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25 June 2015

Lisa Wright
Headteacher
North Crescent Primary School
North Crescent
Wickford
SS12 9AP

Dear Mrs Wright

No formal designation monitoring inspection of North Crescent Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 24 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 behaviour, attendance and safety of pupils at the school.

Evidence

I considered a range of evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day
- discussions with parents and pupils
- analysis of attendance and exclusion records
- documentary evidence
- discussions with senior leaders, the inclusion manager and staff supervising morning play and lunch-time.

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

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

Context

North Crescent Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school and has one class in each year group, except Year 3 which has two small classes. The large majority of pupils come from a White British background and the remainder from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds; the largest of these groups are pupils with a Roma and Traveller heritage. The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above the national average. In September 2014 the school appointed a new inclusion manager and a learning mentor. The school is also funding a child and adolescent mental health worker for half a day each week.

Behaviour, attendance and safety of pupils

Since the previous inspection, the good behaviour of pupils has been maintained. Attendance has improved significantly and is now above average. This is as a result of your decisive leadership and relentless focus on developing pupils' positive attitudes to school. Your management of the small number of pupils who do not attend school regularly is effective and pupils who display challenging behaviour are helped to improve. Many parents said that you are very approachable. You have gained their trust and communicate with families very well.

Pupils listen very carefully to their teachers. They understand what they have to do and quickly get on with their work. They listen to their classmates very respectfully. In the Reception class, for example, all pupils listened well to instructions and showed respect to the Year 6 pupils who were helping them. Effective routines are established at an early age. Pupils show high levels of respect and tolerance when working in groups and waste no time answering teachers' questions because they follow closely what teachers say. When pupils are asked to move into groups or pairs, they do this without fuss. Behaviour was exemplary in the physical education session where several classes eagerly improved their skills in preparation for sports day.

You are aiming for outstanding attitudes to learning across all classes. In order to achieve this aim, higher expectations are required in a few areas. On rare occasions, pupils are not learning as much as they should. For example, some pupils were queuing to ask for help and therefore wasted precious learning time and some pupils were too noisy during practical work and missed out on the teacher's explanation.

The Nurture Room is used effectively to help the small number of pupils who need additional support. It is a welcoming and quiet place. The school's inclusion manager knows pupils and families very well and carefully notes details of incidents, interventions and agreed actions. As a result, issues are addressed promptly and behaviour over time improves.

Behaviour around the school and in the playground is very good. Pupils are courteous to each other and play together sensibly. Most were able to reflect accurately on their own behaviour saying that *'it was not always good enough'* and one pupil admitted that he was *'a bit of a rebel'*. The dining hall is a lively place and the staggered lunchtime for different classes works well. Pupils from the Traveller community feel included in the life of the school. They said that other pupils and staff understood their cultural background. Many had experienced several school moves and said that this was the best school so far.

The pupils I spoke with during the day consistently said that bullying is rare and always addressed promptly. All felt confident that they could talk to any member of staff if they were bullied. They know the number to call for Child Line and clearly explained that racism is wrong and that they must be tolerant of someone being different to them. They were well-informed about the dangers of social networking sites.

Since you became the headteacher in 2009, no pupils have been excluded permanently and fixed-term exclusions are rare. A small number of pupils are currently receiving intensive support. The newly-established 'Behaviour Rocket', a very clear ladder showing levels of behaviour from poor to excellent, is well understood by all pupils and it is helping them to consider the consequences of their actions.

Attendance, identified as a weakness at the previous inspection, has improved significantly from below average to above average. This is the result of many effective strategies including: the breakfast club, rewards' trolley, attendance certificates, attendance charts, late-gate monitoring, effective working with the education and welfare officer and early intervention for families facing particular challenges.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve pupils' self-discipline and attitudes to learning across all classes to meet the school's high expectation.

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

Yours sincerely

Marianick Ellender-Gelé
Her Majesty's Inspector