

Harris Academy Purley

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135955
Local Authority	NA
Inspection number	381978
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Ellis HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	875
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	75
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Jacobs
Headteacher	Carol-Anne Alcock
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
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Introduction

This inspection was carried by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 30 lessons taught by 30 different teachers, and held discussions with groups of students, a governor and staff. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at development plans, curriculum planning, the academy's tracking data showing students' progress, teachers' lesson plans and students' work. Inspectors also analysed the questionnaires received from 203 parents and carers.

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

- To what extent have leaders and managers at all levels been effective in securing improvement in the key aspects of the academy's work, where weaknesses were identified by self-evaluation?
- How effective have been the actions taken by the academy to improve the quality of teaching, to ensure all learners make consistently good or better progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities?

Information about the school

The academy opened in September 2009. White British students constitute around one quarter of the academy population and the remainder are from a diverse range of ethnic heritages. Around two fifths of the students are girls. Around one in three students speaks English as an additional language, but most of these speak English fluently. The overall proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. More students have special educational needs and/or disabilities than is typical for a school of this size, constituting predominantly moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties. The proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.

The academy has a relatively stable student population and is oversubscribed. The recently-established sixth form operates as part of a collaborative arrangement with other academies in the Harris Federation. The academy was initially housed in the buildings of the predecessor school. A building programme is underway to replace some of the buildings with purpose-built accommodation. Consequently, a majority of classes are currently housed in temporary accommodation. The academy's specialisms are in enterprise and sports.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

- This is an outstanding academy. Most students enjoy learning and quickly develop the skills and abilities that they need to move on to the next step in their education.
- Students' attitudes to learning and their attendance improve significantly while they are at the academy and attendance is high.
- Students are polite and welcoming and their outstanding behaviour supports their learning.
- Teaching is excellent and well-planned lessons ensure that students' needs are met. A strong focus on enterprise, numeracy and literacy ensures that students develop the skills they need to learn effectively.
- The use of assessment to identify what students need to learn next and keep them informed about their progress is outstanding.
- An exceptional, relevant curriculum provides excellent opportunities to challenge students and promotes their learning and personal development extremely well.
- Students' welfare and well-being are fundamental to the work of the academy and students are looked after extremely well and kept safe.
- The very positive relationships between staff and students make a major contribution to students feeling safe and making excellent progress in their learning and development.
- The academy is led extremely well and teachers and other adults who work with students share a common sense of purpose and high expectations of what students can achieve.
- High-quality productive links with other schools and a range of external agencies support students very well.
- The academy's self-evaluation is accurate and any evident weaknesses have been tackled relentlessly and effectively. The improvements made since the academy was monitored by Ofsted last year, and the general rapid pace of improvement in all areas, demonstrate there is excellent capacity for further improvement.
- Students have a strong say in decisions about their own education they have excellent opportunities to take responsibility and contribute to the academy community and beyond.
- Parents and carers are kept very well informed about their children's progress and they value the contribution that the academy makes to their children's learning and development.
- All aspects of the small sixth form are outstanding, but it is small and has not developed a distinctive identity or ethos of its own.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Expand the sixth form so that it has a distinctive identity and ethos and provides students with excellent opportunities to contribute to life at the academy.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students join the academy with attainment that is significantly below average for their ages. They make excellent progress from these low starting points so that, by the time reach Year 11, they achieve above average GCSE results. The academy's tracking data and scrutiny of students' work shows that there are no groups who are being left behind. Tasks and activities are regularly set in real-world contexts which give students excellent opportunities to use and apply their learning. Students who have additional needs are supported very well so that they make similar progress to their peers. Students say they feel very safe in the academy and they demonstrate that they know about how to keep themselves and others safe. Students are polite and welcoming and there are excellent systems to support and challenge those who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. There have been no permanent exclusions from the academy and students say that bullying and any other form of harassment are not tolerated.

Students participate enthusiastically in physical activities and demonstrate a very secure understanding of issues that might affect their health and well-being. They readily take up posts of responsibility and participate in making decisions about their learning and development. For example, student specialism leaders work with other students to develop their communication skills, and sports leaders visit local primary schools to organise tournaments and competitions. Attendance is high and students successfully develop the skills and attributes needed for the next steps in their education or training. Students reflect thoughtfully on their experiences and they are able to confidently discuss moral and ethical issues and show that they respect other students' values and beliefs.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1

¹ 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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Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

High quality teaching promotes learning and enjoyment for all students. Teachers have very high expectations of what students can achieve. Assessment is used very well to ensure that teachers build on students' prior learning and provide challenging and engaging activities that are well suited to students' needs and aspirations. Teachers' marking of students' work provides excellent feedback which identifies strengths and areas for improvement. Students are very clear about what level they are working at and exactly what they need to do to move to the next level. Teachers question students skilfully to identify what they have understood and to help students develop their thinking skills.

The curriculum is extremely flexible and very responsive to students' needs. There is a strong focus on enterprise. For example, Year 9 students are developing an application to support disabled users of electronic devices. The academy provides a broad range of academic and vocational choices and makes good use of partnership arrangements to strengthen the curriculum and provide students with memorable experiences. All students study an enterprise course leading to an accredited financial qualification in Key Stage 3 and an enterprise/business qualification in Year 11. There is strong focus on developing literacy in lessons. For example, Year 7 students who have very low literacy skills are selected for a 'Golden Curriculum' group, where they experience specialist teaching and resources that rapidly improve their language and communication skills. The academy's specialisms make a very positive contribution to students' enjoyment, engagement and outstanding progress.

