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Mr David Perkins
Headteacher
Laureate Community Academy
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Dear Mr Perkins

Short inspection of Laureate Community Academy

Following my visit to the school on 14 March 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2016.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the previous inspection. You have an accurate view of the school's many strengths and of what could be even better. Your plans for improvement focus on the right priorities and are underpinned by actions based upon your regular checks on the quality of education.

In keeping with your vision, pupils' well-being is given a high priority. All adults want pupils to achieve their best in the school's happy and caring environment. Pupils know that adults will listen to their concerns and provide them with any help that they need. Several parents commented on how their children had grown in confidence, made academic progress and have opportunities to take on responsibilities. Pupils relish the chance to take on responsibilities through being members of the school council, house captains, eco-leaders, librarians or early years helpers.

The school joined a multi-academy trust, the Unity Schools Partnership, in July 2016, shortly after the predecessor school's short inspection. The trust has strengthened governance arrangements. Regular visits from the trust's chief executive officer and director of primary education provide leaders and governors with additional challenge and support. You use evidence from their checks wisely to inform your improvement plans and act quickly upon any advice you receive. Governors have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and role in the trust governance structure. They contribute effectively to setting the direction and future priorities for the school.

Trust advisers have provided useful guidance and professional development opportunities for leaders and teachers. You make astute use of involvement with other organisations to improve and refine teachers' use of assessment information to plan learning and check pupils' progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

You ensure that keeping children safe has the highest priority. Staff and governors have appropriate training and regular updates. Adults are confident in recognising and reporting concerns. The deputy headteacher is the designated safeguarding leader. She ensures that records of concerns are accurate and updated as necessary. She refers any serious concerns to external agencies quickly and follows these up tenaciously, so that pupils and families receive the help that they need in a timely fashion.

Leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They carry out all of the checks required to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils. The record of these checks is maintained accurately and regularly reviewed by governors and trust representatives. You make sure that the policies and procedures for keeping children safe are up to date and reflect the latest published guidance. The trust regularly reviews safeguarding procedures and you act promptly upon any advice to enhance your procedures.

Pupils say that they feel safe. Staff and almost all parents agree. You promote pupils' understanding of difference well, for example through assemblies, visits from external speakers and by celebrating different cultures and languages. Almost all pupils say that any instances of bullying and use of derogatory or prejudicial language are dealt with quickly and well. Pupils learn how to stay safe online in computing lessons and you provide parents with regular e-safety bulletins in the school newsletter, so that they too are aware of the risks.

Inspection findings

- To check whether the school remains good, I followed a number of lines of enquiry. The first was whether pupils attend regularly and behave well. In 2018, attendance fell below the national average and the proportion of pupils who were frequently absent from school was higher than in most primary schools. Your work to improve this situation has been effective. Current attendance is above the most recent national average.
- You provide support through your family support worker and an education welfare officer and you celebrate and reward high attendance. When parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly you have not shied away from acting decisively. However, there remains a small group of pupils whose attendance continues to be lower than it should be.
- Almost all pupils respond well to your high expectations of how they should behave. Pupils are polite, confident and welcoming to visitors as well as to pupils who join the school. Relationships are good and this contributes to the purposeful learning atmosphere evident in all classrooms. You make sure that the very small

number of pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour get the help that they need.

- The next area I considered was whether you had sustained improvements in achievement in English by the end of key stage 2, particularly for boys. This was because, although improving, boys have made less progress than girls in reading and writing over that last three years. You have ensured that teachers adopt a consistent and effective approach to teaching and assessing the skills of reading and writing. As a result, most pupils are making strong progress in English.
- The changes you have made to ensure that pupils practise and develop their writing skills in all subjects have borne fruit. The quality of pupils' writing in subjects such as history, geography and science is of the same good standard as in their English books. You promote reading effectively. Pupils enjoy reading and do so confidently, with fluency and comprehension appropriate for their current levels of attainment. They apply phonics knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words. Boys and girls are making equally strong progress in English.
- My third line of enquiry was about the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics. This was because although pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 has been broadly average for the last three years, attainment has varied. Also, the proportion of pupils assessed as working at greater depth by the end of key stage 1 has declined over the past three years.
- In line with your expectations, teachers place greater importance on ensuring that pupils have mastered mathematical concepts before moving on to new learning. Pupils also have more opportunities to develop their reasoning skills. You have provided training so that teachers are confident in their teaching of mathematics. Pupils are making good progress, with more on track to attain the higher standard at the end of each key stage.
- Teachers usually ensure that they match mathematics activities to pupils' different capabilities. However, there are still examples where activities do not challenge pupils enough. In some cases, pupils could move on to challenging work more quickly. This is particularly true for the most able pupils.
- I also wanted to establish how well leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils, particularly the small number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are provided for. These pupils make strong progress because of the effective teaching and carefully considered additional support they receive.
- The inclusion manager and special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) are highly effective leaders. They ensure that they accurately identify pupils' barriers to learning and that teachers meet pupils' needs. They check that provision is supporting pupils' achievement effectively.
- Teachers carefully consider how they and teaching assistants help pupils learn. The school's participation in a research project has contributed to focusing this work. Often teachers will now work with those pupils who have the greatest needs. Both teachers and teaching assistants use questioning well to check and support pupils' learning. They encourage pupils with SEND to become independent and confident learners, who typically make strong progress.

- My final line of enquiry was whether the curriculum fulfils your aims and supports pupils' academic and personal development. You and the deputy headteacher have constructed a curriculum that provides a broad range of learning experiences. Pupils develop a range of knowledge, skills and understanding and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. However, systems for monitoring pupils' progress in foundation subjects have yet to become established.
- Pupils enjoy 'Inspirations'. These are themes that are used to capture and build upon pupils' interest. You also provide opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Year 6 pupils' books, for example, contained sensitive written pieces about how it would feel to be an evacuee.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who are still absent too frequently
- all teachers consistently provide appropriately challenging activities in mathematics, particularly for the most able pupils
- assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics become established and are used to support pupils' learning and progress.

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 Suffolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Paul Wilson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I held meetings with you, senior leaders, the SENCo and subject leaders. I met with three members of the local governing body, and the director of primary education and the chief executive officer of the Unity Schools Partnership. I met with a group of pupils and talked to other pupils when visiting classrooms and at lunchtime. I considered the 15 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 19 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. I spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, including 15 free-text comments. I made short visits to observe learning in all key stages with you and we scrutinised pupils' work in a range of subjects. I also heard a group of pupils read. I reviewed a range of school documentation and policies including improvement plans, documentation and

records relating to safeguarding, assessment information and information about attendance and behaviour.