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Nicola Furneaux
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Furneaux

No formal designation inspection of Framingham Earl High School

Following my visit with Paul Wilson, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 6 March 2018, 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.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection of a serious incident involving a child who used to attend this school that had occurred since the previous inspection. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the incident were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Evidence

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We held meetings with you and other senior leaders, the chair and two other members of the governing body, the local authority exclusions officer and three groups of pupils, including those who are vulnerable. Telephone conversations also took place with the governor responsible for safeguarding and a local authority safeguarding officer.

Inspectors also scrutinised documentation relating to attendance, behaviour and exclusions and the curriculum. We also reviewed a range of school policies relating to safeguarding. You accompanied me to observe a small group of pupils learning

mathematics in your nurture centre 'The Den'.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

The number of pupils on roll is 739. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is well below average. An above-average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities attend the school. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is broadly average. Staff retention is high. No pupils attend any alternative provision.

The school has gained a positive reputation locally for the work of its nurture centre 'The Den'. The school plans to become an academy from May 2018 and will be part of the Sapientia Trust.

Inspection findings

You wisely redistributed safeguarding roles and responsibilities when you appointed a new assistant headteacher in September 2017. The new senior designated lead for safeguarding has used this as an opportunity to examine safeguarding practices and make changes for the better. The quality of child protection record-keeping has significantly improved, and all documents in the files are now cross-referenced to a chronological list of events. There are plans to increase the frequency of the safeguarding team's fortnightly meetings so that these take place every week. These meetings are now minuted, which previously was not the case. Arrangements have also been made for all of the safeguarding team to have access to confidential records, which continue to be kept secure. Posters which identify the safeguarding leads are displayed around the school in prominent positions, and pupils regularly discuss safeguarding issues in form time. For example, form-time bulletins seen by inspectors actively encouraged discussions about the recent media coverage of a global charity and the alleged abuse of vulnerable citizens in Haiti by some of its staff. Pupils who met with inspectors said that the school's leaders had clearly 'upped their game' in promoting safety and safeguarding in the school.

You revised the school's safeguarding policy in December 2017. The policy is compliant with current requirements, identifying key staff's roles and responsibilities, and provides clear guidance to staff on how to recognise signs of neglect or abuse and how to refer a safeguarding concern. Staff who met with inspectors confirmed they had received and read the policy and demonstrated a good awareness of safeguarding matters. Staff continue to make safeguarding referrals and say that the process has been made easier by placing referral forms in every classroom. Previously, some staff were not always informed of the outcome of

a referral. Communication systems have now been improved so that staff who make a referral are provided with an appropriate degree of information.

All of the four designated safeguarding leads in the school are fully trained and have up-to-date certificates. Other staff in the school receive annual refresher training and suitable arrangements are made for any new staff who join the school mid-year.

Training in the government's 'Prevent' duty has taken place and all staff have received face-to-face training on this topic. However, six members of staff have yet to provide evidence that they have completed their online training.

Inspectors were provided access to a case study where the school suspected a child had gone missing in education. My scrutiny of this file showed that the school had taken every possible measure to ensure that the child was both located and safe. The police were rightly informed about the matter. The school's leaders were rigorous in ensuring that the matter was pursued until the child was accounted for.

Discussions with pupils, including those who are vulnerable, demonstrated a reasonable awareness of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Pupils who met with inspectors did, however, demonstrate a lack of awareness of the dangers associated with the abuse of prescription drugs. Members of staff who met with inspectors could not recall any recent training on drugs awareness. Your personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum covers all aspects of relationships and how to keep safe when online, including the use of social networking sites. Vulnerable pupils who met with inspectors were able to provide examples of how they felt the school had helped them overcome personal barriers in their lives, and how their self-esteem had improved as a result of your support and intervention. My observation of vulnerable Year 7 pupils' learning in mathematics supports your view that these pupils are well supported and encouraged to believe in their capabilities. Teaching in 'The Den' encourages vulnerable pupils to be resilient and never to 'give up'. You have conducted a subject audit to map out how aspects of PSHE are delivered beyond the designated lessons. Inspectors' scrutiny of your PSHE curriculum showed that the way in which you cover aspects of the government's 'Prevent' duty could be more explicit than it is at present.

Inspectors' discussions with your attendance officer show that much useful work is carried out to encourage pupils to attend school regularly, and that there is a particular focus on disadvantaged pupils, as you acknowledge that these pupils attend less regularly than their non-disadvantaged classmates. Indeed, overall attendance is only broadly in line with the national average. You continue to make telephone calls home on the first day of any unreported absence, and have set up systems to reward 100% attendance. You regularly communicate with parents and carers to ensure that they understand the clear link between regular attendance and achieving well.

Governors at the school have a good understanding of their duty in promoting

safeguarding and checking that the school's systems and procedures for keeping children safe are implemented. Safeguarding rightly features as a regular item on governing body agendas. The school's single central record of checks of the suitability of staff is compliant with current requirements.

External support

The Sapientia Trust has conducted a comprehensive and informative safeguarding audit in advance of your academisation. Following the audit, the school's leaders produced a detailed integrated safeguarding action plan. The plan identified appropriate actions in order to address the issues raised by the audit. Governors monitor the impact of actions that are being taken. Leaders and governors acknowledge the importance of completing all of the identified actions in a timely manner. An educational consultant also recently conducted a brief review of safeguarding with actions to be taken. The local authority has plans to visit the school shortly in order to respond to any questions leaders have on safeguarding matters.

Priorities for further improvement

- ensure that all the issues identified in the integrated safeguarding action plan are addressed within a reasonable timescale
- ensure that an update on drugs awareness training is provided to all staff and that the few remaining staff complete their online 'Prevent' duty training
- make the coverage of 'Prevent' duty more explicit in the PSHE programme
- improve pupils' attendance, particularly those who are disadvantaged, so that it is above the national average.

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

Yours sincerely

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector