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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



17 June 2019

Mrs Jaki Cole
Headteacher
Little Thurrock Primary School
Rectory Road
Grays
Essex
RM17 5SW

Dear Mrs Cole

No formal designation inspection of Little Thurrock Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 13 June 2019, 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 at the school. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements and the actions that have been taken since the previous inspection of the predecessor school.

Evidence

I scrutinised the single central record and other documents relating to safeguarding and child protection arrangements. I met with you and other leaders responsible for safeguarding. I met with the executive headteacher from Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust and three members of the governing body. I met with 12 pupils in key stage 2 and I toured the school with two pupils from Year 4. I also met with four teachers at the school, including one who is newly qualified. I reviewed a sample of child protection records. I looked at a safeguarding audit report from Essex County Council and a safeguarding review report from the trust, as well as notes from a practice visit by the strategic lead for children's safeguarding in Thurrock. I checked the safeguarding policy and the safeguarding procedures for visitors to the school. I reviewed a sample of staff files. I reviewed minutes from

governors' meetings and reports from their focused visits to the school.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time safeguarding is effective.

Context

The school has 675 pupils on roll. It is much larger than the average primary school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is below average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average.

The school converted to an academy on the 1 June 2019. It is now part of the Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust. Prior to joining the trust and becoming an academy, the predecessor school was inspected on 12 to 13 December 2018, and it was found that safeguarding was ineffective.

Inspection findings

At the time of the inspection of the predecessor school, the arrangements for making important pre-employment checks on staff were not secure. Leaders were not taking and recording timely action to follow up their safeguarding concerns about pupils. You and governors have acted decisively to rectify these failings.

The systems and procedures to make and record safeguarding checks on adults who work with children have been strengthened. The document that records these checks is accurate and up to date. You check the record regularly. It shows that all the necessary checks have been carried out. Staff files include all the appropriate information and show that recruitment processes are secure. Files now include a checklist to track each stage of the recruitment process. These checklists are completed diligently.

The systems and procedures to monitor and review child protection concerns about pupils are also secure. You and other leaders responsible for child protection ensure that where there are concerns, they are followed up diligently, including when working with other agencies. The actions taken to keep pupils safe are recorded carefully and, where appropriate, you and other leaders are tenacious in ensuring that other agencies provide feedback on any cases referred to them. Your deputy safeguarding leads meet regularly to review open cases and to share important information about vulnerable pupils. They discuss the pupils they are monitoring, but it is not always clear how this monitoring will be carried out when teachers and other staff are involved.

You have identified the potential risks to pupils and their families in the local area. Staff have regular training and briefings to ensure they understand these risks and how to identify indicators of concern. You have ensured that staff have been trained in the 'Prevent' duty to combat extremism and radicalisation. Your briefings to them have included information about local gang activity and what to look out for. Staff understand the procedures to follow if they have concerns about pupils. Although staff are aware that 'county lines' drug dealing is a local risk, they are not all clear about the possible signs that families and pupils may be at risk.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They can recall assemblies that you deliver that include information about bullying and how to stay safe online. Pupils know what bullying is and they trust that staff will help them if they have concerns. They know how to stay safe online and know the risks associated with online 'friends'. Pupils also know about the risks of having 'followers' online and they can talk about how to mitigate these risks. All classrooms display a copy of the child-friendly safeguarding policy. Pupils understand that it is not always a good thing to keep a secret and they know that they should report any concerns they have about their friends, while encouraging their friends to tell an adult.

Governors acted swiftly to address safeguarding issues. The chair of governors, who is also responsible for safeguarding, has visited the school to ensure that progress in establishing secure practices has remained on track.

External support

Soon after the inspection of the predecessor school, and before the school became an academy, you and the governors began working with the trust to help secure the necessary improvements. The trust has provided helpful support, including work with staff from the trust who are responsible for safeguarding and staff recruitment. This support has been effective. You have also sought and received the support of two local authorities in reviewing the school's policy and practice. This has been helpful in refining your work.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that staff who are responsible for monitoring vulnerable pupils are clear about how this should be done.
- Ensure that all staff understand the potential signs that families and pupils are at risk from 'county lines' drug dealing.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chair of trustees and the chief executive officer for Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Thurrock. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Winter
Her Majesty's Inspector