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20 January 2016

Ms Barbara Aimable  
Headteacher  
Turnham Primary School  
Turnham Road  
London  
SE4 2HH

Dear Ms Aimable

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Turnham Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on Tuesday 12 January 2016, 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, aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school and the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils at the school.

### **Evidence**

The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior staff, a group of staff, two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, the independent consultant, and the School Improvement Partner from the local authority. The inspector also spoke with a large number of pupils who wanted to share their views about the school. The inspector took into account the 54 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke with a small number of parents who wanted to share their views when dropping off their children at school on the day of the inspection. A telephone conversation took place with the education welfare officer.

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

The school's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

## **Context**

With 492 pupils, Turnham Primary Foundation School is a larger than average-size community primary school that serves pupils aged three to 11. The school has more boys than girls. Most of the pupils are from a diverse range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as a second language is higher than the national average. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium funding, the additional government funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or looked after by the local authority. The proportion of pupils included in the school's register of special educational needs is higher than the national average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well below the national average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at different times throughout the school year is average.

Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced staff turnover, including four different headteachers. The new headteacher and three other senior leaders were all appointed to permanent positions in September 2015. The senior staff include a deputy headteacher with responsibility for Years 5 and 6, an assistant headteacher who oversees the running of Key Stage 1 and a second assistant headteacher who is responsible for Years 3 and 4. The assistant headteacher with responsibility for line managing early years was appointed at the start of September 2015 but left before the end of the term.

Three members of staff from Years 1, 3 and 5 left the school in December 2015. The teaching responsibilities for these classes have been taken over by three experienced and long-term supply teachers. Senior leaders, including the governing body, have taken the decision to delay appointing permanent teachers, primarily as they are seeking to appoint teachers who can securely demonstrate consistently strong teaching.

Prior to the appointments of the senior leaders, the school did not have a senior leadership team. With the departure of the previous headteacher, who led the school at the time of the previous inspection, the local authority provided the school with an executive headteacher and head of school. Both left the school within one school year, after which the governing body appointed the current senior team.

Currently, the school is undergoing extensive refurbishment to increase the capacity to a three-form entry in September 2016. Work is expected to be completed before the end of 2016. The local authority is supporting the building programme.

## **Safeguarding findings**

The new senior leadership team have acted quickly and decisively by introducing clear procedures for safeguarding the well-being of pupils. All matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are now covered. Systems for recording and acting on concerns are fully in place. Staff are clear about the processes for listening to pupils, and recording and reporting concerns. Staff know that safeguarding and child protection matters and any concerns relating to pupils' personal development and welfare are given the highest priority in the school. As a result, decision making and referrals for pupils requiring help and support are timely.

The governing body and staff have been very supportive in reinforcing and successfully implementing the new safeguarding and behaviour policies. Staff have embraced the new ways of working and this has ushered in a different culture and ethos in the school. As a result, expectations of pupils' behaviour are now high. Whereas inappropriate behaviour was not dealt with effectively in the past, and there were no records or logs of behaviour incidents, these are now in place and used regularly.

At the start of the academic year in September 2015, the school did not have clear and workable systems for safeguarding or risk assessments. Furthermore, effective systems were not in place to monitor pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. In addition, policies had not been reviewed and none were fit for purpose. The lack of structure and systems prevented the governing body from exercising their strategic role. Governors and previous senior leaders did not work effectively as a team. This lack of cohesion contributed to destabilising the school. At the time, the local authority's intervention did not lead to staff working together to move the school forward. The school's capacity to drive improvement was reduced.

The new leadership team, very well supported by the governing body, has achieved much in a very short time. They have worked extremely well with a highly experienced education consultant, renowned for leading an outstanding school. Together, they have shown tenacity, determination and commitment to moving the school forward. The Chair of the Governing Body acted quickly to secure the support of the independent adviser. Despite the obstacles, senior leaders have not flinched from developing new practices and challenging the norm. For example, analysis of an urgent referral led to them taking swift action and bypassing the lengthy assessment process. This ensured that the referral was handled skilfully and promptly. Changes to procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare include:

- Revising and updating policies. Those relating to safeguarding now reflect national priorities, in particular the new guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015'.
- The development and implementation of new behaviour systems has led to a consistent approach to monitoring and supporting pupils. Records indicate

that parents are consulted and involved at each stage of the process of managing an incident of unacceptable behaviour.

