

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Harris Academy Beckenham

Manor Way, Beckenham, Kent BR3 3SJ

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 May 2023

## **Outcome**

Harris Academy Beckenham continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils receive an exceptional education. They have built a strong academic ethos around the school's values. This helps pupils to be resilient and highly reflective. Pupils are hardworking and polite. They are happy, highly articulate and enthusiastic about their learning.

Leaders have extremely high expectations for what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy the challenges that staff provide and strive to do their best.

The behaviour of pupils is exemplary both in lessons and around the school site. Pupils are kind towards each other. Teachers keep them safe. All pupils have trusted adults to talk to if they have any concerns.

Pupils have access to a broad range of wider activities in the school. These include various sports and music clubs, a robotics club and 'library leaders'. Staff encourage pupils to develop their character through the 'student character challenges'. This programme helps pupils to take part in a range of activities to contribute to the school and wider community. These include donating to a foodbank and creating something that inspires others.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is broad and balanced. Pupils can study a wide range of subjects. This includes the choice of studying Mandarin as their modern foreign language. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that pupils build knowledge progressively over time. Teachers have very strong subject knowledge and expertise. They ensure that pupils build and retain knowledge deeply across subjects over time.

Teachers present information clearly. They use a variety of strategies to check pupils' understanding effectively. They address any misconceptions in pupils' understanding swiftly. This means pupils are fully ready for new content.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND quickly. They train staff to ensure that they provide highly effective support for these pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve the aims of the curriculum successfully.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who struggle with reading. They identify pupils' specific needs and put in place bespoke support. This includes sixth-form students mentoring younger pupils to improve their reading fluency. Staff help pupils to develop in their reading confidence rapidly. All pupils in the school read high-quality and wide-ranging texts regularly. Staff encourage pupils to read non-fiction and academic articles.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are extremely positive. Pupils are focused and purposeful during lessons, producing high-quality work. Staff ensure that lessons continue uninterrupted through their high expectations of behaviour and by building positive relationships with pupils.

Leaders have developed a comprehensive and well-sequenced personal development programme. This includes ethics lessons, tutor periods, assemblies and 'character development days'. Teachers support pupils to gain a firm understanding of a range of topics, for example how to stay safe online and healthy relationships. Leaders have a deep understanding of individual pupils. They ensure that they personalise sessions for pupils so that they understand how to keep safe and healthy. All students in the sixth form take part in enrichment days to broaden their experiences, including in sports and volunteering.

All pupils have access to a range of wider opportunities, including a variety of trips. Pupils attend outings to theatres and museums and take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. External organisations and speakers regularly visit the school, including a Shakespeare company and representatives from a variety of employers.

Leaders provide pupils with highly effective careers advice and guidance. Pupils take part in a range of activities, including employability skills workshops. All pupils receive independent careers advice and guidance during their time at the school. Students in the sixth form benefit from high-quality guidance for applications to post-18 options. They receive regular talks from universities and apprenticeship providers. Students also receive bespoke training and support if they are applying to specialist courses or universities.

Leaders look after the health and welfare of staff. They manage staff's workload, which helps staff to feel valued. Leaders have developed a highly effective professional development programme. They review the impact of this regularly to ensure it leads to sustained and continuous improvement in the quality of education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are well trained and understand how to identify and report concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies to provide specialist support for pupils.

Leaders have carefully considered how to teach pupils about keeping safe throughout the curriculum. They ensure that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of consent, for example. Pupils are taught about healthy relationships and personal safety.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in June 2017.

## 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.

## 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>	137121
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268009
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 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>	1,183
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	173
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Lord Harris of Peckham
<b>Principal</b>	Ciara Warnock
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.harrisbeckenham.org.uk">www.harrisbeckenham.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, school leaders, pupils and a range of staff. They also met with the chair of the local governing body and the secondary director of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, history, music and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, discussed with pupils about their learning and considered samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke with those responsible for safeguarding, along with pupils and staff. Inspectors reviewed the record of pre-employment checks and other relevant documentation.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through the responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Simon Conway, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Olivia Page

Ofsted Inspector

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