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Mrs Diane Reynard
Acting Principal
North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre
Tongue Lane
Meanwood
Leeds
West Yorkshire
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Dear Mrs Reynard

No formal designation monitoring inspection of North West Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC)

Following my visit with Tudor Griffiths and Stephen Ruddy, Ofsted Inspectors, to your school on 28 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 the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

Evidence

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and met with you, other senior leaders and two representatives of the local authority.

Inspectors visited classrooms on the Penny Field School and Green Meadows School sites, talked to pupils and reviewed a range of documents and information relating to their personal development, behaviour and welfare. The lead inspector had telephone calls with the chair and vice-chair of the interim executive board (IEB).

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

North West SILC is a multi-site special school for pupils aged 3 to 19 who have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are three specialist sites: Penny Field School, Green Meadows Primary and Green Meadows Secondary and Post 16. In addition, there are four mainstream inclusive partnership sites: Allerton High School, Benton Park School, Brudenell Primary School and Rawdon St Peter's Primary School.

There are currently 170 pupils on the school's roll. All have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Just under one third of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and approximately half are supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority).

North West SILC was placed in special measures following the inspection that took place in May 2016. The school's safeguarding arrangements were judged to be ineffective and all aspects of the school's work were judged to be inadequate. North West SILC's safeguarding arrangements were also judged to be ineffective at a no formal designation monitoring inspection in October 2016.

Inspection findings

You and your senior colleagues have worked tirelessly to tackle the fundamental weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements. You have raised your colleagues' expectations, improved their knowledge and skills and made sure that promoting pupils' safety and welfare is at the heart of the school's work. The school's designated safeguarding leader has been especially influential in securing this transformation.

The school's record of checks on the suitability of staff to work with children and young people now meets Department of Education (DfE) requirements. Importantly, senior leaders and members of the IEB routinely check that the school's single central record (SCR) is complete and up to date. The local authority's lead officer for safeguarding also checks the SCR regularly to provide an objective assessment of its effectiveness. This gives IEB members assurance that all required safer recruitment checks are in place.

The designated safeguarding leader has developed a comprehensive programme of safeguarding training, briefings and updates for staff. As a result, teachers and other adults are knowledgeable about the things that make children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities vulnerable and they know how to give pupils the help and protection that they need. Records show that incidents involving pupils and concerns about their safety and welfare are reported and acted upon in a timely and effective way. This is because there are stronger systems and the work of each site's safeguarding lead person is effectively

supported and coordinated. Staff told inspectors that there has been 'a dramatic improvement' in the school's approach to safeguarding pupils since the last inspection.

The school's personal, social and health education programme has been radically re-designed. As a result, pupils are learning how to keep healthy and stay safe. Pupils told inspectors that their views and opinions are valued. This is also helping them to feel safe and supported. These important developments are not currently included in the school's safeguarding action plan. This means that they are not checked and evaluated as systematically as the actions identified in the plan. You agreed that reviewing and updating the safeguarding action plan is an important next step.

Pupils' behaviour is being managed more safely because senior leaders and staff are using their knowledge of pupils to improve the help and support that they provide. The senior leader with responsibility for this aspect of the school's work has made a significant difference to pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare since the last inspection.

You have overhauled the school's approach to providing care and support for pupils who have complex health and medical needs. Care plans provide detailed and helpful information about individual pupils. Teachers and other adults are well trained. Records of training and checks on the safety and effectiveness of care plans are now in place. Health professionals and the school's designated safeguarding leader have strong oversight of this critically important aspect of pupils' safety and welfare.

External support

The local authority has provided effective support and robust challenge to you and your senior leaders. The local authority's lead officer for safeguarding has provided incisive advice and information about the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding systems, which is valued by senior leaders and members of the IEB.

The local authority's school improvement adviser has coordinated external support well and provided similarly incisive information about the impact of the school's action plan. As a result, senior leaders and members of the IEB have a clear view of what needs to be done to tackle the areas for improvement identified at the school's last section 5 inspection.

Priorities for further improvement

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the school's safeguarding action plan is reviewed and updated and includes the development of the curriculum and pupils' voice and influence

- the local authority continues to provide the intensive and high-quality external support needed to sustain the pace of improvement at North West SILC.

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

Yours sincerely

Nick Whittaker
Her Majesty's Inspector