

Harlington School

Pinkwell Lane, Harlington, Hayes, UB3 1PB

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders and governors have successfully improved the quality of teaching and the achievement of students, including for those in the specialist resource provision.
- Students make at least good progress in English and most other subjects by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers know their students well and typically plan suitable activities to develop knowledge and understanding.
- Students affirm strongly that they feel safe. The school actively promotes a safe culture for learning and living in the wider world.
- The school has created an atmosphere which is conducive for learning; students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are well developed. They actively take on leadership responsibilities in helping the school run more smoothly. The range of extra-curricular activities and trips on offer enhance their learning.
- Students make good progress in the sixth form, as a result of effective teaching. The sixth form is well led.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The marking of students' work is not always of a consistently high standard across the school, and within all department areas. Students do not always act upon teachers' comments to improve their work.
- There is not enough teaching that is outstanding. This limits the potential of some students, especially the most able, to achieve more.
- Despite the school's concerted efforts, students' attendance is just below average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 36 lessons, observing 34 teachers. Seven lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also conducted a series of further brief observations of students' learning, behaviour and achievement, especially in mathematics.
- Inspectors looked at students' work and observed the supervision of the students between lessons, break and lunchtime within the school day.
- A number of meetings were held with groups of students, governors, the senior leadership team and staff. A number of telephone conversations took place with a representative/representatives of the local authority and the off-site provision providers.
- Inspectors took account of the 10 responses available on the online Parent View questionnaire, and considered the school's own survey of the views of parents and carers. In addition, they took account of the responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its improvement plans, records and analyses of students' behaviour. The inspectors also looked at the tracking of students' progress and a range of students' work, interviewing some students about their learning. They scrutinised attendance figures, documentation and evidence of safeguarding measures. Information for parents and carers was also reviewed from the school website.

Inspection team

Ray Lau, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Howard Lay

Additional Inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional Inspector

Adam Mirams

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A large majority of these students speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. This is additional funding provided to the school for students known to be eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority.
- A few students are disabled or have special educational needs. This is below average compared with other schools. Ten students currently have a statement of special educational needs.
- Four students are educated in alternative off-site provision. These students are educated at Springboard and Hillingdon Tuition Centre. Given the very small numbers, the specific outcomes for these students are not reported upon.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for achievement and progress at the end of Year 11. Early entry to examinations is not used.
- The school provides a specialist resource provision for physical disability that caters for up to seven students.
- The school has a very high proportion of students who enter and leave the school at different times of the academic year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement so that both are outstanding by:
 - all students, and especially the most able, are provided with work that consistently challenges them
 - students' work is marked rigorously in all subjects and gives specific information on what students must do to improve
 - students have time to act upon the oral and written feedback given by teachers
- Improve attendance, so that this is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has provided strong and decisive leadership. She has worked in partnership with the senior leadership team to rapidly improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and use the information to sharply focus on key areas for development.
- Leaders have ensured that the arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Checks made on the suitability of staff are robust.
- The leadership of teaching is good. This has resulted in consistently effective teaching across almost all subject areas. There is a strong programme of professional development. Teachers comment positively on the number of opportunities for enhancing their knowledge and skills. The school uses mentoring and coaching support well to develop the good practice of teachers.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged students which the school receives is spent prudently on extra staff, to lower class sizes and to provide extra support for eligible students. As a result, their achievement is good.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity for different groups of students through robust and accurate checks on their performance. These are undertaken regularly to ensure all students make at least good progress.
- Subject leaders accurately monitor the quality of learning and students' achievement within their areas of responsibility.
- Despite facing some challenges in recruiting high quality staff in a few subject areas, the school is making concerted efforts to improve the quality of teaching through a range of creative means. For example, the school has strengthened links with initial teacher training providers to create opportunities for the potential recruitment of new teachers.
- Leaders effectively monitor the progress and attendance of learners attending alternative provision, through regular visits to the providers.
- The effective leadership of the resource provision ensures that students are well supervised. Staff carefully monitor and track students' progress.
- The local authority has provided useful support in monitoring the school's quality of teaching and has reviewed aspects of leadership and management. This has provided valuable external moderation of judgements and has contributed successfully to the improvements seen in the quality of teaching and leadership.
- The subjects that students study across the school are broad and balanced. There is a range of enrichment activities that effectively support and develop students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The level of respect and tolerance for others is high, contributing effectively to a climate where discrimination is not tolerated. This is a key strength of the school.
- There is a high uptake in, and enjoyment of, sporting and artistic activities. As a result, students are aware of how to keep themselves healthy and are proud to participate in many activities that promote their well-being.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain through a range of assemblies and planned activities. For example, students debate a range of topics in personal, social and health education.
- As a result of good quality advice and guidance, students are well prepared for the next stages of their education and future careers. Many students go on to university.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, the governing body has become much sharper in challenging and holding school leaders to account for students' achievement. For example, it has held them accountable for the performance of students and the quality of teaching in mathematics. The governors are well informed and know how well different groups of learners achieve.
 - Governors discharge their statutory duties effectively and are knowledgeable about how teachers' performance is managed. They ensure that pay progression is not automatic. They hold school leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, and check that decisive action is taken in the few instances when performance falls below expectations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students, including those in the resource provision, are proud to be part of the school and they are positive and ambitious for the future. Students make significant contributions to the running of the school. The arts and sports leaders host, run and organise a number of different events that strengthen students' social and cultural skills. The senior student leadership team actively supports the work of the school, including organising events to raise money for charities.
- In most lessons, students behave well and respond positively to the activities that are provided. In a Year 8 dance lesson, students were learning to 'hand jive' and were given opportunities to make up their own moves to a section of the music. This enabled students to explore and develop their learning with interest and enthusiasm.
- While students work well and show good attitudes to learning, they do not always demonstrate a strong desire to extend their learning further. Very occasionally, where the learning is not sufficiently challenging, they become less interested. Students studying off-site enjoy their learning, and behave and attend well.
- Students are punctual to lessons and wear their uniform with pride. Generally, their work is presented neatly and to a good standard. Very occasionally, where students are not fully motivated, there are examples of poor presentation in their books.
- Despite the school's efforts and targeted work with families that are hard to reach, attendance levels remain just below the national average. The school is taking further action to improve students' engagement by improving further the quality of teaching to encourage students to attend more regularly.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. There are comprehensive steps taken to ensure that entry to the school building is secure and restricted. Appropriate documentation is suitably completed for trips and other external visits.
- Students are aware of the different types of bullying and acknowledge that when an incident occurs, they are comfortable in reporting this. This also includes those in the resource provision. Any incidents are swiftly dealt with by the school to ensure students' safety. Students are aware of the dangers of the internet and social media.
- Students are encouraged to report the use of racist language or derogatory words that could offend other students; leaders take prompt action to address this.
- The subjects that students study, including personal, social and health education, ensure that they adopt safe practices. For example, they demonstrate a wide range of knowledge when cooking food. Students are aware of different types of safe and unsafe situations. They follow the school's guidelines and advice about how to protect themselves.

The quality of teaching is good

- Much of the teaching in literacy, reading and mathematics and many other subjects is now good, representing clear improvement since the previous inspection. The impact of teaching on learning in the resource provision is also good. Teachers know the students' prior levels of knowledge and skills well. They use this information well to plan suitable activities. Most students understand what they are learning which contributes to their good progress.
- Strong relationships exist between the teacher and students which supports well students' enjoyment of their learning. There is effective use of skilful questioning. Where students do not understand the task, teachers act swiftly and re-shape the tasks, so that the students learn more quickly.
- The teaching of literacy is a key strength of the school. Students' speaking and listening and writing skills are well-developed. The use of subject specific key words are effectively promoted. In a Year 10 music lesson seen during the inspection, students used music vocabulary with confidence and applied this well to improve their performance.
- Students enjoy reading and read a range of different books for information as well as for enjoyment.
- The school is becoming increasingly successful in improving the quality of teaching in mathematics, which historically has been less strong than in some other subjects, including English. Teachers are now using many suitable resources to help students learn and apply their knowledge of mathematical concepts. In Year 11 mathematics lessons, students' commitment and hard work has enabled them to develop and

apply their calculation skills particularly well.

- Teaching is not outstanding because there is not enough exemplary practice across all subjects. Sometimes, where teaching is not as strong, some of the most able students, in particular, are not challenged enough.
- While there are examples of effective marking, feedback and assessment of students' work, there is variability within some subject areas and across the school. While many students act upon the feedback provided by the teacher, this is not consistent across all subjects.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school with attainment levels that are well below average. They make good progress across most subjects, including English, science, the humanities and languages
- The proportion of students achieving well in English is consistently high. Achievement in mathematics is not as strong, although the rates of progress for most groups is similar to that for all students nationally.
- Disadvantaged students make at least good progress across almost all subjects; their progress is especially rapid in English. The gap in students' attainment in English when compared both to other students in the school and other students nationally is approximately one half of a grade. However, the gaps in mathematics both in the school and nationally, are wider, at least one grade. The school continues to take decisive action to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics, which has resulted in the gaps closing, particularly in Key Stage 3 and 4.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are in the specialist resource unit, is good. This is a result of well-targeted support provided by staff and a range of strategies that enable students to develop their skills effectively.
- Students who enter the school at different times during the admission year make good progress. Students who are in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the highly effective support that they receive.
- Boys achieve as well as girls. However, in 2014, the progress of a small minority of girls in mathematics was uneven. The inspection team carefully reviewed the current achievement of students in mathematics from a wide range of sources. The evidence suggests that current students are on track to make good progress.
- The most able students generally make similar progress to their peers. However, sometimes, the most able students are not consistently challenged.

The sixth form is good

- Students enter the sixth form with well below average starting points. They make good progress over time.
- In a Year 13 photography lesson, students' work demonstrated high levels of achievement, in which students' excellent work was presented in a highly creative way. Students were able to discuss the influences of different artists in enabling them to develop their ideas for their final project.
- The quality of teaching is good. Students are provided with opportunities to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding to consolidate their learning. As a result of better teaching than in the past, they are making good progress.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They say that they feel safe. Students participate in a range of leadership roles, including supporting younger students with their reading. They take pride in their work. In a Year 13 textiles lesson, students enthusiastically presented their high quality portfolios of independent work.
- Leaders of the sixth form sharply monitor the performance of students, and make improvements to the quality of teaching. They are working well with subject leaders to raise the achievement of individuals.
- There was a dip in performance in 2014, where staffing issues adversely affected psychology and mathematics. However, the current information on students' achievement indicates that they are making good progress across the school in both AS- and A-level subjects.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	102451
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	453652

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	1046
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cathy Mosdell
Headteacher	Elizabeth Horrigan
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 February 2013
Telephone number	020 8569 1610
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