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Mr Joseph Blacker
Principal
Park Campus Academy
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Dear Mr Blacker

Short inspection of Park Campus Academy

Following my visit to the school on 13 June 2017 with Kanwaljit Singh, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since your predecessor school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection despite significant changes to school leadership this academic year. Since the last inspection, the school has become an academy and is part of the Parallel Learning Multi-Academy Trust. You are ably supported by the visionary chief executive officer who utilises talent from across the trust to build leadership capacity in your school. You and the chief executive officer have forged a highly effective partnership, complementing one another's skills.

You have exceptionally high expectations for every one of your pupils and have established a 'no-excuse' culture based on respect. Everyone in the school shares your vision and as a result pupils thrive, in spite of extremely challenging social circumstances and low prior attainment.

Leaders provide a purposeful learning environment. The pupils whom I spoke to told me that they are happy to come to school and feel safe. They also felt that they were learning important skills to help them to resist outside negative influences, such as gang involvement and knife crime. Conduct around the school is good and this is reflected in the pride the pupils take in their school. Pupils are generally well mannered and polite.

Parental satisfaction is high, and those we spoke to reported that they feel happy with their child's progress at Park Campus Academy. The school's pupil

and parental questionnaires show a widespread view that cyber, racist and homophobic bullying is dealt with effectively. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Once more, the school's questionnaire shows high levels of staff morale and a widespread view that behaviour is well managed.

By the time pupils leave Park Campus Academy, all achieve at least level 1 qualifications in English and mathematics, with some receiving five GCSE A* to C grades. Academic progress across the school is carefully and regularly tracked, and as a result leaders are able to identify underachievement in a timely manner. It is a credit to you and school leaders that the pupil premium grant is used highly effectively to ensure that pupils who are disadvantaged make at least good and sometimes rapid progress. A high proportion of pupils achieve their targets well before the end of the year. However, this suggests that the targets do not provide sufficient challenge. The school's data shows that progress in English is less good than in other subjects because of inconsistencies in standards of teaching.

Pupils' personal development is not yet tracked rigorously enough, and therefore leaders are not yet able to measure the impact of the comprehensive range of support programmes offered. When this system is fully in place, it will enable leaders to celebrate the strong achievement in this area.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. You are acutely aware of the most vulnerable groups and multi-agency work within and beyond the school so that it ensures the safety of pupils. Leaders' firm commitment to early intervention, their heightened awareness of the local context and innovative work with the local police have resulted in an impressive reduction in crimes committed by pupils.

Carefully tracked, robust safeguarding is undertaken by all staff. As a result, responsibilities throughout the school are taken extremely seriously. Staff remain highly vigilant at spotting even the smallest changes in pupils' behaviour and are alert to any risks in school and the local community.

Inspection findings

- This inspection focused initially on how well all groups of pupils are achieving. In September, a more rigorous data tracking system was put in place, enabling you and other leaders to see the impact teaching has on pupils' progress.
- You make sure that you assess pupils' level of attainment as soon as they enter school. This enables you to set annual targets, to provide the right level of challenge in lessons, and to immediately begin to track pupils' progress. However, your progress information confirms that almost all pupils achieve their targets well before the end of the academic year.

- Progress is reviewed half termly to ensure that good or better progress is sustained. This also enables leaders to respond swiftly where issues are identified, and to put in place strategies at both an individual and whole-school level. For example, the key stage 3 curriculum model was adapted to provide a more class-based timetable for younger pupils who require more stability.
- However, despite the comprehensive achievement information, this is not sharply analysed, particularly the progress the most able pupils make, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, from their varying starting points. As a consequence, leaders cannot be held fully to account for their work. Equally, they cannot be totally confident that all pupils, particularly the most able pupils, are achieving as well as they should.
- Progress is inconsistent across groups and key stages. Pupils in key stage 3 still do less well than in key stage 4. Disadvantaged pupils, however, do much better than others.
- Pupils in the hospital school make good and sometimes outstanding progress as a result of highly personalised teaching.
- The second focus of this inspection looked at pupils' personal development and their ability to manage their own behaviour. The school's firmly embedded practice of restorative justice is enhanced by strong links with the local police. Pupils develop a clear sense of what is right and wrong, and feel equipped to deal with exceptionally challenging circumstances. One pupil I spoke to said, 'Now we are changed', and 'We don't join gangs.'
- The third aspect of the inspection examined how well pupils are prepared for their next stage in education. Over the last five years, all pupils have gone on to education, employment or training. Links are maintained with pupils long after they have left and where ex-pupils have done particularly well, they are invited back as inspirational role models for existing pupils.
- Finally, this inspection focused on how effective leaders have been at reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions and persistent absentees. This year has seen a reduction in fixed-term exclusions which you have achieved through the use of internal time-out sessions that encourage personal reflection and support pupils to manage their own behaviour appropriately. This approach was particularly valued by two pupils whom I spoke to, with one telling me it was the 'best thing about the school'.
- Although, in the last year, there has been a 5% rise in attendance, the 70.5% overall attendance remains a concern.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- school leaders are more sharply focused in the use of data, particularly around challenging specific groups, including the most able and the most able disadvantaged

- there is greater consistency in the quality of teaching, including in English where pupils do less well than in other subjects
- academic aspirations for the most able are raised with targets always providing sufficient challenge
- the number of persistent absentees is reduced through continuing to work with appropriate external agencies and parents.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer of the Parallel Learning Multi-Academy Trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Lambeth. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Francis McDonald-Gonzalez
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, inspectors held several meetings, including with you and the chief executive officer, senior leaders and middle leaders, the acting chair of the governing body, the local authority inclusion manager and the senior school improvement adviser for Lambeth. I spoke with pupils informally during breaktime and the team inspector met with small groups of pupils and parents to discuss the school's work. I observed teaching in four classes where I looked at pupils' work to consider the quality of learning over time. The team inspector visited the key stage 4 off-site provision and the hospital school linked to your school. I reviewed the school's documents about safeguarding, including the single central record, your own staff and pupil questionnaires, attendance data, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. Inspectors considered the school's staff, pupil and parental questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, to consider.