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Alana Brown
Headteacher
Eynesbury CofE C Primary School
Montagu Street
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Cambridgeshire
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Dear Mrs Brown,

No formal designation inspection of Eynesbury CofE C Primary School

Following my visit with Kim Pigram, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 20 October 2020, 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, as concerns had been raised with Ofsted.

Evidence

We looked at school improvement plans, the record of pre-employment checks, and other documents linked to the safeguarding and child protection arrangements. We met with you, including in your role as designated safeguarding lead, the senior leaders who act as deputy safeguarding leads, the special educational needs coordinator who leads on the implementation of pupils' personal, social and health education, two groups of staff, two pupil groups, the chair of the interim executive board (IEB) and three other board members. I also spoke with two representatives of the local authority with responsibility for safeguarding and school improvement.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Context

The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is in line with the national average.

The current headteacher took up the post as interim headteacher (part time) in September 2019. She was appointed as substantive headteacher in January 2020. Following the COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions in March 2020, the school opened fully to all pupils on 7 September 2020.

This is a follow-up inspection to the safeguarding inspection, which took place on 9 July 2020. Since the inspection, on 14 September an IEB was appointed by the local authority, to replace the governing body.

Main Findings

The IEB is an experienced team with a wide range of leadership expertise, including in the leadership of safeguarding arrangements. There is a named board member with oversight of safeguarding across the school. Since the appointment of the board, the team has acted quickly to get to know school leaders, staff and pupils.

Leaders' improvement planning is securely focused on ensuring that pupils are safe, as well as continuing to develop the quality of education that the school provides. The board is establishing systems for checking the impact of school leaders' work in improving the quality of provision. It is still developing procedures for evaluating leaders' response to advice from external partners and the difference this makes to whole-school improvement.

Child protection records are appropriately detailed and well maintained. The headteacher and the deputy designated safeguarding leaders ensure that files are checked regularly and are up to date. Safeguarding matters are discussed in weekly whole-staff meetings. Information and experiences are shared to inform next steps and further action that needs to be taken. Established links with external agencies, including health professionals and social services, support school staff in getting extra help for vulnerable pupils if it is needed.

The deeper focus on safeguarding, including through staff training at the start of the autumn term 2020, is valued by the whole-school team. Teachers and teaching assistants are confident in recognising the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm. They are now more consistent in their responses to safeguarding concerns. Staff told inspectors, 'Safeguarding is everyone's business, and we are continuing to move forward on this together.'

The local police community support officer (PCSO) has helped to raise staff awareness of local risks, for example the dangers of county lines and gang-related crimes. Teachers are using this knowledge to help pupils, in an age-appropriate way, to understand the things they need to watch out for. The PCSO was a well-received and popular guest in the school on his recent visit to speak with Year 6 pupils about staying safe.

The revised safeguarding curriculum is planned appropriately to combine pupils' personal, social and health education with ongoing discussions linked to their personal development. Key themes, such as 'worries and feelings', are regularly revisited across year groups and in collective worship. In literacy, class texts are matched to themes through story books such as 'Black Dog' and 'After the Fall'. Work is under way to extend these links across other subjects.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know what they need to do to keep themselves safe online. They explained, and some gave examples of how, the 'worry boxes' in every classroom are used to share concerns with staff. Pupils are confident that they can get help if they need it from their teachers or from the recently appointed 'safeguarding champions'. The outcomes of the school's own safeguarding survey of pupils' views reflect this confidence. Parents are typically supportive of the school's work to keep pupils safe.

As designated safeguarding lead, you have completed safer recruitment training. Further training of this type is planned for the deputy designated safeguarding leads this term. The focus on safeguarding in staff recruitment is sharper. Interview questions are designed purposefully to challenge candidates' understanding and experience of safeguarding matters.

The format of the single central record of pre-employment checks on staff has been transferred to a standardised local authority template. Leaders have ensured that all the required checks are made. However, some of the information has not been moved across accurately. For example, identity checks were recorded with the date of transfer rather than the original confirmation date. Arrangements were made to begin to correct these administrative errors during the inspection.

External support

Since the July 2020 inspection, the local authority has substantially increased the level of support offered to the school. Specialist advisers, for example, in safeguarding, English, mathematics and reading, are regular visitors to the school. The personal, social and healthcare education adviser is also scheduled to provide some further support in the implementation of the new curriculum. The local authority-appointed IEB is a strong and experienced team.

The effective link established by school leaders with the local PCSO is a popular addition to the school's external support network.

Priorities for further improvement

- Establish clearly defined procedures for the IEB to evaluate leaders' response to the advice provided by external partners and the contribution that this makes to whole-school improvement.
- Secure the rapid administrative transfer of historic pre-recruitment checks on staff to the new single central record template, so that all the information held is recorded accurately.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the IEB, the director of education for the Diocese of Ely, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Dick
Her Majesty's Inspector