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11 November 2016

Julia Scannell  
Chief executive officer  
Sedgehill School  
Sedgehill Road  
London  
SE6 3QW

Dear Ms Scannell

### **No formal designation monitoring inspection of Sedgehill School**

Following my visit to your school on 12 October 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss safeguarding in your school.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about safeguarding at the school.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils about whether they feel safe at school
- documentary evidence relating to safer recruitment and keeping children safe in school
- discussions with school leaders and staff about safeguarding training
- observations of pupils' arrival and departure from the school site.

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

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to ensure that safeguarding is now effective.

## **Context**

Sedgehill School is a larger than average 11–19 secondary school. Three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, while the number who speak English as an additional language is just above average. Just over half of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average. The number of pupils with a statement of educational need or an education, health and care plan is above average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school other than at the usual times is above average. The school is fully staffed.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Since the last inspection, school leaders have effectively addressed some of the issues identified in relation to safeguarding. They have proactively made changes to the school building in order to keep pupils safer. Bollards outside the main reception area prevent cars from mounting the pavement and the Highways authority has introduced road-calming measures. A new conservatory area in the main atrium funnels pupils who arrive to school late, to ensure that they are registered appropriately. Staff and sixth form students wear identity badges at all times and these are scanned as they enter and exit the building. A Safer Schools' officer and security guard are available to prevent strangers from entering the building and pupils leaving without permission. They also act as a point of contact for pupils needing further support. Staff supervise pupils as they arrive and leave the school site. Consequently, procedures around the start and finish of the school day have improved.

School leaders have commissioned two external reviews of safeguarding procedures and policies, to check that they are in line with statutory guidance, and this is now the case. The interim executive board (IEB) understand their responsibility to ensure that safeguarding procedures are appropriate and that school leaders make careful checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school. However, inspectors found that the record-keeping in relation to this information was not compliant with current guidelines. These errors were amended during the inspection.

Staff have received the most up-to-date safeguarding training. This includes training on the 'Prevent' duty. They are aware of potential risks for young people in the wider community. These include affiliation to gangs, child sexual exploitation linked to gangs, and radicalisation. Staff are clear about their responsibility to keep pupils safe, how they might identify concerns and how to report these appropriately to the designated safeguarding leads. An in-school referral system via the staff website ensures that all concerns are immediately passed to the designated safeguarding officers, who closely monitor individual pupils. Referrals to external agencies are timely, records robust and actions monitored. Pupils receive information on how to keep themselves safe. However, pupils are clear that they would like more opportunities to discuss issues that affect them in the wider community, for instance gang affiliation.

Attendance, while still below the national average, is beginning to improve. The attendance team carefully track pupils who are not in school, parents are informed on the first day of absence and home visits are organised for those missing for two days without parental authorisation. School leaders know that some families are taking pupils on extended holidays during term time and are working with the local authority to address this with individual parents. While pupils' punctuality to school and lessons is still poor, school leaders have instigated a number of strategies to encourage pupils into class quickly, including rewards and consistently applied sanctions. As a result, there has been some improvement.

Some pupils' conduct around the school site is still unacceptable. While school leaders have strived to eradicate poor conduct since the last inspection, too many pupils behave in a way that makes others in the school community feel unsafe. Boisterous and aggressive corridor behaviour, a reluctance to go to lessons and inappropriate shouting mean that many pupils do not feel that the environment is safe or conducive to their learning. School leaders have introduced a range of measures to track pupils' behaviour and set higher expectations about acceptable conduct. However, pupils expressed variable opinions about the improvements that had been made in behaviour since September.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

■ School leaders must ensure that:

- pupils receive regular information about how they can keep themselves safe both in school and in the wider community, particularly in relation to gang affiliation and radicalisation
- record-keeping in relation to the checks on staff is compliant with guidelines
- pupils' conduct around the school site is orderly and calm
- pupils show respect and tolerance towards each other, so that their behaviour and body language does not make others feel unsafe.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Matthews  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**