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Ms Lucy Frame  
Principal  
Ark All Saints Academy  
140 Wyndham Road  
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Dear Ms Frame

### **Short inspection of Ark All Saints Academy**

Following my visit to the school on 19 June 2018 with Laurence King, 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 the school was judged to be good in June 2015.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

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

With the support of your effective leadership team, committed governing body and the trust, you have created an inclusive and nurturing environment that values the learning needs of both pupils and staff. You clearly understand the local community the school serves and how important the school is to the welfare of young people both in and out of term time.

Since your appointment as headteacher of this school, you have given a sharp focus to identifying and addressing areas in the school which need attention. Leaders have worked hard to tackle the areas for improvement from the last inspection. You and others leaders are determined to raise school standards and are making changes as the school grows in numbers to ensure sustained improvement. You realise that initiatives need to be fully embedded to have maximum impact. However, you are aware that a few policies need to be reviewed to deliver the best outcomes for all pupils, including the school's policy on pupils' response to teacher feedback.

New staff spoken to by inspectors feel 'supported and cared for'. On the day of the inspection, pupils were well behaved, polite and courteous. Pupils enjoy school, and attendance for the vast majority of pupils is well above the national average. The creation of the pupil council provides a forum for pupils to share their concerns and voice their opinions.

This year will see the first set of published examination data for key stage 4 pupils. Information provided by the school shows that pupils are making good progress overall.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

All statutory safeguarding requirements are being met. Governors and leaders are clear about their responsibilities to keep young people safe, and as a consequence there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.

Members of staff are very clear about safeguarding arrangements and who they would report concerns to. Staff receive regular training, including on how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremist ideas, child exploitation and female genital mutilation. Effective use is made of external agencies to support vulnerable pupils when appropriate.

Through the taught curriculum, assemblies and 'citizenship' days, pupils are taught about how to keep safe, including online and when travelling around London. All pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they feel safe in the school and if they had concerns they would report them to a member of staff. Many commented that the school is like a 'big family'. They spoke positively about 'peer mediators' who provide effective support for them if they have problems. Pupils said that bullying is rare but if it happens it would be dealt with effectively. They are very clear about the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

### **Inspection findings**

- The first area of focus for the inspection was the progress of the most able pupils. This is because progress from their starting points for these pupils is not as strong as for other groups of learners in some subjects. In addition, the progress of the most able had been an area for development in the previous Ofsted report. Inspectors visited classrooms, looked at pupils' work, and spoke to staff.
- Staff are fully aware that promoting the progress of the most able pupils is a key priority for development. Leaders have put in place a comprehensive professional development programme for teachers to develop their skills in extending and challenging pupils to think more deeply. This is enabling a wider range of strategies to be used which specifically support the learning of the most able pupils. You have put in place a 'higher prior attainment' ambassador who works effectively with the most able pupils, for example in developing their higher-level writing skills. Intervention plans are put in place for pupils who fall behind. Pupils spoke positively to inspectors about how they feel they are challenged and stretched to achieve their best.
- On the day of the inspection, inspectors saw teachers providing challenge for the most able. Work seen showed regular examples of pupils reviewing their own writing and actively responding to teachers' guidance. Practice was particularly strong in English and mathematics. However, it is less strong when pupils are

taught in mixed-ability groups.

- The second area of focus was the progress of disadvantaged pupils. This is because your analysis shows that some disadvantaged pupils make less progress than other learners in several subjects. Inspectors visited classrooms, looked at pupils' work and looked at data.
- Leaders have given priority to disadvantaged pupils. Governors ensure that the spending has measurable outcomes linked to pupils' progress. Teachers regularly monitor pupils and record assessment information. Leaders are aware of those disadvantaged pupils at risk of underachieving, and detailed support plans are in place, which include use of graduate mentors and literacy development.
- In most classes visited on the day of the inspection, inspectors saw disadvantaged pupils making progress in line with their peers. All pupils were making the best progress where bespoke support corrected misconceptions and stimulated deeper thinking. However, in a few classes visited, progress of a few disadvantaged pupils was limited because some of their written work was not completed or lacked sufficient depth to extend their knowledge and understanding. Current school assessment data shows that overall the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers is closing.
- The third area of focus was the consistency of middle leadership. We agreed to look at the impact of your focus on developing the quality of middle leadership as part of your drive to ensure the very best outcomes for pupils. Inspectors spoke with several middle leaders.
- Leaders have worked hard to ensure that middle leaders are effective drivers of change within the school, leading their own departmental self-evaluation and development planning. All middle leaders are trained as coaches and are well placed to support the professional development of other teachers. Each week, middle leaders meet to solve problems, combining academic and action research, which they said is extremely beneficial in developing their leadership skills. They spoke enthusiastically with inspectors about the excellent range of professional development opportunities open to them and the support they receive from senior leaders.
- Inspectors found that middle leaders are working with a high level of consistency across the school. Middle leaders are confident, competent and relishing their roles. They are working effectively as a team and are highly supportive of each other. Those spoken to are clear about how to implement strategies for improvement, measure impact effectively and improve outcomes for young people. They are clear about the accountability they have for the progress of the pupils in their subject areas.
- The fourth area of focus was the development of teaching and learning across the school. This is because of the challenges of recruitment in a new school. Inspectors saw staff training, visited classrooms and spoke with staff.
- Leaders have put staff training at the heart of what they do. Staff are supported through a comprehensive professional development programme 'teach like a champion' to develop effective teaching strategies. A mentoring and coaching programme which encourages teachers with a range of expertise to share their

ideas and experiences is valued by staff. On the day of the inspection, inspectors saw staff engaging with a well-planned and focused training session on developing questioning techniques in the classroom. Sharper practice in monitoring teachers' work and pupils' progress is effectively supporting further improvements. Any teacher underperformance is challenged, and support from leaders is available to enable all staff to teach to a consistently high standard.

- Information provided by school leaders and work in pupils' books indicate that pupils are making better progress over time. In most lessons visited by inspectors, teachers had high expectations, and activities were planned to match pupils' abilities. Leaders are aware of where teaching does not have sufficient impact on pupils' learning, and have plans in place to address this.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- disadvantaged pupils are completing written work in sufficient depth to extend their knowledge and understanding
- policies are reviewed thoroughly to ensure that they are enabling the best outcomes for all pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Sarah Parker

**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

The inspection began with a discussion of the school's self-evaluation. Together, we agreed the key lines of enquiry that the inspectors would follow during the inspection. Inspectors looked at school documentation, including behaviour and exclusion logs and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors visited lessons, looked at work and talked to pupils. Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, new staff, the designated safeguarding lead and three groups of pupils. The lead inspector spoke with the chair of the governing body, a parent governor, and the director of education from the academy trust. In addition, inspectors considered responses to the staff survey, the pupil survey and Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents and carers.