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7 December 2017

Mrs Janet Keefe  
Interim Headteacher  
Nessfield Primary School  
Nessfield Drive  
Keighley  
West Yorkshire  
BD22 6NP

Dear Mrs Keefe

### **No formal designation inspection of Nessfield Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 22 November 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This 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 wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school.

### **Evidence**

I scrutinised the single central record of the checks made on adults working with the pupils and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements and met with yourself, senior leaders, a group of pupils, staff, parents and carers, the vice-chair of the interim executive board and a representative of the local authority.

I also evaluated external reviews, your school's self-evaluation and post-Ofsted action plan, safer recruitment procedures, records of staff training, governors' minutes, risk assessments, and attendance and behaviour records. Together, we conducted a safety check of the school site and observed the behaviour of pupils during lunchtime and in lessons.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

## Context

Nessfield Primary School was inspected in May 2017 and it was judged to require special measures, with safeguarding judged as ineffective. Since the last inspection, the local authority has seconded an interim headteacher. Two acting deputy headteachers have also been temporarily recruited to the senior leadership team. An interim executive board has replaced the previous governing body.

Following the last inspection and after a period of significant staffing changes and upheaval at the school, the local authority seconded you to address the decline of the standards of education at the school. The newly formed interim executive board have the appropriate range of skills and expertise to provide support and challenge and have been appropriately linked to the areas identified as needing improvement. The chair of the interim executive board has taken responsibility for safeguarding. They have now secured the appointment of a substantive headteacher, starting in January 2018, a substantive deputy headteacher and a substantive leader for the early years. The school is currently awaiting the confirmation of a preferred sponsor to complete the process of converting to an academy.

Your knowledge and expertise, along with your commitment to the school, staff, children and the local community, have been a catalyst to a range of improvements. You have established much needed stability across a number of areas of the school and are beginning to restore parents' confidence in the school. Your excellent relationships with members of the interim executive board and the local authority have allowed you to drive improvements swiftly, based on a carefully considered post-Ofsted action plan. You clearly prioritised safeguarding, and the rapid improvements you have secured in a very short space of time lay the foundation for building on further developments in other areas of the school. It is vital during this transition period that the interim executive board and the local authority ensure that this momentum is maintained and further accelerated by the new school leadership.

You have ensured that the single central record is fully compliant, up to date, and regularly checked and monitored. There are now rigorous checking mechanisms in place to ensure the suitability of staff working at the school. You have ensured that recruitment procedures follow safer recruitment guidelines and all members of the interim executive board are trained in safer recruitment. These revised safer recruitment procedures have been rigorously followed during the four recent appointments made by the school since the last inspection.

You have successfully commissioned a member of staff to introduce a number of initiatives around behaviour and the pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils and staff have embraced the newly introduced system of rewards, 'bucket filling', and its consistent use is evident in all classrooms. Pupils are eager to 'fill their buckets' and talk passionately about the rewards associated with them. As a result, the behaviour of pupils is much improved and their conduct in lessons and

during lunchtime is calm, purposeful and polite. School systems for recording incidents have been refined and staff have received appropriate training to use the system more effectively. As a result, staff feel more confident in reporting incidents of bullying and harassment. School records indicate a significant reduction of behaviour incidents since last year, especially for bullying and harassment. Both parents and children reported that behaviour has vastly improved since the last inspection. They say bullying happens on rare occasions, but when it does, staff deal with it appropriately. Pupils spoken with reported that they feel safe in school.

You have taken swift actions to ensure that the recording and monitoring of pupils' attendance is more effective and rigorous. As a result, leaders are able to identify patterns of attendance and take appropriate actions to ensure that children attend school regularly. Pupils were able to articulate very well the importance of attending school and were able to link the impact on future successes. You are developing a culture of regular attendance in the school and are taking action, when necessary, to tackle persistent absence. You have made changes to the school's systems for dealing with children who arrive late each morning to the school. Consequently, the number of pupils arriving late for lessons has drastically reduced since the last inspection. Overall, pupils' attendance has improved since the start of the new academic year and the rate of persistent absence has also reduced, and is now below the national average. We agreed that further staff training would help to ensure that the analysis of the attendance data is accurate and supports leaders to make reliable decisions on intervention strategies.

Following the last inspection, you have worked quickly and decisively with the local authority to ensure that the hazards around the school site have been removed and the outdoor environment is made safe for children and staff. As a result, during our walk around the school to consider the safety of the site, you were able to demonstrate clearly the effect of your swift actions. All relevant site risk assessments are in place but have not been regularly reviewed. Although staff had some basic training on e-safety, their knowledge and understanding is not adequate to support pupils and parents with online safety issues.

### **External support**

The local authority has provided effective support to the school since the last inspection on a number of areas, including the provision of safeguarding training for staff, supporting leaders with attendance tracking and monitoring, and interim staffing. The local authority has acted swiftly to appoint an interim headteacher and two interim deputy headteachers to urgently address the issues identified in the previous inspection report. An interim executive board was also put in place quickly to support and challenge the interim leaders. Representatives from the local authority have conducted external safeguarding audits and regular progress reviews. They have worked closely with the interim headteacher to ensure that work is undertaken quickly to make sure that the school site is safe and safeguarding is effective.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Further develop the analysis of attendance and behaviour data so that more accurate and reliable information is used by leaders to identify areas of concern and take timely and appropriate actions.
- Ensure that risk assessments are reviewed regularly and that staff are fully aware of them.
- Ensure that all staff have appropriate e-safety training to support pupils and parents with issues about online safety and that leaders are able to evaluate the effectiveness of the e-safety education provided.

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 Bradford. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dimitris Spiliotis  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**