

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



7 October 2016

Mrs Clare Harding
Headteacher
Asquith Primary School
Asquith Street
Mansfield
Nottinghamshire
NG18 3DG

Dear Mrs Harding

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Asquith Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 20 September 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 at the school.

Evidence

I met with you, three members of the board of governors, four members of staff and five pupils. I spoke with several other members of staff informally. I held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and a member of staff at an alternative provider attended by one of your pupils. I also spoke with parents as they brought their children to school in the morning, and observed safety as pupils came into school.

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We scrutinised staff training records together. You took me on a tour of the school while lessons were under way and I observed pupils at play during lunchtime.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

Asquith is a larger than average-sized primary school. While the majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, approximately 29% of pupils speak English as an additional language with 17 languages currently spoken by pupils across the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly lower than average. More than four in 10 pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. However, the proportion in each year group varies considerably, with some year groups having as many as seven out of 10 pupils known to be eligible for this funding.

This year, two teachers and one teaching assistant have joined the school staff.

You ensure that staff receive the appropriate training, including training relating to protecting pupils from extremism and radicalisation. Records show that training is up to date. You make sure that staff receive important updates about safeguarding in between their scheduled training. Staff whom I spoke with said that they had received training at the start of this term. The regular updates that you give to staff mean that safeguarding is at the forefront of their minds. All the staff I spoke with were clear about how to raise concerns about a child's welfare and they recognise that they all have an important role to play in safeguarding pupils.

Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place. My visit took place very early in the school year. This meant that several policies were currently being updated in line with recently published guidance. For example, the new staff code of conduct has recently been distributed to staff. Staff are required to sign to confirm that they have received and read it. Staff that I spoke to said that this process was under way and they were able to describe important aspects of the code of conduct, such as those relating to staff use of social media. You and the governing body are aware of the importance of paying due regard to updated documents, such as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2016'), when you review the child protection policy this term to ensure that all the changes and requirements are fully reflected in the policy.

The day-to-day procedures for keeping pupils safe have recently been tightened. Together we scrutinised several files. You keep records methodically and securely. However, your records could be further strengthened by ensuring that everyone has a final note detailing the outcome of the action that was taken. You employ a parent support worker. Unfortunately, due to staff absence, I was unable to meet with her on my visit. However, you discussed with me in detail the work that she does. She liaises with external services, such as social care and the educational psychology services. She meets with parents who would benefit from support. She and other pastoral support staff provide support for pupils in school, such as bereavement counselling, anger management and art therapy. If it is necessary, you make use of the R.E.A.L Independent School for pupils who will benefit from this alternative provision. During our tour of the school, we visited 'the cloud' room

where a small group of pupils were participating in a nurture session with two staff. I also observed pupils in lessons and as they moved around school. Pupils in class were engaged with their learning and those walking round school held doors open for us and greeted us both politely. We arrived in one classroom at the start of playtime which was taking place indoors due to the rain. Pupils were well supervised and occupied with toys, games, and pencil and paper activities. The pupils I saw at play during lunchtime were also well supervised as they played running games or chatted together.

At the start of the inspection, there were a few discrepancies on the single central record. The member of staff responsible for maintaining this record was able to rectify these during the day, so that the record was compliant by the afternoon of my visit. All the appropriate vetting checks take place when a member of staff is appointed.

Governors have a clear understanding of safeguarding. They receive training alongside staff. Safeguarding is an agenda item at governing body meetings and you report to the governors at meetings about any issues relating to safeguarding. They are aware of the recent improvements that have been made, such as to the monitoring of attendance, the use of colour-coded lanyards for visitors and the systems for keeping records in school. However, governors acknowledge that their methods of auditing safeguarding practices and procedures in school could be more thorough.

Procedures for safeguarding were audited by you and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding during the summer term. This audit was discussed at length with another governor, who will be taking on this role in due course. A report has been prepared for the forthcoming meeting of the board of governors. However, the audit did not cover every aspect of safeguarding across the school in order to precisely identify how improvements could be made. You acknowledge that following this inspection, you are keen to work with the governors to improve this audit system without delay so that governors can hold you fully to account for this important aspect of your work.

Pupils whom I spoke with said they feel safe in school. Like their parents, they appreciate that the gate is closed and visitors have to come into school through the main door. Pupils were confident that if they have any concerns or worries there is a trusted adult in school whom they could talk to, who, as one child put it, 'would get involved' and help them. Pupils said that they are taught in school about how to keep themselves safe. They are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet. Pupils spoke proudly of the 'Welcoming Team' that helps pupils who are new to school, many of whom have recently moved to live in England, to settle in and feel part of its community. Pupils also appreciate the support the school provides from external agencies, such as 'Childline', which have visited the school to teach pupils about keeping themselves safe.

The curriculum supports safeguarding well. For example, pupils learn about safety when they are using the internet and keeping themselves safe when they cycle on the roads. You make effective use of external information and providers such as Childline, NSPCC and the 'Great Project' to support pupils' awareness of keeping themselves safe.

On the day of my visit, the pupils in Year 5 were out of school on a trip to Sudbury Hall. You make use of the online system 'Evolve' for risk assessments. This was in order.

There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered. However, parents with whom I spoke felt that their children were safe in school. They appreciate the communication they receive from school if their children are unwell or hurt. They felt confident that the school would help them if they had any concerns or worries. Parents also felt that the school site is safe.

Attendance is below the national average. You have rightly implemented a system to address this. Pupils are now rewarded for good levels of attendance and the attendance of each class is reported in newsletters. It is too early to comment on how successful this is proving to be, but you believe that early signs show that fewer pupils are arriving late. You have also tightened the system for parents who wish to take their children out of school for any length of time so that you know where pupils are at any time.

The school website provides parents with some useful links to help them keep their children safe – for example, links to the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre and ThinkUKnow, which provide information about internet safety. However, some other parts of your website are not up to date. It does not provide all aspects of important information to parents, such as the curriculum and the use of additional funding for primary sports and disadvantaged pupils.

External support

You and your pastoral staff work closely with several external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and that they know how to keep themselves safe. This includes the local authority which provides training and Childline. You have a strong link with R.E.A.L Independent School for pupils who require alternative provision. You act as agents for the local foodbank and direct parents to debt counsellors and housing support if this is required.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that as policies are reviewed, they comply fully with all the requirements outlined in the statutory documents for safeguarding.
- Develop a system for governors to audit safeguarding procedures that

covers all aspects of safeguarding so that existing, and further improved, safeguarding systems are checked closely to ensure that they are robust.

- Ensure that your website is fully compliant with government recommendations for the publication of specified information about the curriculum and the use of funding for primary sport and disadvantaged pupils.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Di Mullan
Her Majesty's Inspector