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12 May 2017

Angela McHale
Holybrook Primary School
Rillington Mead
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Dear Miss McHale

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Holybrook Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 3 May 2017, 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 scrutinised the single central record and many other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. You and I had discussions throughout the day and I met other leaders, various members of staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. A number of parents shared their views with me at the beginning of the school day. I observed pupils in classrooms and in other parts of the school building and listened to what a number of pupils had to say about what it is like to be a pupil at the school.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

The school is slightly smaller than the average primary school. A less than average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A small number of these pupils have an education, health and care plan. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.

The school was placed in special measures following the inspection that took place in October 2016. Safeguarding was judged to be ineffective. Following this, the school has de-federated from its partnership with a local school and the executive headteacher is no longer in post. You were the previous head of school and have now become the headteacher. Other staffing has remained fairly stable with one teacher leaving in April 2017.

An academy order is currently in place and the school is preparing to be a sponsored academy as soon as possible.

You have begun your role as headteacher with the determination needed to ensure that there are effective safeguarding arrangements in place to protect pupils. Staff have received additional training and there is increased clarity in school policies and procedures. As a result, staff feel that there is now a much stronger culture of safeguarding than at the time of the last inspection. There is also greater consistency in the application of school policies and procedures by staff. However, you are rightly aware that some aspects of safeguarding practice, while vastly improved and now meeting requirements, should be developed even further.

Leaders have worked quickly to tackle the school's most pressing safeguarding issue regarding pupils at risk through attempting to abscond from school. Supported by the local authority, your prompt action has resulted in the school site and building now being made secure. You have involved staff in developing a new procedure for when a pupil absconds. This has meant that staff feel they have ownership of the procedure and are keen to work together and support each other in preventing pupils from absconding. A duty-teacher system has been established which results in swift intervention should a pupil not be meeting the desired behaviour expectations. The new procedure and school security measures have not only been successful in preventing a core group of pupils from absconding, but have also reduced the number and severity of behaviour incidents in general. This means that pupils now feel safe and are safe.

A range of policies and procedures have been adapted and improved to meet the needs of your school. By providing training and updates for staff, you have been successful in raising awareness of safeguarding and there is a more consistent approach as a result. Teachers receive dedicated training on a regular basis about safeguarding policies and procedures. You recognise the need to formalise the

safeguarding training all staff receive when they are first appointed, as part of the induction process, as this is not recorded in a consistent way at present. Likewise, although lunchtime staff have received training, a more formalised approach with clear recording of the training received would add greater rigour.

Governors are new in post and have therefore not yet established systems and routines which will support them in rigorously challenging school leaders. Once they are all in post, the review of governance recommended at the last inspection is to be carried out. However, they have made a solid start and have engaged in a range of training to support them in their roles. The chair visits the school regularly to make sure that all serious incidents have been recorded promptly and thoroughly and that the single central register is accurate and up to date. He appreciates that increased rigour in school systems, such as a recruitment checklist and more robust training records, would support him carrying out these checks more thoroughly. The governors are beginning to use their developing knowledge of school systems and the training they have received to provide effective challenge and support for school leaders.

You and your staff team have raised expectations of pupils' behaviour through the improved policies and procedures, which have been implemented with success. Behaviour tracking is effective in identifying any pupil causing concern at a much earlier stage than was previously the case. The pastoral team are then reviewing the needs of these pupils and making sure that the appropriate support is in place. This has resulted in no further incidents for some identified pupils. For a core group of repeat offenders, systems such as specific timetables of activities at lunchtime are minimising the number incidents occurring. The duty-teacher system is helping staff to take collective responsibility for pupils' behaviour and they often de-escalate any potentially serious incident from happening. Where incidents do result in physical restraint being necessary, records are prompt and detailed. You accept that it would be beneficial to add greater rigour to the process by including pupil voice and checks on pupil and staff well-being. This would enable pupils to understand why restraint has been necessary and would support a positive future relationship between the pupil and member of staff. Leaders could then use the recorded information to check the well-being of pupils and staff and to learn any lessons which could prevent future occurrences.

There have been a number of strategies you have adopted to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence. Text messages, rewards and the use of a minibus to collect identified pupils have given a very positive message to pupils and parents about the importance of good attendance. You are keen to build on this parent partnership even further to both instil good attendance habits and to give parents other advice about keeping their children safe, for example, when online. As yet, improvements in attendance figures are only minimal, but changes in attitude are starting to influence and encourage good habits, particularly in the younger year groups. Improved tracking is also identifying pupils who you are monitoring closely

and a range of actions are being taken to address each case.

Pupils still have a weak understanding of other cultures. Leaders have implemented a new approach to the curriculum but this has not yet become embedded. As yet, there is no leadership monitoring of the curriculum in subjects such as religious education, personal, social and health education and citizenship. This means that you are not making sure that the curriculum is effective in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

External support

The local authority acted quickly to manage the de-federation and subsequent appointment of the headteacher. Support has also involved arranging an interim governing body and now a full governing body following de-federation. Representatives from the local authority have also ensured that swift measures were taken to secure the site and prevent pupils from absconding. The school's improvement adviser has a clear view of the effectiveness of actions taken to strengthen safeguarding procedures at Holybrook. He is now working closely with school leaders to develop practice further and support the transition to becoming an academy.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that there is greater rigour in the systems for induction and training of staff.
- Further refine the procedures following physical restraint so that lessons can be learned and future occurrences can be prevented.
- Develop partnership with parents to enable leaders to share information about keeping children safe and encouraging good attendance.
- Ensure that leaders take responsibility for checking the effectiveness of the curriculum in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

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

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Godfrey

Her Majesty's Inspector