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Mrs Cheryl Frost-Cordy
Acting Headteacher
Harford Manor School
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Norwich
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Dear Mrs Frost-Cordy

Short inspection of Harford Manor School, Norwich

Following my visit to the school on 10 July 2019 with Clare Fletcher OI, 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 outstanding in December 2015

Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I have identified some priorities for improvement which I advise the school to address. In light of these priorities, the school's next inspection will be a full section 5 inspection. **There is no change to the school's current overall effectiveness grade of outstanding as a result of this inspection.**

Leadership has changed since the previous inspection and you commenced your appointment as acting headteacher in January 2019. You are supported in your role by the assistant headteacher and another acting assistant headteacher. In the last two terms this has altered the current quality and impact of leadership. For example, the self-evaluation summary was written by the previous headteacher and does not provide any information on the impact of the current senior leadership team on the work of the school over the last two terms. The school improvement and development plan does not make sufficient reference to developing curriculum intent and implementation in the context of the new education inspection framework and does not evaluate the impact of actions of leaders on improvements, although we saw some evidence that this work was underway. The areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection relating to the development of middle leadership and the assessment system are not fully met. New middle leadership roles are due to be implemented in September. You have successfully introduced a new system of assessment to track progress against targets and you recognise that this system needs further development. Governors are not rigorous enough in ensuring that the website is compliant and in challenging the school about the progress of different groups of pupils.

Most parents are pleased with the work of the school. One parent typically wrote,

'My child has progressed in leaps and bounds since coming to this wonderful school.'

You are sustaining the high quality of teaching and learning so that pupils across the school, including children in the early years and students in the sixth form, are making at least good and often outstanding progress over time. You have also continued to ensure that pupils' behaviour remains outstanding and that attendance has risen year on year since the previous inspection.

You have instilled the confidence of staff and continued to ensure strong teamwork in the school with a focus on promoting staff well-being. You are continuing to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through the curriculum, including pupils' awareness of fundamental British values.

Safeguarding is effective.

You are promoting a strong culture for safeguarding in the school and are working closely with school leaders and governors to ensure that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Governors are well informed about safeguarding and regularly check the quality of the arrangements to promote pupils' safety and well-being. All policies and training in safeguarding are fully up to date and vetting procedures to check the suitability of staff to work with children are rigorous.

You carry out detailed assessments of potential risks to pupils' safety and welfare in all activities and put effective measures in place to minimise these. Staff have a heightened awareness of safeguarding especially where pupils have limited communication and development. Staff work closely with parents to ensure the safety of the children and provide higher levels of supervision during school activities to ensure that pupils are kept safe. As a result, pupils move safely around the school and stay safe on school trips. They handle equipment safely and play safely in school. All parents agreed that pupils are well looked after, happy and safe in school.

Inspection findings

- To determine that the school remains outstanding I wanted to know about the impact of the school's spending of additional funding for pupils who are eligible for pupil premium. This was because more than a third of pupils are eligible for this additional funding and there was no information on the website about their progress.
- I found that the school had information about the impact of spending on the well-being of individual pupils, especially in relation to the use of music therapy to develop interaction and ability to express emotions. Additional speech and language therapy has been effective in developing communication skills. Additional technology resources have enabled staff to produce targets for phonics and, as a result, pupils were using phonics accurately.

However, there is no whole-school overview of the impact of the use of additional

funding for pupil premium on learning.

- I also wanted to find out how well governors were holding the school to account for sustaining outstanding provision. This was because the website did not comply with requirements; there was too little information about the work of the governing body for parents to see; there was no mention of the reading scheme and phonics schemes used in the primary department; and there was little information about the achievements of pupils over time.
- In my discussions, governors were unaware that the website was not compliant. Most of their monitoring of the school's work was through receiving reports and challenging the content of these. Governors' minutes of their meetings show that they receive reports about the progress that pupils are making. However, they do not challenge leaders to provide information about the progress of different groups of pupils such as those with severe communication needs and disadvantaged pupils. Governors do visit the school to check on safeguarding and one governor visits classrooms every term and provides a report to the board of governors on the outcomes. However, the box relating to further action in the governors' report has not been completed in any of the visits. Governors are not rigorous enough in monitoring the school's work to ensure that it remains outstanding
- Governors have worked hard to try and recruit a new headteacher and are now hoping to recruit a suitable candidate in January 2020.
- Finally, I wanted to know if current pupils across the school were continuing to make consistently good or better progress over time from their starting points, given the limited information available on the website. I found the school's self-evaluation summary provided convincing evidence that pupils were sustaining outstanding progress in the previous two academic years, but there was little information about the progress pupils were making during this academic year.
- The school's information from their assessment system shows that nearly all pupils across the school, including children in the early years and students in the sixth form, are making at least good progress towards their targets. The school's systematic scrutiny of pupils' work over time and information on pupils' individual target sheets also confirms that their progress is consistently good, especially in the area of communication. By the time students in the sixth form leave school they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- During joint visits to lessons with senior leaders we found pupils were enjoying their learning, they were well motivated and trying their hardest. In the primary department, the work in pupils' books and on display showed they were making particularly good progress in communication, literacy and numeracy, particularly in their use of phonics. Work in pupils' books from the secondary department also showed good progress, especially in developing independence skills, in preparing for life after school and resilience. Observations of the annual sports day showed that pupils were exercising vigorously and were making excellent progress in athletics and field events. However, the school has not yet carried out a whole-school analysis of the progress made by different groups of pupils as at the time of this report final data and analysis had not been collated for this academic year. The new acting headteacher for assessment rightly recognises the need to

develop assessment further.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- governors rigorously challenge leaders about the impact of the work of the school in improving assessment, so they have a clear view of how well different groups of pupils are learning
- self-evaluation accurately reflects the impact of leadership of the school as it is now
- the school development plan identifies the right targets for improvement in further developing the quality of education and records evaluations of how well these are achieved
- the website is compliant.

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

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

We held meetings with you and school leaders, three members of the governing body and had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.

We visited lessons in the primary department and observed secondary department pupils participating in the annual sports day event. We also sampled pupils' work across the school and discussed with a senior leader the school's information about the progress that pupils were making.

We examined 14 responses from Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, along with 13 free-text responses. We also held informal discussions with 15 parents to seek their views and looked at the 40 responses to the staff questionnaire.

We scrutinised a range of documentation including: the school's self-evaluation summary and school improvement and development plan; minutes of governing body meetings and records of visits; attendance figures and records of behaviour; policies and procedures for promoting safeguarding.