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30 November 2018

Mr James McAtear
Executive Headteacher
Hartismere School
Castleton Way
Eye
Suffolk
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Dear Mr McAtear

No formal designation inspection of Hartismere School

Following my visit with Jason Howard, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 20 November 2018, 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 was concerned about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of leadership and management, particularly the contribution of leaders and governors to the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We met with you, members of the senior leadership team, including the designated safeguarding lead, the special educational needs coordinator and three groups of staff. We also held a meeting with the chair of the trust, a trustee and the chair of the school's local governing body. I also had two telephone conversations with the local authority safeguarding lead.

Inspectors also scrutinised documentation relating to attendance, behaviour and exclusions and the curriculum. We also reviewed a range of school policies relating to safeguarding. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils from all key stages and spoke to pupils informally when making short visits to form tutor periods and

lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime.

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

safeguarding is effective.

Context

The number of pupils on roll is 966. There are 187 students in the sixth form. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national 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. A small number of key stage 4 pupils attend alternative provision for part of the week. Staff retention is high.

The school is a member of the Hartismere Family of Schools, which is a multi-academy trust consisting of two secondary schools and one primary school. The executive headteacher of the three schools is also the trust's chief operating officer.

Inspection findings

The safeguarding of pupils is given the highest priority. You and the trustees recently revised the child protection and safeguarding policy to make sure that it reflects the latest published guidance. The policy clearly identifies roles and responsibilities and provides detailed guidance on how to recognise signs of neglect and abuse, and how to raise safeguarding concerns. Staff who met with inspectors confirmed that they had received recent training that highlighted changes to the policy, and showed a good awareness of safeguarding matters. Annual training and regular updates ensure that staff are aware of the risks that pupils face, including the risks of extremism and radicalisation. Staff are clear as to when they should refer any concerns and are confident in doing so. Leaders ensure that staff members who make referrals are provided with an appropriate degree of information about the subsequent action taken. There are suitable arrangements for providing safeguarding training for new members of staff and this includes those who join part-way through the school year. There are sound procedures in place to ensure that temporary supply staff and visitors to the school are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard pupils and how they can raise concerns.

The current designated senior safeguarding lead took on the role early in 2018, having previously been a member of the wider safeguarding team. Safeguarding leaders are highly effective, knowledgeable and fully aware of recent changes to statutory guidance. Records relating to child protection are detailed and include a chronological list of events and actions taken. Since her appointment, the designated safeguarding lead has been tenacious in following up concerns and in

ensuring that pupils and their families receive the support that they need. There is evidence of effective work with other agencies to keep pupils safe. She has ensured that referrals have been made in a timely manner. When necessary, the designated safeguarding lead has challenged decisions made by other agencies to make sure that these are in the best interests of the individuals concerned.

Trustees and members of the local governing body are fully aware of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe from harm. They regularly undertake safeguarding training and have ensured that policies and practice have been amended to reflect the latest statutory guidance. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children and young people are thorough. The single central record of these checks is accurately maintained. The chair of the trust board regularly reviews this record to ensure that all the required checks have been completed and recorded correctly.

You have ensured that opportunities are threaded through the curriculum to effectively support pupils' personal development and welfare. Teachers carefully consider where to use these opportunities in sequences of learning. Consequently, activities are meaningful and appreciated by pupils. Discussions with pupils showed they have a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe from harm and follow healthy lifestyles. Pupils could confidently speak about how they learn to do so in lessons, through personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and activities covered in form tutor time. Many topics, including healthy relationships, drug and alcohol misuse, the risks posed by misuse of social media, sexual exploitation and coping with stress, are covered in appropriate depth and detail for pupils of different ages. Topics are revisited so that they remain relevant to pupils of different ages and raise issues at an appropriate time in pupils' lives. For example, pupils consider how to manage stress and anxiety before they are in Year 11 and may experience this when taking their GCSE examinations. You are aware that some risks are becoming more relevant to the local area and need to be introduced into your PSHE curriculum. This includes teaching pupils about the risks of being exploited and drawn into organised, drug-related crime through county lines.

Pupils have a good understanding of bullying in its different forms and of the harm that it can cause. Pupils spoken to during the inspection were clear that bullying is rare and that teachers act quickly to resolve any bullying incidents or use of derogatory language. This is reflected by school records and the school's own surveys of pupils' and parents' views. Pupils have a good understanding of difference and respect the beliefs and views of others. Pupils told us that discrimination in any form is not acceptable and could give examples where they had considered issues relating to equality in their learning. The long-established 'Hartismere 100' programme, where pupils organise events to raise funds for charities, provides further opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities, apply their learning in a different context and develop empathy. This reflects the ethos of your school motto, 'to learn, to serve' and your aim, which is shared by staff,

trustees and governors, to help pupils to develop 'sharp minds and big hearts.'

You have ensured that there are high expectations of pupils and teachers in all aspects of school life. Attendance is above the national average and few pupils are persistently absent from school. There are robust procedures in place to monitor attendance and follow up absence. High and improving attendance is celebrated. Support is provided where necessary, but you have not shied away from acting when parents have not ensured that their children attend regularly. Similarly, there are high expectations of behaviour. Pupils report that behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils say that their learning is rarely disturbed by others' behaviour. This reflects both what was seen on the day of the inspection and the school's behaviour records. Pupils manage their own behaviour well, both in lessons and during less structured times such as breaktime and lunchtime. Movement around the school's large site is calm and orderly. Pupils respect their environment; social areas are tidy and there is very little litter. They are confident, polite and considerate.

External support

Leaders make appropriate use of the services and support provided by the local authority. This includes completing the local authority safeguarding audit and engaging with local authority officers and the social care team when dealing with individual cases or concerns.

Priorities for further improvement

- Continue to ensure that your curriculum and PSHE programme teach pupils how to recognise and protect themselves from any new risks that emerge.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector