

Tribal  
Kings Orchard,  
One Queen Street,  
Bristol  
BS2 0HQ

T 0300 123 1231  
Text Phone: 0161 6188524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

**Direct T** 01173115246  
**Direct F** 01173150430  
**Direct email:** Sara.Whalley@Tribalgroup.com

4 June 2015

Mrs Rachel Medley  
The Headteacher  
Bayards Hill School  
Waynflete Road  
Headington  
Oxford  
OX3 9NU

Dear Ms Medley

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Bayards Hill School**

Following my visit to your academy on 4 June 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 Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the behaviour and safety of pupils at the academy.

### **Evidence**

I scrutinised the academy's single central record of staff vetting checks and other documents relating to safeguarding arrangements and met with you, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the safeguarding governor. I also met with the Chief Executive Officer of Cheney School MAT. I visited most of the classrooms in the academy to look at pupils' behaviour and safety, and observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime. There were no parent responses about the academy on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

In addition, I reviewed the academy's records of behaviour incidents, the policy on behaviour management and records of attendance and exclusions. I reviewed a selection of governors' minutes and looked at staff training documents.

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

The academy's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## Context

Bayards Hill is a larger-than-average primary school. It became a sponsored academy in October 2014, as a member of the Cheney School Multi-Academy Trust. From summer 2014, the academy was led by an interim headteacher who is a deputy headteacher from Cheney School. A new governing body was put in place in October 2014. The new substantive headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the academy in April 2015. A deputy headteacher is currently on maternity leave.

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is more than twice the national average. Almost half of all pupils are from a minority ethnic heritage and over a quarter has English as a second language. This is much higher than is nationally the case. The proportion of pupils with a disability or special educational needs is higher than average. Pupils at Key Stage 2 enter the academy with prior attainment that is significantly lower than average. More pupils than average join and leave the academy during the academic year. The academy has been undergoing significant building work, which is almost complete.

Since your recent arrival, you and the new deputy headteacher have worked with swift determination to raise standards of behaviour and safety in the academy. You have created a very clear ethos and pupils feel that things are already improving.

Most pupils now behave well in lessons, showing a lively keenness to learn, particularly at Key Stage 1. Pupils listen well and answer questions enthusiastically and most follow the teachers' instructions quickly, especially in Key Stage 1. However, in all classes, there remains a significant minority of pupils who exhibit more challenging behaviour and not all teachers are adept at managing it. Pupils report that their learning is often disrupted by poor behaviour, particularly in Years 5 and 6. You have very recently introduced a new behaviour management system and staff have already benefited from two training sessions. Leaders report that teachers are becoming more confident in managing pupils' behaviour in lessons. An effective new rewards system has also been introduced this term. In my visits to classrooms, I saw that teachers are using this system well across the school. Pupils are excited and motivated by the 'smiley' system and talk proudly about how many stickers they have been awarded.

The academy has very recently put in place some extra provision for pupils who need the most support with their behaviour. This is housed in a separate area of the academy. The Pioneer class provides behavioural support from specialist teachers, as well as helping pupils to catch up with literacy and numeracy. It is too early to judge the impact of this provision. Exclusion rates are slightly lower this year than last year, but they remain much higher than the national average for all groups of pupils.

The academy now tracks incidents of inappropriate behaviour and bullying by individual pupils. This information is not yet collated, so leaders cannot see trends or patterns in behaviour for groups of pupils, or check if new systems for improving behaviour are working. The new leadership team has plans in place to ensure that this happens.

Pupils' attendance is improving; however, it remains below average and is a key focus for the academy. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is better, when compared to national figures for this group, than that of other pupils. The academy uses external agencies effectively and has a learning mentor who works supportively with families where attendance of pupils is too low.

The academy's safeguarding procedures meet requirements. However, the turbulence in leadership over the last year has resulted in some administrative gaps. For example, not all teachers' qualifications have been checked robustly. The academy's safeguarding policy is up to date, but does not reference the most recent government guidance. Parts of the academy's website have not been updated; the required safeguarding information is not available on the website. All staff are trained annually in safeguarding issues. Governors have the safety of children as a high priority in their work. Nevertheless, governors have not checked the safeguarding documentation in the academy rigorously enough.

Classrooms provide a safe and stimulating learning environment as a result of recent work by leaders to ensure better surroundings for pupils.

The academy follows appropriate procedures regarding the safety of pupils. Referrals are made to external agencies, as required, and senior leaders follow up this process tenaciously to make sure that more vulnerable children are well supported. Detailed records are kept by the academy so that leaders can check how well these pupils are doing. All staff, governors and volunteers who work with pupils have full vetting checks in place.

Academy assemblies focus on positive behaviour and mutual respect and safety. These themes are followed up in personal, social, health and citizenship education. The academy is currently focusing on the British values of team work. Pupils report that teachers encourage them to work positively together. I saw an example of this in action during break time, when some pupils noticed another child who was feeling lonely. They were quick to invite him to play with them and to try and cheer him up.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 feel safe in the academy. They say that most pupils get on well together and that 'our friends take care of us'. Teachers give pupils strategies for being 'good and kind to each other'. Pupils report that there is some bullying in the academy, but that teachers act quickly to sort things out. Children feel that teachers would always help and support them effectively, and some pupils reflected on how

the teachers had helped them improve their own behaviour. Pupils know about how to stay safe on the internet.

Older pupils are less positive about behaviour in the school, and this reflects a legacy of previously weaker leadership and management of behaviour. They report more aggressive play at social times, and frequent disruption to their classes. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not always feel safe in school. One pupil said, 'I don't like break times.' Others agreed. However, pupils feel that behaviour is improving, and they agree that the introduction of the rewards policy in the academy has really helped with this.

The academy is nearing the end of a large building project. This means that there is currently only a limited space for pupils to play at break time. As a result, lively and energetic pupils do not have much room to expend their energy. Duty staff supervise pupils well and are on hand to diffuse any situations which arise. Most staff do this calmly and with authority. However, during the inspection, I observed some aggressive, physical 'play' from older pupils which was not appropriate.

The new building work has given rise to some safety concerns. Doors into the buildings are far too heavy for young children to open safely, and pose a risk to both pupils and staff in terms of trapped fingers. Wooden pillars outside the Key Stage 1 classrooms are sharply cornered and are in pupils' way as the pupils run around at break times. The bolt on the Reception class gate is too low and can be reached by children. Senior leaders and governors are aware of these issues and have plans to make appropriate changes quickly.

### **External support**

The academy is supported well by the Cheney School Academy Trust. A few teachers from Cheney School have been deployed at Bayards Hill during the academic year and this is improving standards of teaching. Some of Bayards Hill policies are shared with the academy trust, but not all key policies, including the safeguarding policy, have been updated quickly enough. The deputy headteacher from Cheney School served as the interim headteacher until April 2015 and began the process of eradicating inadequate teaching and improving governance. However, until now, the academy trust has not monitored the academy's systems for tracking pupil behaviour and safety sufficiently sharply. The governing body has not received precise enough reports about patterns of behaviour and how any work done by the academy is improving the behaviour of groups of pupils. The academy trust has provided good, expert support in setting up the Pioneer class at Bayards Hill and has helped to train staff in better behaviour management.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that all key policies are up to date, reference the most recent government guidance and that the governing body checks how well they are being put in place.

- Make sure that governors check all administrative processes for safeguarding, including that all necessary information is included in the single central record of staff vetting checks.
- Address the safety issues arising from the new building so that doors, pillars and locks are safe for children.
- Evaluate records of pupils' behaviour by groups and over time so that you can see if new strategies for improving behaviour are working.

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

Catherine Anwar  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**