

Inspection of an outstanding school: Harris Academy Battersea

401 Battersea Park Road, London SW11 5AP

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 October 2023

Outcome

Harris Academy Battersea continues to be an outstanding school.

The head of this school is Charlie Comerford. This school is part of the Harris Federation, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Daniel Moynihan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Harris of Peckham. There is also an executive principal, Peter Groves, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders ensure that all pupils in the school can excel by providing an exceptionally high quality of education. This includes excellent support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This ensures all pupils achieve very highly.

Pupils work hard during lessons and contribute positively to the school community. They are articulate, kind and enthusiastic to learn. Leaders support pupils to have high aspirations for themselves.

Behaviour in the school is very strong. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning during lessons. They contribute to a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school site. Staff know the pupils extremely well. This ensures all pupils are safe and happy in school.

Leaders make sure that pupils have regular and high-quality enrichment experiences. Pupils can choose from a range of activities, including sports and music clubs, sewing and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Pupils can develop leadership skills by taking part in the school council and student working parties. In the sixth form, students are trained to be reading mentors for younger pupils. Year 13 students also take the role of 'big brother or sister' for new students when they start Year 12.

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

Leaders have developed a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils. It is designed to build on knowledge over time progressively. For example, in Year 8 history, pupils gain an

understanding of the monarchy, parliament and democracy. In Year 9, pupils build on this understanding, learning about civil rights and how people had to strive for democratic rights.

Teachers consistently demonstrate strong subject knowledge. They present information clearly during lessons. Leaders ensure all staff are highly skilled at making adaptations so that all pupils, including pupils with SEND, can access the curriculum successfully. Teachers are highly skilled at checking for, and addressing, misconceptions. They assess pupils' understanding regularly and intervene swiftly if they require further support.

Teachers have high expectations of the work that pupils produce. Pupils meet these expectations with consistently high-quality work. They can clearly articulate what they are learning and use subject-specific vocabulary confidently. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education and move on to aspirational and well-suited destinations.

Staff swiftly identify pupils who may struggle to read. They identify pupils' individual needs and put in place bespoke support quickly. This ensures pupils make rapid improvements in their fluency and confidence in reading. All pupils in the school read a range of fiction and non-fiction texts every day. Authors make visits to the school and there are a range of strategies, competitions and rewards schemes to promote a love of reading. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND receive strong support in their reading.

Systems to manage pupils' behaviour are clear and consistently applied. The rewards system is extremely popular with pupils, who strive to be awarded positive points. Leaders make sure that pupils' attendance is high. They have robust procedures in place to enable pupils to attend regularly.

Leaders have planned a comprehensive personal development programme. They have carefully considered the pupils' needs in the school when designing the curriculum. This ensures pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy. Leaders assess and closely monitor pupils' understanding of topics covered. They identify pupils who require extra support and have links with a wide range of external agencies to provide personalised support.

All pupils can attend a range of trips each year to develop their cultural experiences. These include trips to the theatre, museums and a poetry competition. Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND are fully included in wider opportunities.

Pupils all access high-quality careers advice and guidance. Leaders have built links with a range of employers to provide opportunities for pupils. A variety of external speakers come to the school to discuss future careers options. These include lawyers, civil servants and journalists. Students in the sixth form receive bespoke guidance to support their future education and employment.

Leaders look after the health and welfare of staff. They are conscious of the pressures of workload and explore strategies to minimise this where possible. The trust provides very strong support for leaders and staff to ensure that standards remain high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 February 2018.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140985
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10290262
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	936
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	158
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lord Harris of Peckham
CEO of the trust	Daniel Moynihan
Principal	Peter Groves (Executive Principal) Charlie Comerford (Head of Academy)
Website	www.harrisbattersea.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 January and 1 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses four alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, members of the senior leadership team and a range of staff. They also met with a member of the governing body and board of trustees and a representative from the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: art, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, had discussions with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Simon Conway, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Bromfield

Ofsted Inspector

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