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Mrs Kim Duff
Kings Heath Primary Academy
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Northamptonshire
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Dear Mrs Duff

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Kings Heath Primary Academy

Following my visit with Roary Pownall and Martin Finch, Her Majesty's Inspectors, to your academy on 23 and 24 September, 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 quality of leadership and management, and the behaviour and safety of pupils at the academy.

Evidence

We scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We met with senior leaders including the Executive Headteacher, the Associate Headteacher, the Inclusion Manager, the Behaviour Lead, the Vice Chair of the Academy Improvement Board and the Director of Education of David Ross Education Trust (DRET). We also met with teachers and non-teaching staff, parents and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed eight lessons or parts of lessons and undertook learning walks around the academy. We scrutinised documents, including information relating to safeguarding, behaviour and racist incident records. Inspectors considered the views of parents that were submitted to Parent View and a letter from a member of the public.

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

- The academy's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
- Leadership and management are effective.
- Pupils' behaviour is well managed and pupils are safe at the academy.

Context

Kings Heath Primary Academy is a member of the David Ross Education Trust (DRET). The academy is a larger than average-sized primary school with 432 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is amongst the highest 20% nationally. Similarly, the proportion of children that speak English as an additional language is also above the national figure. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs (DSEN), including those with statements of special educational needs or those with education, health and care plans, is below the national average.

Safeguarding

The new leadership team has ensured that safeguarding is an important part of everyday life at Kings Heath Primary Academy. Pupils are safe at the academy because leaders ensure that safety has a high profile and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Pupils behave safely around the academy because staff supervise them well and insist on them upholding the consistently high expectations set out in the code of conduct.

The curriculum provides opportunities to teach pupils about how to keep themselves safe, including the importance of taking care when using the internet. The academy's firewall procedures mean that the risk of pupils accessing unsuitable material is as low as possible.

Pupils told us that they feel safe in school; they can approach any adult in the academy, who will listen and deal with concerns or worries effectively. Pupils also told us that bullying now rarely happens and where it does arise, caring adults deal with it effectively. Parents told us that their children were very safe in the school. They said that the academy's new headteacher is both approachable and visible and that, as a result of her strong leadership, bullying has reduced significantly and the academy is improving rapidly.

The academy's safeguarding policy and procedures are up to date, compliant, reviewed regularly and applied effectively. The single central register meets statutory requirements and the academy follows safe recruitment procedures. The vice-chair of the academy improvement board (AIB) has effective links with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and meets regularly with her to monitor, evaluate and review safeguarding. However, the AIB have not required an annual report on the education of looked after children from academy leaders.

Leadership and management

School leaders and representatives of David Ross Education Trust are ambitious for Kings Heath Primary Academy and have a clear vision for its future. The Associate Headteacher and Executive Headteacher have effectively communicated their vision to staff and pupils. However, senior leaders need to improve communication with parents so that they too recognise the improvements the academy is making.

The academy leaders and DRET have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching and the standards reached by pupils. The school's self-evaluation document provides a largely accurate view of the school. School leaders have identified key areas for improvement, and evidence from the past two terms indicates that leaders have effectively prioritised the areas for improvement and have acted effectively to improve the leadership of the academy, teaching and behaviour. The academy leaders and the Director of Education for the trust understand that improvements so far have not had an impact on pupils' progress and they recognise that this is a key area for improvement.

School leaders ensure that procedures for staff appraisal and pay increases rightly focus on pupil outcomes. Consequently, teachers know that they are accountable for the progress their pupils make. Staff also know that the school needs to improve. They point out that school leaders, who are open with staff, explain what needs to improve, why it needs to improve and how they will work together to improve it. Staff reported that they feel safe at the academy despite all the changes because school leaders support them.

The vast majority of parents that spoke to inspectors recognise the improvements the school has made over the past two terms. They feel that staff and leaders are much more approachable and that their views and opinions are listened to. Parents know that staff and school leaders are acting to improve the school. All the parents who spoke to inspectors, and the views expressed by those on Parent View, agree that their children feel safe at the academy. While parents can see that behaviour has improved, a small minority remain concerned. Some pupils, particularly those who have challenging behaviours, continue to need additional support from academy staff. Incidents of poor behaviour remain and these affect other children's learning and their sense of safety. The support provided by the academy for these pupils is effective. Nevertheless, a very small minority of pupils believe that behaviour has not yet improved enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

School leaders have worked hard to establish a culture and ethos at the school that has, at its core, an expectation that pupils will attend school every day and behave appropriately. They expect staff to support pupils to behave appropriately and make good progress. In April 2014, leaders introduced a new system to manage and promote good behaviour across the school. The application of this approach has resulted in a reduction in incidents of poor behaviour, including those resulting in

fixed-term exclusions. Teachers and pupils told inspectors that they know the system and appreciate the consistency it has brought to the academy. For example, one pupil said, 'Now we have stages, everyone is behaving much better.' Attendance has improved and is now above the national average, with more pupils arriving punctually.

The academy is an orderly learning environment. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons and children settle quickly to their learning. A very few pupils become distracted in lessons and sometimes disturb others but teachers deal with this behaviour promptly. Behaviour is good around the school, including at breaks and at lunchtime. A small number of pupils and parents are concerned about the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils who have a history of aggressive behaviour. Academy leaders and staff know how to provide support to help these pupils improve their behaviour. Leaders have also provided effective support to families of pupils who are at risk of exclusion. However, school leaders understand that to improve the behaviour of the very small number of pupils with challenging behaviour further still, they must identify the needs of individuals more closely and implement bespoke plans to address their needs.

Academy leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively promoted. Pupils are given opportunities to explore issues which make them think and help them to recognise the importance of listening to each other's views and opinions and respecting diversity. Pupils have recently experienced democracy in action through school council elections.

Overall, behaviour has improved at Kings Heath Primary Academy and staff manage the behaviour of pupils well. School leaders recognise that they now need to support pupils so that they are able to regulate and manage their own behaviour.

External support

David Ross Education Trust and other schools within the trust have provided effective support to Kings Heath Primary Academy since it joined the trust.

The support has included:

- support in strategic planning such as the prioritising areas for initial improvement; leadership, teaching, behaviour and safety of pupils
- supporting school leaders to address the underperformance of some staff
- sourcing suitable candidates for key posts
- support in improving quality of teaching
- facilitating school-to-school support

- supporting the development of pastoral pods in which staff can provide support to individuals or small groups of pupils with additional needs.

Overall, the support provided by the academy trust has been effective. It has challenged and supported school leaders to correctly identify and prioritise the key areas for improvement. They have supported the school to put in place effective strategies to address the priorities. The academy trust, through the Executive Headteacher and Director of Education, continues to challenge and support school leaders to remain fixed on their key priorities and not to be distracted by minutiae. Consequently, the academy is an orderly place to learn. Staff know what is expected of them and trust leaders to hold them to account for the standards the pupils achieve but also to support them in enabling the children to make good progress.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve behaviour further by encouraging and supporting pupils to manage and regulate their own behaviour.
- Improve the attendance and behaviour of targeted pupils by providing bespoke provision that meets their individual needs.
- Improve learning so that all pupils make at least expected progress.
- Ensure that governors receive an annual report on the education of looked after children.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Northamptonshire, to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Academy Improvement Board and as below. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector