

Inspection of Harris Academy South Norwood

Cumberlow Avenue, London SE25 6AE

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 May 2022

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

This school was last inspected 12 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are focused on developing pupils as scholars, citizens and ambassadors. They have high expectations of pupils, and these are usually met. Pupils are respectful to each other. They enjoy learning and the enrichment opportunities that the school provides. For example, pupils involved in the school production are excited about the upcoming performance of 'Hairspray'. Sixth-form students are exemplary role models in the school community. Some hold student leadership responsibilities.

Pupils are safe and feel safe in the school. They are confident approaching staff if they need help. Pupils say that any bullying is taken seriously, and staff act swiftly when it is reported. Working relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils are almost always well engaged in their lessons. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum helps pupils to learn how to be safe and healthy.

Leaders have given careful thought and consideration to the curriculum that pupils study. This means that when lessons are well taught, pupils achieve well. Pupils are ambitious for the future and value their education. They appreciate the guidance they get for careers. For example, selected pupils in Year 7 visited the University of Oxford to widen their experiences in mathematics and science.

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

Leaders are developing an ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders take clear consideration of what pupils have studied previously and then build on this knowledge over time. As a result, most of the curriculum is well sequenced and enables pupils to know and remember more. Leaders introduced design and technology two years ago. Practical work was initially limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, this is the first academic year where pupils are receiving a full curriculum for design and technology. Leaders have invested to ensure that this subject will have the resources necessary for pupils to complete all aspects of the curriculum. Sixth-form students receive access to a broad range of subjects to study, and complete appropriate qualifications.

Typically, pupils speak confidently about their learning. They can link this to what they studied previously. For example, in history, pupils were drawing on their knowledge of the Normans, the Crusades and the Golden Age and applying this to their new learning on Islamic History. In Year 13, students studying English are able to use detailed and subject-specific vocabulary appropriately. Students show a clear and confident understanding of what they are studying.

Subject leaders have reviewed what they are teaching in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They have adapted plans to identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders have a clear approach to assessment. These routines are well established and used consistently in most lessons. However, in a small number of

lessons, where teaching is not as strong, pupils' learning is not checked routinely. This means that misunderstandings are not swiftly identified by teachers. In turn, this leads to some pupils becoming less engaged in their learning.

Sixth-form students receive specific and clear feedback. Teachers' use of careful questioning addresses any misconceptions and helps students consolidate their understanding. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, and use this to help students confidently debate and discuss their learning. This consolidates their understanding. For example, Year 13 physics students have developed a clear understanding of how to complete relevant problems over time. Students are confident in modelling the solving of complex calculations to their peers.

Sixth-form students show exemplary attitudes to their learning. They share leaders' ambitions for their future and are well prepared for their next steps. A significant proportion of pupils are supported to go on to university. Students are well guided through the application process. Appropriate provision is given for those who wish to take alternative pathways.

Newly arrived pupils receive extra help with reading, if required. Careful thought has gone into planning and providing this support, to help pupils gain the knowledge they need. Leaders have established clear routines to identify the special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of pupils. Teachers are well aware of the strategies needed to support pupils with SEND and with lower reading ages.

Pupils have opportunities to take part in a wide range of clubs and experiences. They are encouraged to take part in a broad range of enrichment activities, such as cookery club, tai chi, drama and coding club. About two thirds of pupils in the younger years attend. Pupils with SEND are supported to develop skills they will need later in life. Pupils receive clearly messaged PSHE lessons. These meet all statutory requirements for relationship and sex education and health education. These lessons have been developed to meet the needs of pupils. Leaders are responsive to contextual issues as they arise, for example mental health needs.

Teachers appreciate the way that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They appreciate the professional development opportunities created for them, and value this training. This includes subject-specific curriculum guidance. Leaders at all levels are well supported by the federation.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers are aware of the clearly established routines to report safeguarding concerns. The safeguarding team is visible to all. Pupils are confident that they would go to these staff for help if needed. Pupils are aware of who these staff are. Careful consideration has been given to pupils' contextual safeguarding needs. Leaders work well with appropriate external agencies.

Pupils receive well-planned relationships and sex education and health education. This takes into context a range of content, including understanding about harmful sexual behaviours and mental health. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is used by most teachers to gauge what pupils know and understand. However, where teaching is not as strong, these strategies are not used as effectively. In these circumstances, pupils are not as clear about what they are learning, and some become disengaged. Leaders must ensure that all teachers address misconceptions swiftly and effectively so that pupils, including those with SEND, understand what they are required to do.

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

Unique reference number	135249
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10232854
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2183
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	425
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sir Dan Moynihan
Principal	Rob Hitch
Website	www.harrissouthnorwood.org.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses three alternative providers.
- The school is split into two separate sites. Each site has its own leadership of subject areas and senior leaders. With some small exceptions, pupils and teachers stay on the same site.
- 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 leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Leaders spoke with the executive principal, the principals at both school sites, senior leaders at both school sites and those responsible for safeguarding at both school sites. Middle leaders from both sites were spoken to. Some of these meetings were conducted with leaders present in person, and in others they were present online.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, design and technology, English, history, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with those responsible for safeguarding, scrutinised relevant documentation and spoke with pupils. They also communicated with the local authority designated officer.
- All inspectors visited both sites of the school.

Inspection team

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Lascelles Haughton	Her Majesty's Inspector
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