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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Miss Aiki Constantopoulou
Principal
Harris Junior Academy Carshalton
Camden Road
Carshalton
Surrey
SM5 2NS

Dear Miss Constantopoulou

Short inspection of Harris Junior Academy Carshalton

Following my visit to the school on 16 July 2019, 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. You have provided strong and inspirational leadership. You are not afraid to make changes that are in the pupils' best interests. You have high expectations and aspirations for all. You work well with senior leaders, who share your vision for school improvement. You are effectively supported by Harris Federation, which runs the multi-academy trust of which the school is a part. Leaders' and governors' actions have helped to ensure that pupils' outcomes have improved over time. By the end of key stage 2, pupils leave with outcomes that are at least in line and, for many groups, above those outcomes seen nationally.

The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the school. They report that they support the school's approach to learning and feel that standards at the school have improved. Some parents stated that they would like more information on how to support learning at home, and some working parents felt that they would like more notice of upcoming events. Parents overwhelmingly felt that their children were safe and happy at school, and they appreciated the work of leaders and teachers.

Since taking up your post last year, you have been active in monitoring teaching and learning across the school. You provide teachers with useful feedback on how they can improve their work, and you ensure that staff have access to training and development opportunities provided by the Harris Federation. You have overhauled the mathematics curriculum and the way in which it is taught at the school. Pupils report that they now feel much more challenged in these lessons. Work in books

shows that all pupils, including those with prior high attainment are well challenged for sustained periods. There is a strong focus on reasoning skills and pupils have frequent opportunities to explain their thinking. All adults model mathematical vocabulary well, and opportunities to consolidate learning are frequent. As a result of these actions, pupils' progress in mathematics is exceptional, with many pupils working at the higher standard of greater depth in all year groups.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Detailed, high-quality records are kept, checked and monitored by senior leaders, and the chair of governors. Staff regularly receive statutory training which supports their knowledge of how to keep children safe and protect them from risks. Staff are confident to recognise signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Clear procedures are in place and staff know how to report concerns.

Pupils behave well both in classes and in the playground. They show consideration and care towards each other. They are clear as to how they should keep themselves safe when working online. They have an awareness of gangs and understand why joining a gang is not a good choice in life. Pupils understand about the different forms bullying might take, and they know what to do if it should happen to them or one of their friends. Parents are confident that on the few occasions when bullying has happened it has been dealt with quickly and effectively by senior leaders.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection we decided to focus on how effective leaders' actions have been in ensuring that all pupils make good progress. This was because, although pupils' progress in mathematics was well above average, it was only average in reading. Fewer disadvantaged pupils, that is, those for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium grant, achieved the higher standard of greater depth than their peers nationally. In addition, over time, outcomes for boys had not been as good as those for girls attending the school.
- Reading is well led and managed overall and is taught daily across the school. It is no longer taught in group reading sessions, it is now taught in ability streamed sets. Pupils learn skills such as skimming, inference and deduction, and they develop a more extensive vocabulary by learning about the meaning of new words. As a result, the majority of pupils make good progress. Interventions are in place for those not making the progress expected by leaders, and these interventions are monitored effectively.
- Quality texts have been purchased that appeal to both the boys and girls. These are having a positive impact on pupils' outcomes, especially boys' outcomes. Many pupils reported that they read for pleasure out of school and could name a range of children's authors.
- We saw particularly strong practice in Years 5 and 6. Teachers ensure that pupils are sufficiently challenged. In our visits to these classes, we saw that pupils were

required to explain and justify their answers by relating them to the evidence in the text. Teachers did not accept vague or incorrect answers, and they addressed misconceptions quickly. However, this very strong practice is not yet consistent across the school. As a result, pupils' progress and outcomes are better in some parts of the school than others.

- At times, some pupils are exposed to texts that are too difficult for them. They cannot access them because their knowledge of phonics is not yet good enough. The school currently runs a phonics programme which is different to the one that pupils are familiar with when they enter from the infant feeder school. You have rightly identified this is a barrier for some pupils and have planned for all staff to be trained in the same phonics programme as the infant feeder school for September.
- We also considered how effective leaders' actions have been in ensuring that all pupils make good progress in writing. This was because pupils' progress has gone from being well above average in 2016 to average for the past two years, despite mathematics progress being much stronger last year for the same group of pupils. You reported that this has been a priority development area this year and the school's data supported an upward progress trend.
- The work in pupils' books indicated that opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length and develop stamina for writing. Pupils typically write in a range of genres and for different purposes and audiences. Learning environments are well resourced and words, captions and prompts on 'working walls' support learning. The school's focus on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar has been effective, and this has improved the overall quality of work in pupils' books. Pupils' handwriting is neat, the majority of pieces are typically well presented, and pupils take pride in their work.
- Teachers model writing, and they draw pupils' attention to the features of writing such as adjectives, fronted adverbials, similes and metaphors. In the best instances, they link back to previous learning to help pupils deepen their knowledge and strengthen their understanding of different concepts. Many pupils are aware of what it is they need to do to make their writing even better. One pupil told me the most important thing in helping him improve was his teacher 'because she shows me new things and gets me to try them myself'.
- Pupils do particularly well in Years 5 and 6. In our visits to lessons, we saw that teachers checked that pupils understood what it was they were learning. Here, teachers provided opportunities for pupils to share ideas, make notes, deepen knowledge, rehearse their writing, improve their vocabulary choices and sentence structures in rough, before they put pen to paper. As a result, pupils were keen to write, they knew what they wanted to say, and they produced quality pieces of work. They also had become very skilled at editing because they had experienced rich learning opportunities and routinely accessed resources, such as the thesaurus, independently, to improve their work.
- As with reading, this very strong practice is not yet of a consistently high quality throughout each year group. Sometimes, these processes were not well embedded and pupils did not always understand their learning and, at times, the vocabulary in learning objectives was too complex for them to understand. They

did not have enough time to prepare to write, and their editing was not always fully successful at improving the quality of their work.

- Finally, we considered how effectively leaders were improving attendance and reducing persistent absence for its most vulnerable pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils. Case studies show that for many pupils, significant improvements have been made, and this has, in turn, resulted in much improved outcomes for individual pupils. Leaders have worked to foster good relationships with parents and support them in meeting their statutory duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly. Term-time holidays are no longer authorised, and leaders work closely with the education welfare service. There is still a small group of pupils who do not attend school regularly or have too many unauthorised absences and miss out on the quality experiences and opportunities the school offers. However, everything reasonably possible is being done to help parents achieve good and regular attendance for their children. Overall attendance is in line with or above national levels for the vast majority of pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they make sure that all pupils can access texts through the effective teaching of phonics to those pupils who need it
- they further improve progress and outcomes for pupils in all classes by eliminating inconsistencies in the teaching of reading and writing.

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

Yours sincerely

Lou Anderson
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

I held meetings with you, senior leaders, a range of representatives from the federation, and the chair of the local governing body. I visited classrooms to observe learning and looked at samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. I listened to pupils read as part of their learning in class. I also talked to children, in all year groups, about their learning both in class and at social times throughout the day. I read responses staff made to Ofsted's staff survey and held informal discussions with parents at the start of the school day. Responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, were taken into account, including written comments. I looked at documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement

plans, information on pupils' attendance and documentation related to safeguarding, as well as assessment and behaviour information.