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Harsha Patel
Dormers Wells Infant School
Dormers Wells Lane
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Dear Miss Patel

Special measures monitoring inspection of Dormers Wells Infant School

Following my visit to your school on 26–27 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 during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken since the school's recent section 5 inspection.

This monitoring inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out to review the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements at the school because these were judged as ineffective during the previous section 5 inspection.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record (SCR) and an extensive range of documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements, including records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. I met with you, senior leaders, the safeguarding team, subject leaders, members of the interim executive board and a local authority adviser. I spoke to a group of staff to gather their views about the school's safeguarding procedures. I spoke to pupils in a prearranged meeting and around the school. I visited all year groups alongside senior leaders and I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktime. I took into consideration the views of parents by speaking to them on the playground and during a meeting with the 'parent champions'. I held a telephone call conversation with a parent. I reviewed the school's curriculum to find out how well it helps to keep pupils safe.

Context

Since the previous inspection, there have been further staffing changes, including the appointment of an interim deputy headteacher.

You continue to provide strong leadership that is focused on improving the school. You are now the designated safeguarding lead and have undertaken many positive actions to improve the schools' safeguarding procedures.

Senior leaders are working well to implement a number of changes to policies and procedures. A major improvement has been to ensure that the new fencing and signing-in arrangements are now effective. In the past, these systems were lax because members of the public could access the same space as pupils on the playground.

Leaders have introduced strong systems for following up safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding team is made up of senior leaders and other members of staff. This enables effective collaboration between staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. A new online system for recording any concerns is available to all members of staff. This is used well by leaders to follow up on individual cases in a timely manner. Leaders liaise effectively with external agencies, including the local authority and police when required. Record-keeping is systematic, and the safeguarding team has an insightful understanding of individual cases.

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. They speak confidently about how to raise concerns should they need to. Induction processes for new staff are tight. Transition arrangements have improved so that teachers now have up-to-date information about vulnerable pupils.

Staff provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their understanding of keeping safe. Regular assemblies linked to the school's values deepen pupils' understanding of safety. For example, Year 2 pupils could talk about the importance of keeping safe online and not sharing personal details with strangers. Pupils typically behave well and the school is an orderly place. All pupils to whom I spoke told me that they felt safe in the school. They trust adults to deal with any concerns that they may have.

You have worked purposefully with parents and made a 'parent champion' group. Its members value the opportunity to meet with you and feel that their suggestions are typically taken on board, including on matters relating to pupils' safety. The vast majority of parents who I spoke to felt that their children were safe in school. Parents recognise a number of improvements made in the school's procedures since the previous inspection. However, some parents still feel recent changes are not implemented consistently by all staff.

The leadership of attendance has improved significantly. In the past, there was no

clear oversight of pupils' attendance. Leaders have worked closely with the attendance governor and implemented a number of changes. As a result, leaders have a strong understanding of pupils who are persistently absent. The office staff follow a 'first-day response' system for pupils who are absent. Vulnerable pupils are easily identifiable by school staff. They ensure that any absences are followed up immediately. Leaders liaise with parents and provide clear targets for improving pupils' attendance. This liaison has been effective. However, overall attendance remains below the national average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.

You have introduced a number of new systems across the school. For example, pupils with medical needs are clearly identified. This helps all members of staff to take responsibility for pupils' well-being. Staff first aid training is up to date and reviewed in a timely manner. Furthermore, when pupils are collected by parents/carers at the end of the day, staff now use a different system to ensure that pupils go to the correct adults. However, not all staff use these new systems as well as they can.

At the start of the inspection, the school's SCR was not compliant. Pre-employment checks of staff were missing and there was confusion among some staff about how to fulfil the requirements effectively. The school is in the process of becoming an academy and remains in a transitional phase. As a result, some members of staff are new and do not have a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities. By the end of the inspection, leaders had ensured that the SCR met requirements.

External support

The interim executive board (IEB) works effectively with the school. Members of the board have specific areas of responsibility, including safeguarding and attendance, which they carry out purposefully. The IEB provides strong challenge to leaders and supports them in developing the school's procedures further. Members of the IEB work alongside leaders and visit the school regularly, demonstrating an accurate understanding of the school's priorities. For example, the safeguarding governor works alongside leaders to carry out a safeguarding audit. Staff have increased opportunities to develop their own expertise through external training and are empowered to implement positive changes. The school continues to work closely with the local authority.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the monitoring of the school's safeguarding procedures are further tightened, so that all staff consistently implement them.

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

Yours sincerely

Noeman Anwar

Her Majesty's Inspector