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Mrs Porter
Acting Principal
Henderson Green Primary School
Earlham Grove
Norwich
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NR5 8DX

Dear Mrs Porter

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Henderson Green Primary School

Following my visit to your academy on 29 June 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 aspects of the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school (including governance), and of personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils for pupils at the academy.

Evidence

The inspector scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and met the acting principal, the executive headteacher, a group of pupils from Reception to Year 6, a small number of parents, and the chair of directors and two other directors. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

The inspector scrutinised school documents including behaviour logs, minutes of meetings of directors and committees and attendance information. The inspector visited all classes and spoke with a range of members of staff.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders, including academy trust directors, are taking effective action to improve the school, including pupils' behaviour, the quality of teaching and learning and provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Context

Henderson Green Primary Academy is a smaller than average primary school. The school became part of the Heart Academy Trust in April 2016. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to that found nationally. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than double the national average. The number of pupils with a statement of special needs or an education, health and care plan is broadly average.

The predecessor school was judged to require improvement in November 2015. Since then, the school has suffered a period of turbulence in relation to leadership and staffing with a succession of temporary headteachers. Currently, the school is led by a trust director as acting principal and overseen by the executive headteacher of the trust. A permanent headteacher has been appointed to start in September 2017. There has also been a large turnover of teaching staff since the previous inspection, with almost every current class teacher joining this year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

During the inspection, the inspector looked at how effective leaders are in keeping pupils safe. Checks on staff are now carried out according to statutory regulations and are recorded appropriately.

The inspector looked at the safeguarding audit that current leaders carried out. This identified a range of weaknesses including in the recording of concerns for pupils and of action taken. These have now been remedied and concerns are recorded appropriately and follow-up action is evident. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that action is taken to keep pupils safe.

Leaders ensure that all staff are fully and regularly trained and know what to look for that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. Staff spoken to during the inspection demonstrated that they are very conscious of pupil safety and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil.

The inspector drew attention to the safeguarding policy on the website which, because of recent personnel changes, did not have the correct names for the designated lead professionals. This was amended during the inspection.

Leaders provide good early support for pupils and families through the pastoral support adviser so that any concerns are quickly identified and addressed before these escalate.

The inspector visited all classes and found that behaviour across the school is generally good. Pupils are settled and cooperative in lessons and enjoy playing together at playtimes and lunchtimes, although some pupils said that they would welcome more playtime equipment. Pupils said that behaviour is 'mostly good' and the small number of parents spoken with also said that behaviour has improved because staff deal with behaviour incidents consistently. However, pupils also said that there are some incidents, predominantly caused by a small number of pupils. You confirmed to me that this is the case because some pupils have specific behaviour issues. These are dealt with appropriately as shown by the school's behaviour logs. Leaders have a clear policy for managing behaviour with a system of sanctions and rewards for behaviour which pupils know and said is effective. However, prior to the inspection, the link to the behaviour policy on the school's website did not work and so parents could not access the policy without requesting it from the school. This has now been rectified.

An area of concern raised by parents to Ofsted prior to the inspection was about provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspector talked with the acting headteacher and special educational needs leader for the trust, and found that important and necessary changes have been made in relation to special educational needs provision. These include reintegrating pupils into classes who had previously been within a separate class run by teaching assistants. This change was handled well with a clear transition programme for the pupils concerned and is proving effective. Pupils who had previously been in the separate class were seen working with their peers and taking part in lessons with their classmates. Alongside this, individual and small group support for pupils is provided, which is well planned and carefully evaluated. Leaders for special educational needs regularly check provision for these pupils to ensure that advice provided for teachers is acted upon and support for pupils is effective.

Leadership and management

The inspector looked at how leaders keep parents informed about the work of the school and how they deal with concerns raised by parents. During the period of staffing changes, leaders notified parents about the changes but were rightly unable to provide detail about the reasons for staff changes.

Leaders are keen to develop closer links with parents. They provide parents with fortnightly newsletters which let parents know about day-to-day events and achievements. They invite parents in to a morning café with the school's parent support adviser. They have planned events such as mathematics cafés and reading cafés. This is improving communication with parents.

The inspector looked at the school's complaints procedures. Leaders agree that these are not as clear as they should be to help parents raise complaints appropriately, especially those concerning pupils who have special educational

needs and/or disabilities.

The inspector looked at records relating to concerns raised by parents with leaders. These demonstrated that leaders respond appropriately to concerns, including modifying school procedures when necessary. For example, following a concern raised by parents about an incident, leaders reviewed and subsequently altered the school's first aid procedures. However, some concerns raised with the local authority have not been resolved because directors have not yet permitted local authority personnel to investigate the specific complaints. Nonetheless, parents spoken to during the inspection, some of whom said they had raised these complaints, commented positively about action taken by leaders in relation to their concerns.

Parents had previously raised concerns about the turnover of staff and how classes are staffed. Leaders acknowledge that there has been a high turnover of staff but have ensured that the school is fully staffed with permanent teachers in all classes. Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and provide clear feedback to help teachers improve their practice further. As a result, teaching is improving. Leaders are realistic and recognise that there is more to be done to ensure that all teaching is at least good.

External support

The academy trust provides strong support for leaders. This includes providing staff when necessary from across the trust, and commissioning a range of external support from consultants to evaluate and review aspects of the school's work. This has helped directors to ensure that they have an accurate view of the progress the school is making. A new chair of directors has been appointed and changes in organisation from local advisory boards to committees that operate across all four schools in the trust have improved the governance of the school. This is because in the committees, directors focus more closely on specific aspects across all four schools, such as finance and pupil achievement. Discussions with directors and scrutiny of committee minutes demonstrate that directors are determined to improve the school. They have improved systems for verifying and evaluating school information, visiting more regularly and speaking with staff and parents. As a result, directors are robust in holding leaders to account. Directors have not, however, ensured that information provided on the school's website is accessible, up to date and compliant with current requirements by the Department for Education.

Priorities for further improvement

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure:

- effective engagement with external stakeholders, including the local authority, so

that concerns are avoided or resolved rapidly

- the school's complaints procedures are improved so that they are clearer and more accessible to parents
- information on the school's website is up to date and accurate so that parents have better information about the school.

I am copying this letter to the executive board, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Maria Curry

Her Majesty's Inspector