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22 March 2015

Ms Jill Davis
Executive headteacher
Walpole Highway Primary School
School Road
Walpole Highway
Wisbech
Norfolk
PE14 7QQ

Dear Ms Davis

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Walpole Highway Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

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 because the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the school, as identified at the previous inspection. I arrived at the school without giving any prior notice of the monitoring inspection.

Evidence

I considered evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- scrutiny of pupils' work
- documentary evidence
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

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

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to improve behaviour and secure consistently positive attitudes to learning.

Context

Walpole Highway is one of four schools in The Windmill Primary Federation. Almost all of the 40 pupils on roll are White British. Pupils are taught in two classes from Monday to Thursday. On Fridays, Year 6 pupils from three schools in the federation are taught together as a third class. The proportion of pupils supported by additional funding for children in local authority care, those with a parent in the armed services and for those known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils supported with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour of a significant minority of the youngest pupils, a point for improvement raised at the previous inspection, has improved. Their behaviour no longer prevents other pupils from learning or feeling safe. The pupils presenting the behavioural issues are doing well in their learning because their attitudes towards classwork and towards their classmates and staff have improved.

The improvement is a result of staff's concerted action and determination. As a team, they stuck to an agreed set of expectations, rewards and consequences. Pupils were taught how to talk through their difficulties. They were encouraged to express their feelings, thoughts and worries. Even when the going got tough, staff supported one another well to model and reinforce good behaviour and relationships. This included support from senior leaders during this time.

Pupils across the school know what is expected of them. They know that different adults give the same consistent messages about behaviour. In each class, pupils have a set of behaviours that they have agreed to aim for. Although younger pupils know these expectations well, older pupils are not so sure about what they are.

In each class, the work in books and in lessons shows that pupils take their work seriously. During this inspection, pupils listened carefully to staff and one another. They responded positively when reminded to pay attention or to persevere at the tasks. Pupils were confident to ask questions about things that they did not understand and to explain to others what they had learned.

I observed pupils moving appropriately around the building between lessons and at breaktimes. Any slowness to get lessons started was addressed firmly and swiftly by staff. Pupils arrived promptly at the start of the day. Having spent time socialising with their friends, they came into class quickly and sensibly. The youngest pupils waved their parents off confidently and quickly.

In partnership with the local authority, the school's arrangements to support the behavioural needs of individual pupils works well to make sure that their behaviour improves, and that they are included in all aspects of school life. My discussions with pupils show an understanding that some pupils need extra help to manage their behaviour. They say that this help makes sure that playtimes and lessons run smoothly.

Mindful of the need to prepare pupils to work and learn together in secondary schools in larger groups than they have been used to, three schools in the

partnership arrange for their Year 6 pupils to come together as a class each Friday. This challenges the pupils' academic performance as well as extending their opportunities for social relationships and responsibilities.

Pupils' attendance has improved. Most pupils' attendance is in line with the national average. There have been no exclusions since the end of September 2014, in contrast to the seven exclusions in the previous school year. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded in sufficient detail but the information is not collated or analysed systematically enough to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' social and learning behaviours.

The governing body is reviewing its arrangements to monitor the priorities in the school improvement plan. Arrangements are not tight enough or sufficiently thought through to make sure that governors collect first-hand information about how well pupils' behaviour supports the full range of academic skills and personal development.

The school's website is currently being updated. The policies for safeguarding pupils and managing pupils' behaviour are not available on the website.

Priorities for further improvement

- use the information about pupils' behaviour and attendance to identify, strengths, weaknesses and trends, and to systematically target and track behaviour that develops good attitudes to learning
- make sure that the governing body gathers first-hand information about pupils' behaviour, and that governors have a clear understanding and aspirational view of good learning behaviour and personal development
- keep the school's website up to date so that parents and others are well informed about the school's work, including the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and managing their behaviour.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services or Norfolk and the Chair of the Governing Body. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Heather Yaxley
Her Majesty's Inspector