

Harris Primary Free School East Dulwich

Introduction

The Harris Federation were initially contacted by 3 local East Dulwich councillors within Southwark, and asked whether we would consider applying to open one or two Free Schools in the area to meet the rising demand for primary school places. They have been impressed by the success of our existing primary and secondary academies in Southwark. They are very concerned that Southwark do not have the capacity to meet forecast demand from existing schools and having heard our education vision was very keen for us to open a new primary school (4-11) to meet the increasing demand for primary places.

Key features of the this application

- A new 2 form of entry primary school that will benefit from the vision and values of the Harris Federation with expert support from our Primary Director, Sir Robin Bosher, and his team of Primary specialists
- A 420 place primary school that will grow from 60 students in 2014/15 to reach full capacity in 2020/21 by 60 students each September.
- Operational and educational benefits from co-locating in the same area as other Harris Federation school, thus having the opportunity to share staff and curriculum support, as well as have access to the secondary academy facilities and teaching staff (in years 5 and 6) for specialist teaching.
- The establishment of a board of governors for the HPFSED within the Harris Federation.
- An admissions policy based on proximity to the school or nodal points.
- Demand for primary places substantiated by the Local Authority which has shown there will be a shortage of 215-235 in the wider Dulwich area by September 2016.
- Endorsement of the Harris Federation vision and plans for HPFSED from local parents who have signed up to support us. We intend to form a parent steering group to take the proposals forward.

Vision and ethos

All Harris Federation schools operate within one academy trust, The Harris Federation of London Schools, with a local governing body for each school under a single Harris Federation Board of Trustees. As part of the network of Harris Federation schools, the HPFSED will benefit from sharing curriculum, teaching and learning practices, pastoral practices and administrative services.

The ethos of HPFSED will be of high expectations for learning and behaviour and therefore high expectations of outcomes for children. This will be brought about by having systems and processes that ensure engaging and rigorous teaching; high quality learning and assessment combined with detailed monitoring of pupil achievement and personalised target setting.

HPFSED will have literacy as its specialism. There will be an emphasis on ensuring all children leave Year 6 with the skills that are needed to be literate and numerate and who will have a love of learning and be independent learners; this will ensure their move to secondary school will be smooth.

The specialism

The specialism of literacy will be a focal point of the Free Schools network activities. Literacy will infuse the whole curriculum. The specialism will be integral in developing whole-school events, with pupils learning skills such as problem-solving, risk-taking, and decision-making.

Mathematical skills will be enhanced by teaching through problem solving contexts and Literacy will be enhanced by a phonics approach to reading and enhanced development of oracy through interaction with adults other than teachers, along with many opportunities for presentation of project work.

Reward System

From the beginning of the early years, systems will be in place to reward child achievement in ways which promote intrinsic motivation and love for learning. Children will have the opportunity to track their own learning goals by use of a target card. Through conversations with adults, each child will be encouraged to revisit their targets after key learning opportunities and decide whether they have met them. Regular celebrations in class and in assemblies, and communication with parents, reinforce this sense of achievement.

Further up the school, sense of achievement and success will be nurtured further by a house-points system. Success in achieving lesson objectives, success criteria and personal targets results in each child earning points for their house. As learning objectives will be differentiated for all abilities and need, all children have equal opportunity to earn these house points. Points can also be earned for effort, behaviour for learning and sporting achievement. Significant and outstanding achievements by pupils will be celebrated in assemblies with personal rewards (certificates).

Performance and Standards

Our aim will be for the Free School to be outstanding with pupil progress significantly above the national average and for the Free School to be in the top 10% of schools for attainment and progress by the time the first cohort takes KS2 SATS.

The Federations primary academy/school improvement programme is led by Sir Robin Boshier, an outstanding Head Teacher with significant experience of transformational leadership. The focus for school improvement will be on continuously improving the quality of teaching and learning. We will support the leadership team to create an open culture where all adults involved in teaching articulate what they do and why they do it.

Harris believes that all children, regardless of culture or socio-economic background, have a right to the highest quality education. With this in mind, Harris will endeavour to ensure:

- All teaching will be at least good with the majority outstanding.
- KS1 and KS2 SATs results to be within the top 10% in the country.
- Attendance is at least 95%.
- Children throughout the school achieve well and make rapid and sustained progress.
- Those children who start education at a lower than expected level, make accelerated progress.
- Children with English as an additional language receive the provision and language-rich curriculum to help them succeed within the English system.
- Children with Free School Meals make at least as good progress as other children.
- All children are happy, enjoy learning and want to go to school.
- The school has an ethos of accepting and celebrating differences.
- There is strong support from the community and parents of the school.

These targets are based on what we know works well to make outstanding schools in this area and therefore will suit the children we will be teaching and the community we will serve.

Measures of success and aspirations for pupil achievement

We will be ambitious for the children and families of this new Free School in East Dulwich. Our aim will be for the Free School to be outstanding with pupil progress significantly above the national average and for the Free School to be in the top 10% of schools for attainment and progress by the time the first cohort takes KS2 SATS.

Experience from our other schools in Southwark has shown that these targets (although challenging) are an extremely good measure as to whether a school/academy is achieving the Harris Primary vision.