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6 January 2023

Hannan Mohammed  
Acting Headteacher  
Carfield Primary School  
Argyle Close  
Sheffield  
South Yorkshire  
S8 9HJ

Dear Ms Mohammed

### **Urgent inspection of Carfield Primary School**

Following my visit with Kate Rowley, Senior His Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 15 and 16 November 2022, I write on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This inspection was conducted under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for urgent inspections. The inspection was carried out because His Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to determine the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school as concerns had been raised with Ofsted about these, the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school (including governance), and the behaviour and attitudes of pupils at the school.

We do not give graded judgements on urgent inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Act and be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the urgent inspection as a graded inspection immediately.

### **Evidence**

We scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding, including the single central record. We also reviewed documents relating to pupils' behaviour and their attendance. We met with members of the school's leadership team and a national leader of education currently supporting the school. We met with groups of pupils and considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils. We met with members of the governing body, including one of the co-chairs of the governing body and scrutinised documents relating to governance. We met with groups of staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's online

staff survey. We spoke to parents informally on the playground and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. We met with some parents with an advocate for their children. Meetings were also held with representatives of the local authority.

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

### **Safeguarding is effective**

While no serious concerns have been identified, we have found evidence that overall standards may no longer be as reported at the last graded inspection. As a result, the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

### **Main Findings**

At the time of the inspection, you, the acting headteacher, had been absent from the school for a short period of time. Two assistant headteachers are currently responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the school. They are supported by a national leader of education who has executive leadership responsibility. The governing body has brokered this temporary arrangement. A memorandum of understanding was finalised during the inspection which makes clear the roles and responsibilities of the executive leader.

Leaders understand that one of their core duties is to keep pupils safe. They take this responsibility seriously. With the support of the local authority, leaders have spent time evaluating the school's arrangements for safeguarding. Leaders have acted swiftly to address any actions needed. Leaders make sure that staff have the training and knowledge they need to identify if a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff know how to raise concerns about adults who work in the school. If staff are worried about the welfare of pupils, they raise this promptly with the school's designated safeguarding leaders. When concerns are raised, leaders act appropriately, involving external agencies when necessary to ensure that pupils are safe. Staff make thorough records of their concerns and the actions taken. Leaders undertake appropriate checks of adults who work with pupils in the school.

Leaders have set out clearly what pupils should learn in relationships and sex education (RSE) lessons. Leaders have consulted with parents about the RSE policy. Reports of child-on-child abuse are taken seriously by current leaders. Where concerns have recently been raised, leaders work with pupils and parents appropriately. For example, recently leaders involved pupils in discussions about what a good friend would and would not say and do.

Classrooms are purposeful. Pupils settle quickly to their work. Leaders have provided training for staff to help them to implement the school's new behaviour policy. Pupils appreciate the rewards for positive behaviour that they can earn and say that teachers challenge occasional poor behaviour effectively. This leads to pupils being able to get on

with their learning. Pupils play well together. Staff help pupils to resolve occasional falling out on the playground.

Pupils feel safe. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey for parents agree that their child is happy and feels safe at the school. Records show that leaders take quick and appropriate action to occasional reports of bullying or the use of prejudicial language. Recent training for some staff has helped them to support pupils' mental health and emotional development. Most pupils are confident that if they have any worries or concerns, staff will help them.

Occasionally, staff use physical intervention. Records show that they do this to prevent a pupil from hurting themselves or other pupils. However, until very recently, staff have not had training in how to hold pupils when they need keeping safe. Leaders have recently prioritised training for the staff who work with pupils that might need this type of intervention. Plans are in place to train more staff later in the year.

Leaders know that the support for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) was not good enough in the past. In previous years, leaders have not communicated effectively with the parents of some pupils with SEND. As a result, some parents have lost confidence in the school.

Current leaders are working to improve how pupils with SEND are supported. For example, they have ensured that staff are trained to better identify and meet pupils' needs. Plans of support have been introduced which outline how staff should help pupils in lessons. These plans outline pupils' next stages in learning and how staff should help pupils to achieve them. Parents are now invited to contribute to the regular reviews of these plans. Leaders have recently set up two nurture classrooms to support pupils with sensory or more-complex needs. The school's special educational needs coordinator checks to ensure these changes are having a positive impact for pupils. However, many of these changes are new. It is too early to see their long-term impact. Leaders liaise with a range of specialist services to make sure that pupils with SEND are given support.

A number of pupils do not attend school regularly. Leaders have effective systems in place to check that these pupils are safe. For example, staff undertake home visits to check on these pupils' welfare. However, pupils who are not in school regularly miss out on important learning.

The number of pupil suspensions has increased in recent years. Appropriate systems are in place to reintegrate pupils into school following a suspension. There are early indications that the recently improved support for pupils with SEND and the new behaviour policy are leading to a reduction in the use of suspensions.

Recently, there has been a reduction in the number of appointed governors on the governing body. This has limited its capacity to hold leaders to account. To address this, the governing body has invited two new members to join as parent governors. They have done this without holding parent governor elections, as required by the School

Governance (Constitution) Regulations 2012. This means that the governing body is not legally constituted. The governing body began to take action to rectify this during the inspection.

Governors ask probing questions about the information that they are provided with by school leaders. Governors understand the areas that school leaders have identified in their improvement plans. However, at present, the governing body has had to work to steady the leadership arrangements in the school and address concerns that have been brought to their attention. They have not checked some of the information that they are given by school leaders, for example, about aspects of the quality of education. Therefore, they do not have the assurance that what leaders are telling them is accurate.

### **Additional support**

School leaders and the local authority have evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school by commissioning two audits undertaken by external safeguarding experts. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to address the actions identified in these audits.

### **Priorities for further improvement**

- The support for some pupils with SEND has been weak in the past. Some parents have rightly felt let down by this. Some improvements to the support that pupils with SEND receive are recent. It is too early to see their long-term impact. Leaders should continue to monitor the impact of their recent actions and continue to develop effective partnerships with parents of pupils with SEND.
- There has been recent turbulence in the governing body which has limited its capacity. Governors have tried to address this by inviting new governors who have appropriate skills to join the governing body. However, they have not done this with due regard to appropriate legislation or Department for Education statutory guidance about the constitution of governing bodies. The governing body should make sure that it is correctly constituted.
- The governing body is reliant on the information provided to it by school leaders, other than in the school's work to safeguarding pupils, where external audits have been considered. The governing body does not presently have the capacity to connect what it is told by school leaders with other information. This means that governors cannot be assured that their views are accurate. Governors should work with other agencies to ensure they have the right advice, training and support to provide effective challenge and support to school leaders.
- A number of pupils are persistently absent. These pupils miss out on essential learning. Leaders should work with parents to ensure that the number of pupils who are persistently absent reduces.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Tim Scargill-Knight  
**His Majesty's Inspector**