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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
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10 October 2018

Mr Craig Nicholson  
Acting Principal  
North Ormesby Primary Academy  
James Street  
North Ormesby  
Middlesbrough  
TS3 6LB

Dear Mr Nicholson

### **No formal designation inspection of North Ormesby Primary Academy**

Following my visit with Barry Found, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 27 September 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss safeguarding and behaviour in your school.

The inspection was carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about safeguarding and behaviour at the school.

### **Evidence**

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including the single central record
- records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance
- pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons, as well as their conduct around the school and at play and lunchtime.

Meetings were held with you, senior leaders, staff, a local authority representative and a parents' and carers' group. Parents' views were gathered at the start and end of the school day and the 13 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Parent View, were also considered. Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and spoke to pupils informally throughout the day to gather their views about the school. A telephone meeting was held with the chair of the governing body, who was also representing the trust.

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

Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

### **Context**

North Ormesby Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has 241 pupils aged three to 11 years old. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with 12 other ethnic groups represented in the school. A quarter of pupils speak English as an additional language and this is just above average. Just over half of all pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is more than double the national average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is above the national average. However, the proportion who have an education, health and care plan is below average. The proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at times other than usual transition points is above average. The school converted to become an academy in 2012 and is a part of the Academies Enterprise Trust. The principal is currently absent from the school and an acting principal is in place.

### **Safeguarding**

You and your staff place great emphasis on the safety and well-being of pupils. An ethos of nurture and care underpins all work of leaders and staff. As a result, pupils are happy and confident, and those who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe in the school.

You have a secure understanding of the local community and of pupils' social and emotional needs. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a range of contexts and this learning is enhanced through the school's close work with community police officers. For example, pupils know about the potential risks presented by strangers and roads. They are also clear about the risks they face online and know how to avoid them.

You provide effective training for staff which has ensured that they identify potential risks promptly and are aware of their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Staff joining the school receive training relating to safeguarding before they take up their posts. Clear procedures are in place and staff know what to do if they have concerns about a child.

You and your staff keep detailed records regarding changes in pupils' behaviour, including incidents of unwanted behaviour, and of significant communication with parents and carers. You have systems in place to ensure that all relevant staff are alerted to any concerns. This effective sharing of information ensures that staff are vigilant to any patterns in pupils' behaviour which may indicate an underlying

vulnerability.

Designated safeguarding staff communicate well with outside agencies and, where necessary, referrals are made swiftly. Leaders' records in respect of vulnerable pupils and their families are detailed and demonstrate that appropriate support is provided.

Leaders ensure that when staff are appointed, all the required checks are made to ensure their suitability to work with children. A record of these checks is held within the school and is well maintained.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

Strong relationships exist between staff and pupils. Pupils feel that their opinions and feelings are listened to. Consequently, they feel confident to share any concerns or worries that may arise with a trusted adult in the school. Pupils and staff agree that, occasionally, bullying does happen. However, pupils have faith in adults to tackle these instances effectively.

Pupils' conduct during the inspection was calm and orderly at all times. Clear routines at the start and end of the day mean that pupils' entry to and exit from school are safe. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well structured and suitably supervised. As a result, pupils play cooperatively and enjoy the opportunity to interact with their friends. Leaders and pupils both say that behavioural incidents do occur. The school's records show that incidents are dealt with effectively. You have introduced a new approach to discussing behaviour with pupils. As a result, pupils are becoming increasingly reflective when considering their own behavioural choices.

You are determined to create an ambitious culture within the school. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Senior leaders are focused on raising pupils' aspirations and ensuring their future employability. You have been successful in ensuring that pupils have a strong work ethic and, as a result, they show consistently positive attitudes to learning. Lessons are productive and purposeful. Pupils shared the view that they love coming to the school because they want to learn.

Pupils appreciate the leadership opportunities available to them and understand how these roles support their personal development. For example, pupils are proud to fulfil the role of sports leader, digital ambassador or school council representative. Additionally, leaders have designed the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum to support pupils' emotional resilience and promote their mental health. As a result of your focus on personal development, pupils are polite, welcoming and articulate.

Parents' views of the school are mixed. The majority of parents praise the school's

work, particularly in relation to their children feeling happy and learning well. Leaders have embraced a newly formed Parents and Carers Advisory Board, which has done much to strengthen relationships between parents, the school and the wider community. However, you are fully aware that there is more work to do to gain the confidence of a relatively small but significant group of parents who feel that their views are not heard.

Pupils' attendance rates are below average. Although the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent has reduced from 2017 to 2018, it remains unacceptably high. Both of these measures are negatively affected by the high number of pupils who join and leave the school at points other than the end or beginning of the school year. Leaders provide incentives for pupils who attend regularly. Pupils appreciate the associated rewards and they know the importance of attending school every day. Leaders check on pupils' attendance on a daily and weekly basis and they follow up absences promptly to ensure that pupils are not at risk. However, they do not always act swiftly or stringently enough where pupils' attendance is sporadic over a longer period. Therefore, where pupils' attendance is falling, parents do not always receive appropriate support and challenge in a timely way. Governors and trustees do not hold leaders to account rigorously in this respect.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should improve attendance rapidly by:
  - holding leaders to account effectively for pupils' attendance
  - reducing the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school
  - ensuring that checks on pupils' attendance over time are rigorous and systematic
  - providing appropriate and timely support and/or challenge for parents where attendance falls or becomes too low.
- Strengthen relationships with parents, particularly those who are dissatisfied with aspects of the school's performance.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Middlesbrough. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Karine Hendley  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**