

Inspection of Harris Academy Falconwood

The Green, Welling, Kent DA16 2PE

Inspection dates: 16–17 October 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well mannered and considerate. They told us how, when new to the school, they made friends quickly. Pupils feel safe in the school because there are plenty of staff around to help them. Bullying does not happen often here and, if it does, pupils are confident that the adults will sort things out.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and are ambitious for their academic achievement. We found that pupils are insightful. They expressed their views confidently and have clear ideas about what helps them to learn well. Pupils value their education and the fact that teachers give them extra help with their work, especially at examination times. Pupils attend school very regularly. They arrive on time to school and to lessons. Pupils are keen to learn about the next steps in their education and for life in the world beyond school.

There are lots of interesting and exciting activities and clubs on offer, especially for younger pupils, including trampolining, cookery, trips to museums and sports events. However, pupils do not benefit as much as they should because not as many pupils take up these opportunities as leaders intend.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils achieve well in a broad range of subjects. Over the last three years, an increasing number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 study a modern foreign language, as well as mathematics, English, science and history or geography. This leads to an increasing proportion gaining the English Baccalaureate qualification each year. In the 2017/18 academic year, leaders entered pupils in Year 11 for the English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualification to gain GCSE examination practice and improve pupils' literacy skills. Since then, no pupils have been entered for this qualification.

In the past, pupils began their GCSE courses in Year 9. Leaders have redesigned the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 so that pupils study a wide range of subjects over the whole of key stage 3. Currently, there remain limited opportunities for pupils to study some subjects, for example music and computer science, in the same depth as other subjects after Year 8. Leaders ensure that pupils gain sufficient experience of these subjects and provide pupils with a broad curriculum in key stage 3. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to pursue interests and talents, and learn more in music and computer science, higher up the school. Leaders have already taken steps to address this to ensure that pupils can build their knowledge in all subjects in Years 7 to 11 in the future.

Leaders organise an extensive range of high-quality educational outings for older pupils, including students in the sixth form. These are usually linked to the subjects that pupils are studying. Pupils' wider experiences beyond their academic studies are limited.

Leaders have carefully planned what they want pupils to learn, and when, in all subjects. Teachers are beginning to use these plans well. When they do, pupils recognise that what they learn builds on their work from earlier lessons and previous years. Teachers give pupils useful advice to help them to learn and remember key facts. Pupils are motivated and enthused by learning more and applying their knowledge. This is particularly the case in the sixth form. However, where leaders' plans are not followed, pupils find work difficult because they do not have prior knowledge to help them to understand new concepts. As a result, sometimes, pupils' attitudes to their work become less positive than is usually the case. Pupils become distracted and time in lessons is wasted.

Well-trained staff skilfully meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify how best to support pupils with SEND and help them to achieve well. Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged receive the extra help they need to study the same range of subjects as others.

Leaders have a well-established and well-organised programme to support pupils' personal development. Teachers encourage pupils' personal and social skills and their understanding of topics, including healthy lifestyles, financial management, democracy and e-safety. This programme encourages pupils to develop skills and knowledge about the world of work. Some pupils and students in the sixth form told us that the school's careers advice and guidance have not been particularly helpful. They have not felt confident when making decisions about their next steps in education or employment. In the past, this has meant that some pupils have left the school at the end of Year 12 because the courses that they had started were not the best ones for them. Recently, leaders have increased the opportunities that pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 have to find out about courses on offer and the qualifications they need for a wide range of careers. The proportion of students leaving the sixth form at the end of Year 12 in 2019 decreased considerably compared with 2018.

Leaders know how well subjects are taught across the school and where improvements are needed. They meet regularly with the team of teachers who teach the same subject. Subject leaders make sure that teachers know how subjects should be taught and provide teachers with professional development, support and training. Leaders draw upon support from the trust, for example to help non-specialist teachers to develop their knowledge of the subjects that they teach.

Surveys carried out by the school indicate that staff feel that leaders take their well-being into account. Leaders have taken steps to help staff to manage the pressures of high workload. They recognise this as an ongoing priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are familiar with current safeguarding issues and are alert to risks that pupils might face in their everyday lives. Pupils feel safe and know who to go to if they need help. The safeguarding and pastoral teams are well trained and take effective

action when staff or pupils raise concerns. They work closely with outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being when needed. Leaders, including governors, take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They ensure that the required checks are made on all staff and that record-keeping is well organised.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have newly revised, well-designed and ambitious plans for the school's curriculum offer. The extent to which these plans are put into practice varies within and between departments. Leaders need to ensure that teachers teach the key content that leaders want pupils to learn and remember in each subject.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils in all year groups participate in a wide range of activities and clubs to broaden their outlook and experiences.
- Some pupils told us that they did not feel well prepared to make choices about the next steps in their education, including when making study choices for the sixth form. Leaders need to enhance the careers education programme so that pupils are helped to make well-informed decisions about their subject and pathway choices at key stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- The transition arrangements were taken into account on this inspection. Leaders have newly revised curriculum plans for all subjects taught in the school. It is clear from the actions leaders have already taken that they are in the process of bringing about the effective implementation of their plans for music and computing.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	135677
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10110504
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,204
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	228
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Steve Ward
Principal	Terrie Askew
Website	www.harrisfalconwood.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school has not undergone any significant changes since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was concerned about the effectiveness of leadership and management in the school and, in particular, the number of pupils entered for the ESOL qualification in Year 11 in 2018, compared with the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language in that year. The inspection also considered the high proportion of pupils who left the school at the end of Year 12 in 2018.
- We held meetings with school leaders, including the deputy chief executive officer,

groups of staff and groups of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of governors.

- We visited lessons, often accompanied by school leaders, in a wide range of subjects. We looked at pupils' work and discussed it with them.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its work, subject planning and records of pupils' attendance and behaviour. We also considered the school's own surveys of staff views.
- We observed pupils' attitudes and behaviour in classrooms and around the school, including at breaktime and lunchtime. We held conversations with pupils and staff around the school. One inspector attended an assembly.
- We met with leaders who have responsibility for safeguarding and looked at the school's systems for recording safeguarding information.
- The subjects we focused deeply on were English, art, history, science and modern foreign languages.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jude Wilson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pamela Fearnley	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Murray-Hudson	Ofsted Inspector
James Whiting	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019