements for Key Stage 3 and 4 were welcomed by pupils but a very small minority of younger ones still felt less safe when walking through the school at the

same time as older pupils. Pupils felt very safe using the internet as a result of the programme of e-safety delivered in Years 7 to 9 covering cyber bullying, grooming, sexting and the security of private data. Staff are also trained on e-safety and at parents evening parents are reminded of the importance in restricting their children's access to the internet. Pupils felt confident of the risks of religious extremism through RE lessons but were less sure about political extremism.

Governors are well informed to carry out their roles. There are designated links for safeguarding and special educational needs who meet the designated officers termly to review progress. They are kept fully up to date on referrals and child protection reports and the whole governing body receives an annual report on safeguarding. Governors have received safer recruitment training to ensure recruitment and selection procedures are followed and a trained governor is always on interview panels. Staff disciplinary procedures are in place and, although used very rarely, are carried out rigorously when required. Governors are fully aware of these procedures. Governors are also acutely aware of the different forms of extremism that young people may be vulnerable to and question leaders vigorously on measures taken to protect them.

External support

The local authority has no safeguarding concerns with the school. School leaders and governors engage well with the local authority training and reviews and fully comply with local authority briefings and checks on safeguarding, The local authority set up the local sharing panel but it is now owned and chaired entirely by the schools themselves.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that the concerns of the small minority of younger pupils who feel less safe walking around the school and are more reluctant to report incidents are addressed.
- Ensure that all pupils fully understand the risks attached to political extremism.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services, 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

Mark Sims
Her Majesty's Inspector

cc. Chair of the Governing Body
cc. Local authority