Exemplary transition arrangements ensure that students get off to a good start. Students say that they get excellent support and advice to help them make choices, for example, about which courses to follow or for matters relating to their personal health or safety. There are excellent successful strategies to encourage regular attendance. Very well-targeted support for all pupils enables them to make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points and abilities. Progress of potentially vulnerable students is closely monitored and, because of the excellent support and guidance they receive, they make better progress than similar students nationally. The number of students who need intensive support is declining as successful guidance and support has enabled students to overcome significant barriers to learning and make accelerated progress.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The principal and her senior team have an ambitious vision for the academy and its students. Leaders and managers have shown a strong commitment to improving the quality of teaching and, in a very short time, have had considerable success. The move into temporary accommodation was managed well so that progress was not hindered. Rigorous and systematic monitoring of all aspects of the academy’s work ensures that leaders have accurate and timely information about strengths and areas for development. Development plans are built on thorough analysis of all of the available information and, consequently, the academy has well-thought-out priorities for improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels are not complacent and continue to seek ways of improving teaching and learning.

The governing body are well informed and provide the right level of challenge and support to enable the academy to make outstanding progress. A very large majority of parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about their children’s experiences. The academy regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and they are informed about their children’s progress and how they can help them with their learning. Excellent productive partnerships with education, welfare and health professionals and with other schools, particularly other academies in the Harris Federation, make a significant contribution to students’ outstanding learning and personal development. This is a very inclusive academy, where all students are valued regardless of their background or ability. The academy successfully promotes equality of opportunity and the impact of this can be seen in the rapid progress of all the different groups of students who make up this cohesive academy community.

The academy adopts a proportionate approach to safeguarding and is a leader of high-quality practice. Procedures are regularly reviewed and all staff benefit from appropriate training in child protection. The academy knows its community extremely well and actions taken to promote community cohesion have had a beneficial impact on both the academy and the local community. For example, local residents have been kept informed about the progress of the building work and were invited to visit the academy. Thorough analysis of the impact of actions taken has informed future plans and the academy has ambitious plans to engage with the wider community beyond the immediate local area.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Sixth form

The academy joined the Harris Post-16 Federation in September 2010, having recruited 29 students onto a small number of level 3 BTEC qualifications. There are currently 75 post-16 students who follow a growing range of AS Levels and BTEC Level 3 qualifications. The sixth form is very inclusive and admits students from across the ability range. Evidence, from scrutiny of the academy’s performance data and of students’ work, shows that they make excellent progress in relation to their starting points and are on track to achieve very challenging targets.

All teaching seen in the sixth form was at least good, with the majority outstanding. Assessment is used well both to track progress and to plan inspirational and engaging activities. The federation curriculum offers a very broad range of courses that are well suited to students at the academy. Transport arrangements ensure that students are able to travel between the different centres and the progress of students taught elsewhere is closely monitored. A rigorous induction process prepares students for life as a post-16 student and there is a comprehensive programme of support that prepares students for adult life to ensure they can make informed decisions about their futures. A strong tutorial programme provides for personal, social and health education and students value the time they have with tutors to review their progress and discuss any issues that might arise.

Leaders and managers have ambitious plans to develop the sixth form so that it meets the needs of the students and the local community. Staff regularly share information and robust procedures are implemented to ensure students are safe and cared for well. Partnership arrangement with the other academies in the federation, particularly the well-designed systems and procedures that support and monitor

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students, make a strong contribution to the students’ excellent progress. Although all aspects of the sixth form are outstanding, at this early stage in its development, the academy has not yet realised its ambitious vision for the sixth form to provide additional progression pathways for academy students and to make a major, distinctive contribution to academy life.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

Views of parents and carers

Most of the above-average proportion of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed positive views about the work of the academy and its impact on outcomes for their children. A very high proportion felt that their children enjoyed attending the academy and that teaching was good. A very small number of parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour issues. Inspectors explored these concerns and their findings are included in the report above.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of students registered at Harris Academy Purley 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 academy.

The inspection team received 203 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 875 students registered at the academy.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	90	44	97	48	13	6	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	85	42	103	51	8	4	3	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	102	50	88	43	11	5	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	84	41	104	51	9	4	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	85	42	110	54	5	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	69	34	108	53	20	10	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	27	125	62	14	7	2	1
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)	70	34	108	53	11	5	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	72	35	113	56	9	4	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	45	88	43	14	7	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	30	113	56	13	6	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	94	46	99	49	6	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	94	47	98	49	6	3	0	0

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).

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



9 December 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Harris Academy Purley, South Croydon CR2 6DT

Thank you for making us feel welcome and for helping us with the inspection. I would particularly like to thank those of you who took time to talk to us about your experiences at the academy. I hope you will take time to read the full report that will be published on the Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

This is an outstanding academy and I was pleased to see that you are cared for very well and encouraged to have high aspirations. Teachers go to considerable lengths to ensure that the work you do is matched to your needs and is set at the right level. You told us that you feel safe and respected by the adults you work with. I saw that you get on very well together and I was pleased that you have excellent attendance and make outstanding progress in your learning. The high quality care and guidance you receive ensures that you are suitably prepared for the next steps in your education. The adults who are responsible for the academy have ambitious plans for how it will continue to improve. I hope your move into the new building goes well next year.

Although the academy has many strengths, there is one particular area that we would like it to focus on. Although the sixth form provides extremely well for the relatively small number of sixth-form students, it needs to continue to grow so that it can make an ever better contribution to life at the academy.

So this is the key thing that we would like the academy to do to improve further.

- Continue to develop the sixth form so that it has a distinctive identity and ethos and provides you with further excellent opportunities to contribute to life at the academy.

I look forward to hearing about your future achievements.

Yours sincerely

Robert Ellis
Her Majesty's Inspector

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