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Marianne Allen
Headteacher
Springfield Lower School
Orchard Street
Kempston
Bedford
MK42 7LJ

Dear Mrs Allen

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Springfield Lower School

Following my visit to your school on 28 April 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in December 2014. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The focus of this visit was to ensure that the school had addressed weaknesses in its safeguarding procedures identified at the time of the previous monitoring inspection.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. Further action should be taken to:

- review the deployment of midday supervisory staff during lunchtime
- ensure that the Year 4 'playground friends' are briefed to pass on important information to teachers.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the school's safeguarding officer, the member of staff responsible for e-safety, the governor responsible for safeguarding and a representative from the local authority. I also met with a group of pupils in Year 4 who are 'playground friends'. I scrutinised the school's records of

recruitment checks of staff as well as the playground accident book. I looked at the school's most recent policies relating to health and safety. With you, I observed children at play during their lunchtime.

Context

Since the previous inspection, you have reviewed and updated the safeguarding policy.

Main findings

Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and are more robust. All staff in the school have been provided with documentation relating to safeguarding including the document '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' and they have signed a document to say they have both received and read this document. Staff received updated training on the safeguarding of children and fire safety in March 2015.

Children told me they feel safe in the school and that the school site is secure. The 'playground friends' in Year 4, whose purpose is to ensure that no child is lonely or unhappy, treat this role seriously. However, when I met with this group of pupils, they were not all aware that they must report details of their conversations with their peers if they are told something which causes concern.

The number of minor playground accidents recorded in the accident book on a daily basis suggests that a greater presence of midday supervisors might be necessary outside at peak times. You are actively seeking to increase the number of midday supervisors.

Pupils and staff demonstrated a good understanding of e-safety and the risks associated with using the internet. You have updated the anti-bullying policy which has yet to be ratified by the governing body. You have improved your systems for recording any incidents of bullying and racism; such incidents are rare.

Ofsted may carry out further monitoring inspections and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

External support

The mentor headteacher from a local school has worked well with you to strengthen the school's safeguarding procedures. The local authority is also providing helpful support.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Bedford Borough.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector