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Ian Kenworthy
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Dear Mr Kenworthy

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Camborne Science and International Academy

Following my visit with Polly Soper, Regulated Social Care Inspector, and Justine Hocking, Ofsted Inspector, to your school on 3 and 4 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

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. Inspectors met with you and the vice-principal, who is also the designated safeguarding lead, as well as various other senior leaders, groups of pupils, and representatives of the governing body and multi-academy trust. An inspector also spoke on the telephone to the local authority designated officer.

Inspectors scrutinised a number of additional documents including governors' minutes, local authority safeguarding audits, attendance and exclusion records, and information about parental engagement. In addition, inspectors scrutinised e-safety information, behaviour records, health and safety information and information relating to alternative provision. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons

and during breaktimes. Inspectors also visited an alternative provision to establish the effectiveness of safeguarding in this setting.

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

safeguarding is effective.

Context

Camborne Science and International Academy became an academy in 2011. It also formed a multi-academy trust with St Michael's Secondary School, a free school, in 2015. St Michael's closed in 2016 and the site became part of the Camborne Science and International Academy. Since the closure of St Michael's, the Nexus centre has opened on this site. Nexus is provision for most-able pupils in subjects such as science, mathematics and computing. Currently, Year 7 and Year 8 pupils study these subjects on the Nexus campus for two days a week. Other subjects, such as Mandarin, are also studied on the Nexus campus at different times.

The school has approximately 1400 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils are of a White British background and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is just above average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. Levels of mobility for pupils are in line with the national average.

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ensuring that safeguarding and child protection arrangements keep pupils safe

Leaders take their responsibilities for safeguarding seriously. They understand that the protection of children is paramount and this understanding threads through different aspects of the school's work. As you said, 'we live and breathe safeguarding in our school'. Leaders fully appreciate the importance of having 'tight', well-organised systems for staff training, recording information and pursuing child protection concerns. They also rightly believe that a safe school is built on a foundation of firm-but-fair discipline and good behaviour.

Consequently, effective systems are in place to ensure that staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what is expected in terms of their professional conduct. Other systems ensure that there is good communication between staff so that safeguarding always has a high profile. For example, safeguarding is a standing item on meeting agendas and, where appropriate, child protection issues are discussed at weekly staff meetings.

A large number of senior staff hold safeguarding responsibilities and have been trained accordingly. They meet frequently to ensure that they are all kept fully

informed about school-wide issues. The wider staff have received appropriate child protection training in accordance with the school's policy and the latest guidance from the Department for Education, 'Keeping children safe in education' 2016. As a result, they know how to spot signs of vulnerability and the procedures to follow should a referral need to be made. Following training, staff are 'tested' to be sure that their understanding of procedures is secure. Staff involved in the recruitment of new staff to the school, including governors, have received safer recruitment training. This ensures that new staff joining the school are suitable to work with children.

The school's single central record contains all the necessary information to ensure that staff currently working at the school are suitable to work with children. Checks are robust and up to date. For example, the single central record contains individual staff files with details of references for all staff. Staff do not commence employment until references have been received and confirmed. Any gaps in employment history are investigated.

Staff are encouraged to share any concerns they may have about pupils, however small. They do this by completing Cause for Concern forms, which are then passed to the relevant designated safeguarding lead. Inspection evidence shows that these concerns are well managed and the appropriate follow-up action taken as required. Where necessary, staff liaise effectively with external agencies to secure the necessary support. However, when external support is not as timely or as effective as it should be, staff do not always follow escalation procedures 'to the letter' to tackle shortcomings.

The governing body is effective in promoting a positive safeguarding culture in the school. It supports the school's approach to nurturing a culture based on 'caring discipline' because this promotes good behaviour and, in turn, a safer environment. Governors provide vital challenge to leaders in ensuring that all pupils are supported by this culture. Where pupils are at risk of exclusion, governors insist that staff use every means at their disposal to avoid this last resort. As a result, leaders' decisions have not always been upheld in this regard. Governors receive the same training received by staff; they too are 'tested' on their understanding. Governors have a good understanding of safeguarding issues in the school. This is because they receive regular reports from the senior designated safeguarding lead. Consequently, they are able to speak knowledgeably about the most pressing concerns and, where appropriate, the support in place for individual pupils.

Pupils behave very well in the school, which supports effective safeguarding. In lessons, pupils follow teachers' instructions, concentrate on their work and cooperate well with each other. No low-level disruption was observed by inspectors. Furthermore, inspectors were frequently greeted by learning ambassadors who explained in an articulate, mature fashion what pupils were learning in the session. Around the school site, during breaktimes and lesson changeovers, pupils move in a

calm, orderly fashion. They respect each other's personal space, even at pressure points in the school building such as corridor intersections, so that the 'flow of traffic' is smooth. However, some younger pupils reported that certain corridors could feel busy and made the analogy that they were 'carried along like a river current'. When talking in small groups in communal spaces the volume is appropriate. Pupils are polite and considerate to each other, and also to staff and visitors. Pupils wear their uniform very well; they are impeccably presented.

Behaviour is monitored and tracked effectively. As a result, staff are able to detect patterns and emerging issues. They are quick to take action to tackle these issues. For example, last year some pupils would use the word 'gay' in conversation and out of context. Leaders quickly spotted this and took action to explain to the pupils why this behaviour was unacceptable. There have been no further occurrences as a result.

There have been no permanent exclusions this academic year, which is a significant improvement on the previous two years. Fixed-term exclusions are in line with the average. This is due to a number of factors, including pupils' increasing appreciation of, and conformity with, leaders' high expectations of behaviour. Leaders are also using a balanced system of rewards and sanctions, and alternative provision, to good effect. Governors are effective in ensuring that staff have 'tried everything' before resorting to permanent exclusion.

Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they feel safe in school because there are lots of different staff they can approach should they have concerns. For example, pupils said they would speak to learning mentors and designated safeguarding leads if worried. Pupils commented that bullying is dealt with effectively in the school. They said that staff are good at 'cracking down' on it, whether it be physical or online bullying. Pupils stated that the behaviour system in the school balances rewards and sanctions appropriately. As a result, pupils 'know where they stand' and feel that the system is fair.

Leaders work hard to ensure that pupils are aware of e-safety and know how to keep themselves safe online. The information technology curriculum is kept up to date to respond to the latest e-safety issues, such as 'sexting'. Key messages are publicised through different media, such as the daily bulletin and the termly newsletter. For example, the daily bulletin was a useful vehicle for reminding pupils how to use social media applications such as 'Snapchat' appropriately. This was in response to an incident that had occurred in school.

Staff responsible for e-safety in the school also ensure that other staff are trained appropriately. For example, staff have received training on how to reduce their online social media visibility, in keeping with their professional responsibilities. Opportunities to engage parents with these issues are also taken when they arise. This is because staff understand that when pupils are online outside school, parents

have a vital role to play in helping to safeguard them. Consequently, guidance is provided to parents on the school website and drop-in sessions are arranged during parents' evenings.

The curriculum to develop pupils' personal, social and health education focuses on relevant issues to help pupils become more aware of how to keep themselves safe. However, pupils report that they are not always able to recall all of what they have learned. This is because these sessions occur only occasionally on select days through the year.

The overall attendance of pupils is broadly in line with the average. This is the case for most year groups and most groups of pupils. The attendance officer works closely with the pastoral support managers to follow up any reported absence. Staff contact parents and liaise with other agencies, such as social care professionals and the police, if necessary. Despite this work, persistent absence is too high for some Year 10 and Year 11 pupils, some of whom are disadvantaged. Staff monitor the attendance of different groups of pupils, including those who are vulnerable. However, monitoring and evaluation are not sufficiently refined to enable staff to uncover less obvious patterns of absence. This limits the ability of staff to identify swiftly, and tackle, some pupils' poor attendance.

Leaders ensure that the safeguarding culture and procedures that are evident in the main school also apply in other settings, such as the Nexus campus. The vice-principal who coordinates this aspect of the school's work is also a trained designated safeguarding lead. She communicates regularly with the other designated safeguarding leads and knows all the pupils in her care well. Attendance of these pupils is closely monitored. They are asked for their views about their involvement with Nexus provision and report that they are happy and safe. Their behaviour in lessons reflects that of pupils in the main school; they are focused, attentive and engaged. The Nexus campus is secure; gates are locked and the site is enclosed by a sturdy perimeter fence. The campus is located next to a train station, rail line and busy road. Current risk assessments do not take sufficient account of the potential risks posed by the surrounding area to pupils arriving at or leaving the campus.

Leaders closely monitor pupils attending a variety of alternative provisions. They have a good understanding of the complex needs of these pupils and their individual circumstances. Leaders receive regular updates on their pastoral and academic progress. Staff in these institutions send certificates of assurance to the senior designated safeguarding lead stating that safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and meet school leaders' expectations.

External support

The school has been well supported by the local authority designated officer over time. Leaders have taken advice on different occasions and acted on it to ensure that complaints are resolved and allegations against staff dealt with appropriately. Leaders have also commissioned safeguarding reviews from an external consultant, which has enabled them to refine their practice.

Priorities for further improvement

- Develop sharper systems for monitoring the attendance of different groups of pupils, in order to quickly understand reasons for absence and tackle it more effectively.
- Conduct a more detailed risk assessment of the local area around the Nexus campus, better to ensure the safety of pupils arriving at and leaving the site.
- Be aware of, and use, all formal routes, including liaison with the local children's safeguarding board, in order to secure necessary support from external agencies when required.
- Ensure that the arrangement of the curriculum fully develops aspects of pupils' personal, social and health education.

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

Yours sincerely

Steve Smith
Her Majesty's Inspector