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Michelle Akarsu
Headteacher
Mulberry Primary School
Parkhurst Road
Tottenham
London
N17 9RB

Dear Mrs Akarsu

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Mulberry Primary School

Following my visit to your school 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 aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, in the school.

Evidence

The inspector examined the single central record closely, as well as other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including checks on the suitability of adults to work with children. He met with the headteacher, senior leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. He also made a tour of the school site, accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Context

Mulberry Primary School is at the heart of a multicultural community and is located in Tottenham, north London. It is one of the largest primary schools in Haringey, with 686 children on roll and 140 staff. Just under half of all pupils are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium. This proportion is well above average. The funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after. In this school, there are no children who are looked after. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with three out of four pupils speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school at different times during the school year is below average.

The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school has a specialist resource unit for 18 autistic pupils, whose age range is similar to that of the other pupils.

In January 2015, a permanent headteacher was appointed, having previously been the temporary head of the school. Since the last inspection, just under two-thirds of class teachers have left the school, and the support team has been re-organised. During the past year, a number of senior and middle leadership appointments have been made. As a result, staffing is now more stable, and there is an effective leadership team in place to continue to make improvements.

Since the last inspection, the senior leaders have strengthened the consistency of safeguarding and child protection arrangements. For example, senior staff walk the school site daily to check that it is secure and that health and safety procedures are in place for the benefit of pupils and staff. They do specific checks to see whether all pupils are in class. If any pupil is missing, senior leaders ensure that the pupil has a good reason for being out of lessons, such as feeling unwell. Senior leaders ensure that the pupil is in a safe place. They also check that pupils are wearing coloured bands to indicate that a teacher has given permission for them to be away from class. This is to ensure that staff know the exact whereabouts of all pupils at all times.

The headteacher and her senior colleagues have ensured that all staff have received regular up-to-date safeguarding and child protection training. At weekly staff meetings, senior leaders ensure that all staff are kept updated regarding the key plans for pupils who are most in need. The teacher who is the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) keeps in regular contact with families when the need arises, and makes home visits if required.

Since the last inspection, levels of staff supervision of pupils have been much improved. For example, staggered break- and lunchtimes have been introduced successfully, to enable almost 700 children to enjoy their break and leisure time in a

safe and secure environment. The work of the midday supervisors has been re-organised. Staff have received extensive training in health and safety at work, safety in the kitchen and positive behaviour techniques. Each midday supervisor has been assigned to an individual class, in order to escort pupils from their classrooms to the playground and return them to class. They have been given specific areas of the playground to patrol and they wear high-visibility jackets, allowing children to see them quickly if the need arises. Telephones have been installed in all classrooms so that help can be summoned quickly in an emergency. Senior staff are on duty during break- and lunchtimes and are equipped with walkie-talkies to help speedy communication. In a recent survey of pupils' views, they unanimously reported that there is always an adult they can go to if they are worried at school.

The school has made considerable investment in ensuring all areas of the school are visible from classrooms. For example, the way that the outside areas can be seen has been greatly improved since the last inspection, particularly the garden area. Tree canopies have been raised, so that no large plants or shrubs obscure the view from classrooms. Senior staff have ensured that the garden is always supervised by an adult at break and lunchtimes, and that transparent panels have been installed on all doors throughout the school, including the gym. In addition, there has been extensive redecoration of classrooms and toilets so that they are clean and welcoming.

The behaviour of pupils observed when they were out of lessons and moving around was suitable across the school. They are respectful and polite towards each other, staff and visitors. Pupils report that 'peer mediators' (Year 2 pupils and upwards) receive 'lots of' training so that they are able to help both their classmates and the younger pupils if they have any concerns.

Since the last inspection, the school has improved the programme and teaching of sex and relationships education (SRE). This has been specifically designed to help pupils to make informed choices about sexual matters and behaviour and to help them avoid any possible exploitation.

The school has published on its website the SRE themes for Years 2, 4 and 6, which carefully explain to parents and others which areas are to be covered. Before the lessons begin, a letter is sent out to parents and carers outlining the content of what will be taught. The letter explains that they have the option to remove their children from such lessons but few do so. Parents are also able to see the resources and video clips before the lessons are given. Staff in Years 2, 4 and 6 receive annual training provided by a neighbouring local authority. The assistant headteachers support classroom teachers regularly by attending their planning meetings for SRE lessons and by monitoring the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils reported that they are well informed and have many opportunities to discuss matters that arise from these sex and relationships lessons.

Since the last inspection, school leaders and governors have made a determined effort to improve communication, particularly between the school and parents. The school now has many systems for providing information to parents and relevant authorities. Parents now attend regular workshops relating to different subjects, early years, special educational needs and phonics (the sounds that letters make). As a result, they feel much better informed about what is going on in the school and are more confident in helping to support their children's education.

High attendance at events such as coffee mornings, the Christmas fête and the International Day helps to develop parents' confidence about coming into the school and making new friends. As a result of these and other actions, the governing body now has its full complement of parent governors.

There are procedures for the reporting and logging of incidents of pupils' misbehaviour, for writing action plans for individual pupils and for recording cases which give cause for concern. There are also records of annual reviews of statements of special educational needs, as well as of education, health and care plans for pupils. These documents show that the right channels of communication between staff and parents and staff and local authorities are in place. In a recent survey of parents' views, 91% reported that their 'child is not bullied and feels safe at the school' and 88% said they 'feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or a complaint'. However, the online questionnaire Parent View is currently underused.

Governors are committed to providing an education that helps to ensure that all pupils are kept safe, so that they can achieve their very best. The membership of the governing body is drawn from a wide field of professional skills and experience, which includes education, law, finance and local government. Governors are confident in challenging senior leaders and holding them to account and, as a result, have made sure that all safeguarding and child protection procedures meet current requirements. However, the minutes of their meetings do not fully reflect the way in which governors hold the school to account in relation to safeguarding and child protection. The minutes are not therefore as helpful as they might be in terms of informing the school's policy and practice.

External support

The local authority provides very effective support and helpful advice. Its officers work closely with leaders and governors to help keep all pupils safe and secure. The school improvement adviser has been particularly helpful in offering training and advice in strengthening safeguarding and child protection arrangements at the school.

Priorities for further improvement

- Make better use of the online questionnaire 'Parent View' in order to gather parents' views formally and more easily.

- Make sure the minutes of governing body meetings reflect a greater degree of challenge to school leaders so that they demonstrate clearly that governors are holding the school to account.

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

Yours sincerely

David Scott
Ofsted Inspector