

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs Jo Sawtell-Haynes
Headteacher
Kenningtons Primary Academy
Tamar Drive
Aveley
South Ockendon
Essex
RM15 4NB

Dear Mrs Sawtell-Haynes

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Kenningtons Primary Academy

Following my visit with Christine Dick, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your school on 8 March 2016, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings.

This monitoring 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 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. They met with you and other senior staff, groups of pupils, parents, the Chair of the Governing Body and the caretaker. Inspectors also reviewed attendance records, observed pupils working in lessons and scrutinised pupils' work in their English and mathematics books. Telephone conversations took place between Her Majesty's Inspectors and the local authority's designated officer for safeguarding, and a representative of the local authority attended the feedback meeting. Inspectors took into consideration the 57 responses on Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and analysed the school's own questionnaire results of parents' and pupils' views.

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

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

Context

Kenningtons Primary Academy is larger than the average of its type with 455 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in care of the local authority) is average. Just over a third of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The remaining pupils are of White British origin. The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability support is above the national average, as is the number of pupils supported by a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The level of pupil mobility in and out of the school is much higher than that seen nationally.

Safeguarding

Together with other leaders and governors, you have instilled a culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Those leaders with specific responsibility make effective use of good procedures to ensure that all pupils are kept safe from harm. Pupils say they feel safe at this school. They know whom to go to if they feel concerned or if they are being bullied in any way by another pupil. Analysis of the school's records related to bullying and behaviour, and discussions with pupils, confirm that incidents of bullying are infrequent. When they do occur, staff are quick to respond and deal with any antisocial behaviour and bullying. Incidents are recorded and followed up with the parents of pupils involved. Teachers provide pupils with clear guidance through lessons and assemblies about the safe use of computers and the use of social media.

Procedures and policies are fully understood and consistently implemented by all staff. These policies are appropriately informed by the latest government documentation such as *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. You have implemented effective monitoring procedures to ensure that all staff and governors are familiar with this important guidance and the school's own safeguarding policies and procedures. Robust procedures are used to ensure the suitability of adults working with children in school. Checking procedures are thorough and records are kept fully up to date. At least two references are followed up when new staff are appointed.

You ensure that all staff and governors are kept totally up to date with the government's latest guidance on safeguarding through specific training at the start of each academic year. You have established clear lines of accountability to ensure that safeguarding is taken seriously. For instance, checklists are maintained to confirm that all staff and governors have read the latest guidance and completed training related to the 'Prevent' duty. Interview procedures fully comply with the government's requirements for the safe recruitment of suitable staff. The governing body regularly monitors the implementation of the school's safeguarding arrangements through meetings with you and other senior leaders.

All staff know what to do and who to go to if they have a concern about a pupil in school. Staff with specific responsibility for child protection are especially tenacious in following up referrals made to the local authority. Written records are detailed and completed in a timely manner. School staff with specific responsibility for safeguarding maintain professional links with staff from other agencies. Documents are completed and shared in a timely manner. Any specific concerns are raised quickly with social services and the local police.

The needs of the most vulnerable pupils and those who are looked after are monitored very closely to ensure that they make good progress in their lessons, personal development and well-being. The pastoral manager is vigilant at contacting the receiving school of any pupil who leaves the school. This effectively ensures that the whereabouts of these pupils are known to the local authority.

The caretaker undertakes regular risk assessments of the site. All staff participate fully in the daily risk assessment of the classrooms and working areas. Governors with a specific responsibility for health and safety monitor the action of staff appropriately. Risk assessments of school trips are thorough. Older pupils play their role in the daily monitoring of health and safety. They proudly wear their high-visibility jackets during playtimes as they oversee the door areas and walk about the playgrounds giving support to other pupils when needed.

Discussions with parents and carers during the inspection confirm that many are pleased with the levels of communication between school and home. Parents of pupils requiring extra support are kept fully informed about their child's development and progress. However, the latest results on Parent View indicate that some parents feel that the communication between senior leaders and parents and carers of pupils at the school could be better regarding aspects of safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The good behaviour of pupils identified at the last inspection remains. This is a view

shared by many parents and carers of pupils at the school. Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves are good in both lessons and at playtimes. Pupils enjoy working together in class to solve problems in mathematics or practising hockey skills together in physical education lessons. Pupils respond particularly well to the exciting range of learning activities planned for them in lessons. This starts with children in the Reception class independently making stick puppets for their little play, and Year 3 pupils growing and tending vegetables in the school's allotment garden. Caring for a flock of free-range hens in the 'farm area' provides pupils with good opportunities to care for animals. Such experiences give pupils at the school a greater understanding of where food comes from and the wider world around them.

Pupils are very proud of their achievements and enjoy writing about things in their 'Boasting books' as an example of their best work. Displays around the school further engender a sense of pride in the pupils about their achievements, such as in the high-quality writing on the 'What have you done to make you proud?' display board in the hall. Handwriting and the presentation of work are neat. Pupils respond well to good levels of marking and feedback by completing more challenging tasks set by their teachers. Scrutiny of pupils' writing and mathematics books in Year 5 and Year 6 confirms that this high-quality feedback is accelerating the progress of these pupils.

Pupils respond well to the school's effective promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies and personal and social education lessons. The core British values of tolerance and respect for others are exhibited well by most pupils in the way they work and play with each other while at school. Pupils say they feel safe at the school and trust that adults will help them if they feel bullied in any way. Older pupils say that often they are able to resolve issues between themselves. Furthermore, they know that there will always be an adult at hand who will help.

The ethos of the school promotes a positive approach to the management of pupils' behaviour in the classrooms and play areas. Regular staff training is used well to reinforce these principles. Pupils are rewarded for good behaviour but appropriate sanctions are applied when behaviour is not acceptable. Specific staff are fully trained in the use of restraint. On the rare occasion when a pupil becomes aggressive towards others, restraint is used to protect other pupils from harm. Small rooms provide a calm area for staff to provide good levels of care and support for these individual pupils. This facilitates their quick re-integration back into class effectively. A specific unlocked isolation room is used on very rare occasions when a pupil is particularly aggressive towards staff or pupils. The procedures for the use of this room fully comply with government requirements.

Pupils are punctual and keen to be at the school each day. Attendance is broadly average overall. Staff with specific responsibility for monitoring pupils' attendance work hard with families to ensure that those pupils who are persistently absent attend more regularly. Fixed-term exclusions are used as a last resort when a pupil poses a risk to the safety of others. There has been an increase in the use of fixed-term exclusions to above the national average since the last inspection. These involve a very small number of pupils.

External support

The local authority is commissioned to provide good training in safeguarding and safer recruitment. Furthermore, staff at the school receive good levels of support and training in topics such as 'Safe handling' from external organisations. However, senior leaders find that the response of the local authority and social services to referrals made by the school about specific safeguarding concerns is often too slow. This limits the school's desire to meet the needs of the most vulnerable pupils in their care quickly.

Priorities for further improvement

- Improve levels of communication between senior leaders, governors and parents about the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and management of pupils' behaviour.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body, the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Director of Children's Services for Thurrock Council. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector