

# The Harvey Grammar School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118805
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	379686
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Metcalf

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	881
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	207
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Dennis
<b>Principal</b>	Bill Wright
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26–27 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Cheriton Road Folkestone CT19 5JY
<b>Telephone number</b>	01303 252131
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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	15–16 September 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	399686

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They observed 40 lessons and 37 teachers. They looked at a range of data and documentation, including school policies, assessment data, safeguarding documentation and minutes of meetings of the governing body. The responses to questionnaires completed by staff, students and 119 parents and carers were also analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which lesson observations, work scrutiny and available data support the school's judgments about attainment and progress.
- Whether the quality of teaching secures sufficient progress and learning for all students, especially higher attaining students.
- How well care, guidance and support promote learning and the personal development of all students.
- The effectiveness of senior staff and middle managers in driving and securing improvement.

## Information about the school

Harvey Grammar is a selective 11-18 grammar school for boys, which is similar in size to the average secondary school. The proportions of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are similar to the national averages, but increasing. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The school was designated as a specialist college for sports, supported by mathematics, in 2005. It achieved Healthy School status in 2009 and a Quality Mark for Extended Services.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The Harvey Grammar School is a good school. There have been many improvements since the last inspection and several features of the school's work are now outstanding. Leaders and managers have worked decisively to improve teaching and learning and provide an innovative curriculum which is carefully matched to the needs of students and recently enhanced with new courses such as engineering, music technology and sports leadership.

The school's engagement with a range of partners is exceptionally strong and its specialist status has had a significant impact on sports locally. Engagement with parents is outstanding and many parents used the questionnaire to make comments about the school's intranet, where they can access details about attainment, attendance, behaviour, homework, targets, progress, reports and timetables. The comment that 'big improvements have been made regarding communication with parents' was typical of the many positive responses received.

Attainment in GCSE examinations is high with the proportion of A and A\* grades much higher than average in a range of subjects, including English and the sciences. The proportion of students achieving A\* and A grades in GCSE examinations has continued to rise, with further improvement seen in 2011. Students' progress and examination results in mathematics have improved considerably and the proportion now attaining the highest grades is well above average. The A-level results in 2011 were the best ever, with 65% of students gaining grades A\* to B and notable performances in French, computing, politics, psychology, further mathematics and BTEC Sport.

Predominantly good, and some outstanding, teaching enables students to make good progress and achieve extremely well. While school leaders correctly judge the overall quality of teaching to be good, they acknowledge that there still remains some inconsistency in practice. Similarly, while most teachers mark students' work regularly, and give detailed guidance on how to improve and achieve higher grades, this is not consistent across all subjects.

Care, guidance and support are good, including provision for the small proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Although the number of these students is small, they are well supported by learning mentors and peer mentors who ensure their full integration into the school.

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Leaders and managers have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Targets are demanding, with a strong focus on raising the proportion of students attaining the highest grades. School self-evaluation is accurate and the school knows exactly what to do further to sustain its journey towards excellence. Actions taken to improve teaching and strengthen subject leadership have already brought about improvements. There is a clear track record of improvement since the last inspection, confirming that the school's capacity to sustain further improvements is good.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding still further by:
  - making better use of available data to identify trends and track the performance of different groups
  - ensuring that there is a sharper match of work to students' changing levels of attainment and skills
  - giving students more responsibility for their own learning by encouraging them to be more active and inquisitive in class.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Students' attainment in both GCSE and A-level examinations is well above the national averages. The school's results have increased considerably since the last inspection, especially in the proportion of students gaining the highest grades. The school's data and lesson observations confirm that students make good progress. The small numbers of students who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress as a result of the targeted support and personalised intervention they receive. Students' achievement overall is outstanding.

Students learn well, particularly where teachers have planned purposeful activities which extend their knowledge and understanding and help them to learn independently. Students make the best progress where they are able to explore new ideas or concepts and build on existing knowledge. For example, in a Year 10 electronics lesson, students were challenged to investigate different components on a circuit board without any prior knowledge. Their positive attitudes, as well as their enthusiasm, motivation and engagement, supported their learning and resulted in their better understanding of the workings of a circuit board.

In a very small minority of lessons, where progress is no more than satisfactory, tasks are not sufficiently challenging or teachers sometimes over-direct what students do. In a few lessons, students are not always actively engaged in their own learning and reflecting on what they have achieved and how to improve.

Attendance is above average, with no differences in attendance rates for different groups, although the data available are not used sufficiently to identify trends and

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track different groups. Discussions with students and responses to the questionnaires confirm that they enjoy school and feel safe. Exclusion rates are low and students' good behaviour makes a positive contribution to their learning. The school achieved Healthy School status in 2009 and students respond well to health promotion strategies, including designing their own healthy sports drink, extra-curricular lessons in healthy cooking and inter-house cooking competitions. Students participate enthusiastically in physical education lessons and there is a large take-up for a range of extra-curricular sport.

Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that students are involved in a wide range of artistic, sporting and cultural activities both within and beyond the school. Students are confident and keen to take on responsibilities and leadership roles within the school, including as house officials and representation on the school council. Younger students welcome the support of older students in the recently introduced mixed-age tutor groups. Students demonstrate empathy and respect for each other and make generous contributions to charities, including a local hospice, cancer research and Help for Heroes. Their knowledge and respect for other cultural heritages is evidenced through assemblies and their sponsorship of students in Africa.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching and teachers' engagement with students and their learning are good. Relationships between teachers and students are supportive and

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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expectations are high. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and they have a good awareness of examination requirements. In the best lessons, students are actively involved in their learning and encouraged to be more inquisitive and ask probing questions. In the outstanding lessons observed, students rise to the high level of challenge set by the teacher. For example in a Year 10 computing lesson, students made excellent use of extensive resources and the internet to research local landmarks and provide appropriate advertising materials. The students' enthusiasm for the task and the teacher's well-considered interventions significantly raised the quality of their presentations. In a small minority of lessons, students have fewer opportunities to contribute or discover for themselves, as question-and-answer sessions are too brief and input from the teacher dominates the lesson.

Assessment is good and teachers' marking offers useful feedback on how students might improve their work. The school's databases are used effectively to track the progress of individual students and support any who are potentially underperforming against expectations. The quality of information on individual students is exemplary but the data to identify trends and track the performance of different groups are underutilised.

The school has developed its curriculum exceptionally well through undertaking thorough research on existing good practice and experimentation leading to innovation. For example, the fast tracking of Year 9 students into Year 10 has proved to be successful and motivating. The curriculum makes a very positive contribution to students' enjoyment of school, to their achievement and to their personal development. This is reflected, for example, through the well-attended extra-curricular activities in conjunction with the school's specialism, which has been recognised in the recently awarded Quality Mark for Extended Services.

Care, guidance and support are good, and procedures to support students are effective and contribute significantly to their confidence and self-esteem as well as their good behaviour. The quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance, including careers advice, are strong but not sufficiently focused on different groups. Transition arrangements are very well supported, with strong links to partner primary schools and a comprehensive programme of preparation for higher education, including advice on how to develop valued skills and experiences. Strong partnerships with external agencies provide additional support for the most vulnerable students.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are highly regarded by students, staff and parents. Self-evaluation is accurate and there is a clear vision for the school and a determination to improve academic standards further. Challenging targets have been set and students' attainment has improved since the last inspection, notably in mathematics and in the proportion of students achieving the highest grades in GCSE and A-level examinations. However, leaders acknowledge that there is more to be done to ensure consistently outstanding practice in planning, teaching, learning and assessment. As a result of the successful strategies to develop the role of middle managers, they are now more actively involved in taking responsibility for departmental evaluation and raising achievement.

The governing body is active in shaping the direction of the school. Discussions and minutes of meetings confirm that they are well informed and make a strong contribution to the work and direction of the school. They discharge all statutory duties effectively and use their highly productive and open partnership with senior leaders to provide challenge and support.

The school enjoys excellent relationships with parents and carers. Consultation is regular and exceptionally well organised to ensure that parents' and carers' views are known, for example through the use of parental questionnaires. The principal's blog offers school and community news as well as providing guidance on the ways in which parents and carers can support their children. Parents' access to data ensures strong links between school and home.

Safeguarding procedures are thorough and robust, with exemplary attention given to child protection issues. Students, staff and governors are involved in working parties to inform policy and develop action plans. All staff receive regular and rigorous child protection and e-safety training, although records relating to health and safety and some risk assessments are not all up to date.

