

# Inspection of Harris Garrard Academy

Yarnton Way, Thamesmead, Erith, Kent DA18 4DW

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 November 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders and governors have very high expectations of what pupils will achieve. They are determined that all pupils will leave the school with the knowledge that they need to succeed in life. Everything that staff, governors and leaders do is based around this vision.

Pupils enjoy school. In the primary phase, pupils are especially enthusiastic about their learning and are proud of what they know and can do.

Pupils know the school's routines and expectations for their behaviour. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff deal with it quickly.

Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Leaders encourage pupils to be independent, to take on responsibilities and to treat everyone equally. Pupils said that staff help them to feel safe and that there is an adult in the school they can talk to if they need any help. Pupils are appreciative that staff are present at the gates and around the local area at the end of each school day.

Leaders create opportunities for pupils in different year groups to work together. For example, sixth-form students support the primary choir, help staff to supervise breaktimes and act as mentors for pupils lower down the school. This means that pupils in different areas of the school are part of one community.

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

Pupils in all year groups follow an ambitious curriculum. Leaders have planned the curriculum so that pupils' learning builds over time. For example, in history, concepts such as empire and power are taught in the primary school and then developed further in the secondary school and sixth form. This involves teachers from the primary and secondary phases working together. Students in the sixth form can choose from a range of academic and vocational qualifications to suit their interests and future ambitions. Leaders have appropriately adjusted the curriculum to address knowledge gaps caused by the impact of COVID-19.

Teachers across the school have strong subject knowledge. Almost all teachers in the sixth form are subject specialists. Throughout the school, teachers are given the necessary support to develop their subject knowledge. Often, this involves teachers working with subject consultants from the Harris Federation.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is positive. When this is not the case, leaders support staff to address it. Teachers present new content clearly, and regularly help pupils to remember key learning. That said, not all teachers routinely check what pupils have learned. This means that sometimes pupils do not get the feedback that they need to address mistakes or misconceptions.

Pupils develop knowledge in the subjects that they are studying. For example, students in the sixth form talked confidently about the sociological theories that they have learned this term. The work that most pupils produce matches what leaders intended them to learn. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the full curriculum because of the support that they receive. For example, staff often break down complex tasks for pupils with SEND to make learning easier.

Leaders and staff are passionate about the importance of early reading. There is a clear programme in place to develop pupils' knowledge of phonics in the early years and Years 1 and 2. This includes making sure that children read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Staff teach reading in a way that excites and motivates pupils. Children's success is celebrated. However, children in Reception and Year 1 do not routinely have enough time to practise what they have just learned. This means that some children struggle to complete tasks or sound out previously learned sounds. Leaders have identified this as an area for development. They have recently put in place a programme of training and support to address this area. Staff value this support.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme has been carefully planned by leaders to build pupils' knowledge over time. This starts in the early years and is focused on developing key character traits. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught about important areas such as healthy relationships and bullying. Pupils across the school value what they are taught about these areas. Staff continually review the PSHE programme to make sure that it reflects the current needs of pupils.

Pupils are taught and encouraged to think about careers throughout their time at school. In the primary school, pupils get useful information about possible careers. Students in the sixth form receive one-to-one careers advice and guidance. Students typically find this helpful when making informed decisions about what to do when they finish school. Leaders create opportunities for pupils to meet local employers and visit colleges.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities beyond the PSHE curriculum for their wider personal development. This includes students in the sixth form taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and/or the extended project qualification. Pupils lower down the school benefit from a range of after-school and lunchtime clubs. Leaders ensure that these cater for a wide range of interests, including gardening and football.

Leaders and governors have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and development priorities. They are not complacent, and strive to be the best they can be. For example, despite already taking steps to support the staff's well-being and workload, leaders have rightly evaluated that there is more work to do here. The trust provides valuable training for governors. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are clear systems in place that staff use to report any safeguarding concerns. These are followed up quickly with appropriate actions by the safeguarding team.

Leaders from different parts of the school meet regularly so that they can share information and identify pupils who may need additional help. Governors play an important role in making sure that pupils are kept safe.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They are taught about risks that they may face. This includes pupils knowing how to keep safe online and how to look after their mental health and well-being.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some teachers do not routinely check pupils' learning. This means that some pupils do not get the feedback that they need. Leaders should ensure that all teachers check what pupils have learned so that they can provide clear feedback to address mistakes or misconceptions.
- When teaching early reading, staff sometimes move on too quickly. This means that some children do not have enough time to practise and remember the sounds that they are learning. Leaders should ensure that children have enough time to practise what they are learning so that it becomes fluent and is not forgotten.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145140
<b>Local authority</b>	Bexley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10203354
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1433
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	65
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Beverley Johnston
<b>Principal</b>	Chris Everitt (Executive Principal)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.harrisgarrard.org.uk">www.harrisgarrard.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Harris Garrard Academy converted to become an academy school in September 2017. When its predecessor school, The Business Academy Bexley, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school uses four registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, senior leaders and subject leaders. They also met with the chair of the governing body and senior leaders from the Harris Federation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, history, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons and spoke to leaders about the PSHE (character and mindfulness) curriculum.
- Inspectors held meetings with pupils, a range of staff and leaders to discuss the schools' safeguarding arrangements. They also looked at pre-employment checks and other records relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff (including early career teachers) about their well-being, workload and professional development. They considered the responses to the Ofsted staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups. They also considered the pupils' responses to the online pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, and held phone calls with a small number of parents.

## Inspection team

Jasper Green, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Brian Simber	Ofsted Inspector
James Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Hudson	Ofsted Inspector
Jan Shadick	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Pratt	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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