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Mrs Ellen Woodthorpe
Skipton Parish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
Brougham Street
Skipton
North Yorkshire
BD23 2ES

Dear Mrs Woodthorpe

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Skipton Parish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 18 July 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, around the building and in the playground, and listened to what 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 average in size for a primary school. The large majority of the pupils are White British. A lower than average proportion of pupils is disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.

The school was judged to require special measures following the inspection that took place in February 2017. Safeguarding was judged to be ineffective. Following this, leaders have worked with the local authority to tackle the identified areas for improvement. An academy order is in place and the school is preparing to become a sponsored academy as soon as possible. Since the inspection, you have appointed two additional lunchtime supervisors and two higher-level teaching assistants, and an existing member of staff has been appointed as a pastoral leader. You are due to retire and governors have appointed a new headteacher to take up post in September 2017.

You have tackled the safeguarding concerns relating to pupils' behaviour and bullying with urgency. Consequently, safeguarding procedures are now effective. New approaches to managing behaviour and improved recording systems have quickly resulted in a reduction in the number and severity of behaviour incidents. You are aware that there is still work to do and that the new behaviour system needs to be applied more consistently in order to have even greater impact.

Using the support brokered by the local authority and expertise from existing staff, leaders have developed an effective behaviour system. Involving all stakeholders, for example through pupils' and parents' forums, means that there is a better understanding of the approaches being adopted and people feel involved in supporting the improvements being made. Pupils and parents also value the focus on rewarding positive behaviour. Following the launch of this new behaviour approach, pupils and parents can already see immediate improvements. Staff have much higher expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils feel that behaviour in class and around the school has got much better.

A pupils' forum identified some 'hot spots' around school where pupils felt less safe. One particular area identified was the playground. As a result, you have increased the level of supervision and have made sure that there is a range of equipment available to keep pupils occupied. Cloakroom areas were also identified as a place which made some pupils feel more vulnerable. These areas are now supervised during break and lunchtimes to give pupils greater security about their safety. Leaders have also created additional opportunities for older pupils to work with younger ones to support their learning. This has encouraged the formation of positive relationships. Pupils of different ages are now playing more harmoniously together in the playground. As a result of these actions, pupils now say they feel much safer in school, and confident that staff will take seriously any concerns they raise.

A critical improvement has been the record-keeping and analysis of behaviour and bullying incidents. By appointing an existing member of staff with considerable expertise to the role of pastoral leader, you have been able to establish a comprehensive recording and reporting mechanism. As a result, leaders and governors now have detailed information about the types of incidents, their severity and the pupils involved. This is supporting governors in holding school leaders to account with regard to safeguarding procedures. Analysis of this information is telling leaders that there has been a sharp fall in the number and severity of incidents. Importantly, analysis has also highlighted where there are still areas for improvement. Lunchtimes have been identified as a more common time for incidents to occur. Therefore, governors have taken action to enable leaders to look at good practice in other schools in order to make further improvements.

Records also show that a few pupils are now responsible for the majority of incidents. While the occurrence is reducing, it is not stopping for these individuals. Leaders have identified that more tailored and personalised support for these pupils, most of whom have more complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, is going to be paramount in reducing incidents further and ensuring that pupils' individual needs are well met. Leaders have responded by introducing 'chill and chat' at lunchtimes, which is providing pupils with a calm and quiet indoor space where they can avoid the busy playground areas if needed. Governors have made plans for the pastoral leader to further develop the provision for the identified pupils as part of his new role. Leaders also acknowledge that the development of the key worker role in the early years will enable staff to better support children's emotional needs so that they are able to fully flourish in key stage 1 and beyond.

Pupils are confident about how to report any concerns about bullying and are able to name various adults they could talk to if they had an issue. However, they are not always clear about the different forms of bullying. You are aware that while the number of bullying incidents has rapidly reduced, it is important that pupils have a good understanding of the definition of bullying and the different types of bullying they could encounter. Leaders have made plans to raise pupils' awareness of bullying so that pupils are fully clear about what types of behaviour are considered unacceptable and should be reported.

External support

The local authority has acted quickly to address the issues identified at the last inspection. The extensive support provided for leaders has ensured that safeguarding is now effective. The recruitment of a national leader of governance to the chair of the governing body has been vital to improving the governing body's effectiveness at a rapid rate. The governing body has now been reconstituted and roles and responsibilities have been defined. Members of the governing body have begun to receive training to enable them to carry out their duties more effectively, and provide greater challenge and support to school leaders. The local authority has also ensured that the new headteacher has been fully involved in the recent

changes to enable a smooth transition in the school's leadership arrangements. The school's improvement adviser has a clear view of the actions taken to strengthen safeguarding procedures. He is now working closely with school leaders, including the new headteacher and the diocese, to develop practice further and support the school's transition to becoming an academy.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to embed the new behaviour approach so that staff apply the procedures with increasing consistency.
- Develop more personalised pastoral support for pupils with complex needs.
- Raise pupils' awareness and understanding of bullying.
- Develop the role of the key worker system in the early years to better meet children's emotional needs and to provide support for their well-being.

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

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Godfrey
Her Majesty's Inspector