Equality of opportunity is good and the school has worked hard to promote equality across the school. Students talk confidently about action to combat bullying, including homophobic bullying and racist incidents. The promotion of community cohesion is good and the school knows its students very well. Students are well represented in local volunteer groups such as the Sea Scouts, Air Training Corps and the St John Ambulance Service, as well as in community project work as part of their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Expeditions are a regular feature of the school calendar, including trips to America, Barbados, France and Holland. The breadth of experiences helps to ensure students' understanding of different communities and raises their awareness, confidence and self-esteem.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*



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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

Attainment on entry to the sixth form is above that seen nationally. Students make good progress overall to achieve results in AS and A-level examinations which are well above the national averages. Students' achievement has improved significantly in recent years, with a particularly marked improvement in the 2011 examination results and confirmed during lesson observations. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form, as reflected in high levels of attendance and retention rates.

Students make a positive contribution to the school and appreciate the opportunities to involve themselves as school prefects, house captains and sports leaders as well as offering one-to-one support to Year 7 students in a variety of subjects. Outside of school, they undertake voluntary work within the local community, including work with partner primary schools as part of the school's sports specialism.

Teaching and learning are good. Students enjoy their lessons and value the positive relationships which they enjoy with their teachers. Lesson planning is thorough but does not always take sufficient account of the available data to cater effectively for the whole spread of ability in the class. Students receive constructive feedback on their progress and how they might improve. They understand their targets and are clear about what they must do to meet them.

The curriculum is broad and varied, with subjects such as psychology, sociology and BTEC sport introduced recently to meet the differing aspirations of students. The offer is extended as a result of collaborative arrangements with local schools and enriched with a wealth of extra-curricular activities. Care, guidance and support are good and students benefit from high levels of personal and academic support provided by subject leaders and the heads of house. However, insufficient use is

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made of the data available to identify trends and track the performance of different groups.

Leadership and management in the sixth form are good. Sixth form leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the sixth form as well as a commitment to improving academic standards further. Students' attainment has improved since the last inspection and the data confirm sustained improvement over time, with the 2011 examination results being the best on record.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Although a lower than average proportion of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, inspectors also saw evidence of the school's own highly effective systems for gathering parents' views, which were equally positive. Most parents and carers are highly supportive of the school and the quality of education it provides. The overwhelming majority agree that their child is safe at school and most agree that their child enjoys school and they are well informed about their child's progress and helped to support their child's learning. They were similarly supportive of the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school. A number made extremely positive comments, particularly with regard to the school's arrangements for transition into the school and the quality of communication, including their access to data via the school's intranet. A few responses raised concerns about behaviour and progress. The inspection team found that behaviour was good, and progress good and improving.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Harvey Grammar School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 881 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	45	55	46	8	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	64	54	52	44	0	0	2	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	78	66	35	29	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	46	49	41	8	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	49	41	57	48	7	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	30	68	57	11	9	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	22	80	67	8	7	2	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	47	39	59	50	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	47	51	43	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	30	60	50	9	8	7	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	27	62	52	0	0	10	8
The school is led and managed effectively	47	39	54	45	5	4	5	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	54	43	36	6	5	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



17 September 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of The Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone CT16 5JY**

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently, I am writing to say how much we enjoyed meeting and talking to you in your lessons and around the school. We noted your positive responses in the student questionnaires confirming that you enjoy school, feel safe and learn a lot in lessons. We have taken your views and those of your parents and carers, and school staff into account in arriving at our judgement that your school, including the sixth form, is good. Some aspects of the school's work are outstanding.

Examination results are high and you are making good progress in your academic and personal development. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the curriculum is innovative and tailored to your needs. Care, guidance and support are good, with strong links to partner primary schools and higher education providers. The leadership of the school is good and we have every confidence that with your continued help, the school will continue to grow from strength to strength.

We have asked your teachers to increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding still further by making better use of the data that are available to identify trends and track the performance of different groups. We also think that you should be given more responsibility for your own learning and we want you to be more active and inquisitive in class.

Once again, thank you for your contribution to the inspection and very best wishes for your future success and happiness.

Yours sincerely

Paul Metcalf  
Lead inspector

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