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9 May 2022

Mr Nick Haycraft and Mr James Fraser
Acting Headteachers
Milton Church of England Primary School
Humphries Way
Milton
Cambridge
Cambridgeshire
CB24 6DL

Dear Mr Haycraft and Mr Fraser

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Milton Church of England Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 29 March 2022, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the outcome and 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 most recent section 5 inspection.

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in September 2021. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the second inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. I discussed the ongoing impact of the pandemic with you, and have taken that into account in my evaluation of the school.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust, the director of education for the Diocese of Ely, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cambridgeshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Steve Mellors
Her Majesty's Inspector

Report on the first monitoring inspection on 29 March 2022

Context

Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in the school's leadership. The previous headteacher has left. Currently, there is an interim position and the two deputy headteachers are serving as co-headteachers in an acting role. A new substantive headteacher has been appointed and will begin employment at the start of the summer term 2022. The leadership of safeguarding has also changed. Safeguarding is now led by one of the acting co-headteachers. There has been a further addition made to the team of safeguarding leads with responsibility to promote and support the well-being and mental health of pupils.

This inspection focused on the school's safeguarding arrangements. It evaluated how leaders have responded to the issues identified at the previous inspection to ensure that pupils are kept safe at school.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Leaders and governors, supported by the trust, have worked tenaciously to improve the culture of safeguarding at the school. New leaders of safeguarding have wasted no time in addressing the issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection. There is now an improved and shared understanding among all staff regarding their responsibilities for keeping pupils safe.

Leaders have reviewed their safeguarding roles. Additional capacity has been added to the safeguarding team. This is helping to improve the monitoring of pupils' well-being. Weekly meetings are now held to exchange information. Leaders now make decisions based on the most up-to-date information about pupils.

All staff have received additional safeguarding training. They understand the latest legal guidance to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Leaders have instigated regular meetings for different groups of staff, and safeguarding matters are a consistent focus. This helps to keep the profile of safeguarding as a high priority. Leaders use these meetings to remind staff of leaders' expectations. Leaders now ensure that staff continue to be alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm.

The processes and procedures for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns have been strengthened. Staff have received training in the use of the school's chosen electronic recording systems. Leaders have ensured that resources are readily available to anyone who needs to report a concern. Staff understand that every concern should be reported, no matter how small. Staff are confident that they know how to recognise and report concerns. Leaders make full use of their records to determine the appropriate actions they need to take. Leaders refer serious concerns in a timely manner.

Leaders have met with other schools in the trust to share good practice. They have made effective use of information that they have been given to continue to make further improvements to their systems of communication. Parents and carers receive regular bulletins that include helpful guidance on how they can support their child at home, especially when using social media and other online technologies.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They know about the dangers that they should look for when they are using the internet. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe in personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils consider that adults listen to them when they need to share their concerns. Communication boxes in the classroom provide additional ways in which pupils can raise any worries with adults. Pupils are confident that adults will support them and help them to resolve any problems, should these occur.

Leaders have ensured that the checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are well kept and include all statutory information.

Governors have undertaken more safeguarding training. This is helping to improve their understanding of what is required for safeguarding to be effective. They have worked alongside trust leaders to provide more robust challenge to leaders' safeguarding work. Governors accept that their skills are still developing and that at this stage they are more reliant on the guidance provided by trust leaders. They have a clearer understanding of their roles and responsibilities in checking safeguarding procedures.

Additional support

Since the previous inspection, the trust has acted promptly to provide specific training related to safeguarding and to review the school's safeguarding systems and procedures. The trust's safeguarding lead makes regular visits to check safeguarding processes and provide further advice and guidance. Leaders are now knowledgeable about their safeguarding roles. Records are well maintained, and leaders act on issues and concerns in an appropriate way.

Evidence

The inspector observed the school's work, scrutinised documents and met with the acting headteacher, other senior leaders and middle leaders, as well as a group of teachers. The inspector met with the multi-academy trust's chief executive officer, its director of education (online) and its safeguarding lead. The inspector held a meeting with three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

The inspector had a discussion with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. He observed break- and lunchtimes and spoke to support staff during those times.