- New behaviour and attendance policies provide clear guidelines on expectations in relation to sanctions, rewards, uniform and punctuality. Increased monitoring of lateness has led to very few pupils arriving late to school. Effective systems, for example employing an attendance officer and a part-time education welfare officer, have increased the links between home and the school. The school tracks children who are missing their education and home visits are now routine. As a result, there has been a sharp reduction in persistent absence. Attendance at the end of December 2015 was above the national average for primary schools.
- Reconstructing and updating the website so that all information, including the curriculum, reflects recent changes and practices. The school expects to complete the website by the end of January 2016.
- Closer supervision of pupils. Good levels of staff supervision at the start and end of the school day, including break and lunchtime, means that pupils are very well disciplined. The process is very well coordinated. For example, it involves staff using portable radios to liaise with one another.
- An increased emphasis on training and development. While all staff have now received safeguarding training, they have not attended training on the 'Prevent' duty. Arrangements are in place for this to take place before the end of the current term.

Senior leaders recognise that although much has been achieved, there is still more to do. For example, the audit on safeguarding is mostly complete but dates for completion of actions lack clarity and a few gaps remain. The rolling programme to update all policies is underway and systems are not all embedded and evaluated; it is too early to draw definitive conclusions and adjust the plans. New systems to monitor the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 are being introduced and governors are ensuring that the needs of all groups are met.

Previously, the special educational needs register was incomplete and support for this group of pupils was irregular. A complete register is now in place. This is also the case for pupils eligible for additional funding. Resources are now matched to pupils' needs and used consistently. However, analyses of assessment information do not take into account the progress made by all groups of pupils. Governors have begun to challenge senior leaders about the performance of specific groups. Senior leaders have been responsive and know that not all groups achieve as well as they could. They are in the process of identifying the most appropriate strategies to address this.

Staff who I spoke to during the inspection say that the new systems introduced ensure that pupils are safe. They attribute this to the persistent approach and good leadership of the headteacher, who consistently reinforces the school's procedures to keep children safe. For example, they welcome the calm learning environment and

link this to the revised vision and values which emphasise respect and tolerance, particularly as the school is seeking to gain the Rights Respecting Schools Award. Increased discipline means that pupils enter the classroom ready to learn. Staff recognise that the headteacher consistently consults, communicates and listens to them and the parents. Staff report that previous rudeness from pupils has been replaced by politeness and cooperation; pupils accept the new rules and try to keep to them; unacceptable behaviour is no longer ignored. Staff also know that if they raise concerns about pupils' behaviour or welfare, these are dealt with effectively and that they are kept fully informed. This has improved staff morale and stability, particularly as they now view the school as a better place with opportunities for them to develop their skills.

Pupils are positive about their school. They also feel safe. All were emphatic that there is very little bullying. Although pupils are aware of different forms of bullying they are not up-to-date with local issues on, for example, the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and the dangers in relation to gangs. However, they are confident that their concerns are dealt with quickly and they can turn to an adult for help and support when needed. Formal and informal discussions with pupils confirm their agreement that behaviour is much improved. For the last three years there have been no permanent exclusions. Fixed-term exclusions are rare. Pupils point to the headteacher and senior staff as the main innovators and enforcers of the rules; they like the new discipline and a greater emphasis on learning. They embrace the new values, and in discussions all were unanimous about the harmony between the diverse groups in the school. They love being a part of the diverse community and spoke lucidly about the new values of tolerance, perseverance, respect and friendship.

### **External support**

The new local authority officers are working well with the senior leaders at the school; trust is being restored and a professional working relationship is being forged. The new School Improvement Partner has started to hold meetings with senior leaders. Better working relationships between the senior leaders, including the governors and the local authority officers, are leading to improved communication and the formation of partnership work with two outstanding local schools. This is helping the staff to reflect on and improve their teaching. This newfound relationship has led to the school using the local authority as a main training provider to develop governors' skills. Advisory support and guidance is also provided for the early years phase. The governing body is working closely with the local authority on budget forecasting, particularly as it seeks to recover surplus funds which were returned to the finance department before the new leaders were appointed.

The headteacher has made good use of external consultants to monitor and validate the school's work. This has focused attention on developing teaching, curriculum planning and the use of assessment information.

The independent education consultant, acting as mentor and adviser, provides excellent support and training for the school. This support has contributed to the headteacher and senior staff adopting a measured approach when taking strategic actions to sustain improvement.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Ensure that the website and the safeguarding and child protection policies are accessible to parents and other interested parties before the end of the current term. In particular, make sure that by the end of the summer term 2016 the website is compliant.
- Ensure that the new systems for recording, reporting and meeting the needs of pupils are developed, monitored and evaluated regularly in relation to:
  - safeguarding and child protection
  - special educational needs
  - pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare
  - the Equality Act 2010.

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

Yours sincerely

Carmen Rodney  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**