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Matthew Rooney
Principal
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Dear Mr Rooney

Urgent inspection of St Giles School

Following my visit with Gayle Bacon, Ofsted Inspector, and John Craig, Ofsted Inspector, to the school on 21 November 2023, I write on behalf of His 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 the school.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 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 and the use of physical intervention at the school as concerns had been raised with Ofsted.

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 held meetings with you and other senior leaders. I met with a member of the governing body, and with representatives of the local authority. We visited lessons in all areas of the school and spoke with pupils and members of the teaching and support staff teams. We observed pupils on arrival at school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. We spoke to some parents and carers at the start of the day.

We reviewed a wide range of documents. These included school policies, and records relating to staff training, behaviour incidents and the use of physical intervention. I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including the findings from an external review of safeguarding.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and staff support pupils' well-being effectively in the use of physical intervention.

Main findings

The leadership team places a high priority on safeguarding. You have instilled a positive culture of safeguarding by providing a thorough induction and training for all staff and governors. You encourage staff to develop a sense of 'professional curiosity' in their approach to keeping children and young people safe. Staff are expected to act on their instincts if they sense that something has changed for a pupil. All concerns, however minor, are logged on the school's safeguarding system without delay. Records show that leaders' actions in response to concerns are prompt and appropriate. The school works in close partnership with a wide range of external professionals to support vulnerable young people.

In discussion, teaching and support staff reported that they have received regular safeguarding training and updates. They commented that this training causes them to think deeply and reflect on their own practice. Staff express confidence in how to log concerns. They understand the pupils, and their needs, very well. For example, staff described how the school works with pupils and families to promote online safety.

Positive, trusting relationships are evident throughout the school. In lessons, and during social times, there is ample adult supervision to ensure pupils' safety and well-being.

There are well-established arrangements and routines for managing pupils' arrival at school. Staff have clearly identified roles and responsibilities to ensure that pupils transfer safely from their modes of transport into school. Pupils were observed entering school happily, enjoying a warm welcome and a positive start to the school day. Parents praised the care provided for their children, and the positive progress their children make.

You have ensured that there are strong policies and systems in place for managing the use of physical intervention. These instances are infrequent, and only undertaken as a last resort to keep pupils safe. However, when the need arises, records show that well-trained staff follow the appropriate guidelines. You analyse incidents straight away and report any findings or patterns to governors. In recent years, you have continued to strengthen the emphasis on a positive approach to behaviour management. This has resulted in a

reduction in the use of physical intervention over time. In all lessons and classes visited, and during social times, we noted a calm, happy and positive atmosphere throughout the school. A small number of pupils who struggle to remain regulated receive appropriate support to engage in learning.

The governing body provides strong support and appropriate challenge for the school. Governors are proactive in checking for themselves the school's arrangements for safeguarding, as well as receiving regular reports. They visit the school to speak to leaders, staff and pupils. Governors are committed to the welfare and well-being of pupils and of staff. They ensure that the appropriate procedures are embedded and followed.

Additional support

The school benefits from visits and support from the local authority. This includes, for example, professional discussion around the school's long-term strategic plans for development and growth.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of governors, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Nottinghamshire County Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Christine Watkins
His Majesty's Inspector