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Miss Emma Penzer
Principal
Harris Primary Academy Philip Lane
Philip Lane
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Dear Miss Penzer

Short inspection of Harris Primary Academy Philip Lane

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 2018, 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall. Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a full section 5 inspection.

You and your senior team have high aspirations for the pupils in the school and have continued to improve standards since the last inspection. You are highly effective at addressing barriers to pupils' learning to enable them to reach their potential. As a result, the large majority of pupils make excellent progress and a higher than average proportion achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

You are committed to ensuring that there are consistently high-quality learning experiences for pupils. You have an eye for spotting and developing talent. This skill has enabled leaders at all levels to develop a range of very effective strategies that have helped teachers to reflect and improve their practice. You use the federation's resources well to provide staff with well-considered training and development.

Governors know the school well because they ensure that they visit regularly. They share your high expectations and provide effective support to leaders while at the

same time challenging them to maintain the high standards achieved. The federation's board of directors/trustees provides an effective additional level of challenge.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and in the playground. They are rightly proud of their school and very keen to learn more. Pupils told me that they appreciate the improvements that have been made to the playground since the last inspection and I observed them playing cooperatively together. Pupils know that it is important to come to school every day so 'they push themselves up rather than down'. Pupils enjoyed telling me about how they follow their REACH values. As a result, they are kind and respectful to each other and their teachers.

Staff are proud of the school and positive about all aspects. They believe the school to be well led and managed and appreciate opportunities to be innovative. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the safe and nurturing environment that you provide. One parent said that their child, 'skips into school every day' and another said that 'teaching and pastoral care are excellent'.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding procedures are fit for purpose and that pupil safety is a high priority. Leaders keep detailed records and any concerns raised by staff are dealt with in a timely manner. Leaders have developed strong links with external agencies and ensure that agreed actions are implemented and the right support is put in place for families. Governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are robust. All necessary checks are carried out on staff prior to them starting work in the school.

Staff receive regular training and you and your leaders routinely check that staff understand their roles and responsibilities. You have ensured that expectations regarding safe practice are highly visible around the school. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe, particularly with regard to online safety. Those pupils that I spoke to appreciated the talks from organisations outside the school, such as the NSPCC. All parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child feels safe and is well looked after at school.

Inspection findings

- We first agreed to see how effective leaders have been in ensuring that the most able children are challenged in literacy. This was because, in 2017, these children, who are not eligible for the early years pupil premium grant, attained below national averages.
- A high proportion of children enter the school with skills and aptitudes that are below age-related expectations. You have ensured that children are taught in an environment that is rich in vocabulary and which strongly develops their literacy skills. Engaging activities promote opportunities for children to write. For example, I observed children in the Nursery using prepared clipboards to write

about their learning in the construction area.

- The teaching of phonics is secure and ensures that children make strong progress in their knowledge of sounds. Reading areas are engaging and pupils are introduced to a range of high-quality texts through a weekly book focus. Learning areas are clearly labelled to support further the development of children's vocabulary.
- Informative learning journals show that children learn well. Children are very proud and enjoyed showing me the pictures of their learning experiences. Early years staff set clear targets for children and use these to plan interesting activities that motivate children to learn well. Learning journey parties encourage parents and carers to respond and contribute to learning experiences in school. You and your leaders are committed to ensuring that all parents attend these sessions.
- As a result of these actions, children make substantial progress. A higher than average proportion of children are working above age-related expectations when they transfer into Year 1.
- We next agreed to see how effective leaders had been in ensuring that the most able pupils at key stage 1 achieved the higher standard in writing. This was because in 2017, the proportion of this group of pupils achieving the higher standard fell. Also, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics was below average.
- You and your leaders have ensured that children moving from Reception into key stage 1 continue to receive high-quality teaching in phonics and early writing skills. You have ensured that all staff are well trained and skilled in this approach. Pupils are introduced to a range of high-quality texts which further supports their vocabulary development.
- Scrutiny of pupils' books and visits to classrooms show that there are many opportunities for pupils to write at length across the curriculum. This enables them to practise the key writing skills they have been taught. Most books seen showed that teachers had high expectations regarding the quality of writing. However, we agreed that for some pupils, expectations were still not high enough.
- As a result of you and your leaders' actions, the most able pupils are now making stronger progress in their writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard is above the national average in Years 1 and 2.
- Finally, we agreed to see how effective leaders had been in securing high standards in geography for key stage 2 pupils. We chose this because you stated that geography is a particular strength in the school.
- You and your leaders have ensured that there is a systematic approach to the teaching of key geographical skills and knowledge throughout key stage 2. I observed strong evidence, in books and in classrooms, of the impact of deep learning over time.
- Pupils' confidence in their understanding of geography is enabling them to make links between different subjects. I was impressed to see a pupil sharing with the

class that Ernest Shackleton would have used a compass. This was because she had gained this knowledge through reading about explorers in her English lessons.

- You provide pupils with many opportunities to draw on the skills they have been taught in other subjects, without this weakening the depth of learning in geography. You have ensured that cross-curricular writing is consistently applied through specific subject focus weeks.
- The development of key geographical vocabulary is a particular strength and is well established in classrooms and in books seen. I observed pupils explaining confidently specific subject vocabulary such as 'rural' and 'urban', as well as the difference between physical and human features. We did, however, agree that pupils did not always have enough opportunities to explore geographical features at first hand.
- Pupils told me that learning experiences are wide ranging, engaging and fun. As a result of your actions, pupils achieve very well in geography over time.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils continue to deepen their learning through increased opportunities of first-hand experiences in geography
- high expectations are consistently applied to all pupils in key stage 1 in writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior and middle leaders. I met with the school's chair of governors, as well as the director of primary and chief executive officer for the Harris Federation. You and your vice-principal accompanied me on our visits to classrooms. I also observed pupils as they moved around the school and in the playground. I met with a group of pupils to discuss their experiences of school. I took account of the 48 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and read all text comments provided by parents. I also took account of the 35 responses to the staff questionnaire and 49 responses to the pupil questionnaire. I scrutinised documentation, including governors' minutes of meetings, school policies and the school's safeguarding records.

