

# Inspection of a good school: Harlington School

Pinkwell Lane, Harlington, Hayes UB3 1PB

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Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

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

Pupils enjoy being part of Harlington. They describe it as a diverse community and that well-being is at its heart. Pupils like celebrating their heritage through events such as the annual 'culture day'. They have opportunities to represent the school through various sports, including badminton, basketball and football. Older pupils are given opportunities to develop their leadership by being members of the student council, and through volunteering at the breakfast club.

Pupils feel safe and are kept safe in school. This is because they are confident to speak to trusted adults when concerns arise. Bullying is rare and pupils feel that adults are generally good at tackling this when it occurs. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons because expectations are clearly understood. However, this is not always the case in the corridors and around the school, where some pupils are not always as considerate and sensible.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. In many subjects these are realised. However, in others, the knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn come secondary to the activities that are chosen. This means that, in some subjects, pupils do not build up a secure grasp of important knowledge over time.

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

Pupils study a broad curriculum in line with what is expected nationally. Leaders are making necessary changes to the curriculum. In some subjects, they have mapped out the important knowledge they want pupils to learn. Leaders have also made sure that staff receive regular training to develop and sustain their subject expertise. As a result, in these subjects, the curriculum content is well sequenced so that learning builds on what has come before. For example, in physics, students in Year 12 could draw on their prior understanding of resultant forces to help them work out the conditions for equilibrium.

Similarly, in English, pupils could discuss Macbeth's character by drawing on their previous understanding of representations of Othello as a tragic hero.

However, in some subjects, the curriculum focuses more on activities rather than the content that leaders want pupils to remember. Often, teaching choices do not prioritise the key building blocks of the subject that are needed for future success. This means that pupils struggle to recall the most important concepts and ideas. The weaknesses in curriculum design also mean it is harder for teachers to check what has been understood. As a result, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not develop as deep a body of knowledge in these subjects.

Leaders have an established programme in place to help those pupils who need to catch up in reading. This helps most pupils read with greater fluency and confidence over time. Pupils at the earlier stages of speaking English as an additional language also receive well-targeted support to read with increasing accuracy. Staff receive appropriate guidance to help them make suitable adjustments to support these pupils.

Pupils and students with SEND benefit from individualised support in the specialist provisions. This is because staff receive appropriate training, and this helps pupils to access important curriculum content.

Leaders have recently put in place a curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) to help pupils understand important issues such as online safety, consent and puberty. Pupils learn about British values, including tolerance, in PSHE and assemblies. Pupils, including those with SEND, receive tailored careers advice and guidance. This includes focus days on specific professions and careers fairs. Pupils benefit from regular visits from apprenticeship providers, so that they become familiar with training and employment options in the local area.

Leaders have recently put in place strategies to help staff to better manage pupils' behaviour. Pupils' interactions with peers and adults are generally courteous and respectful. Pupils understand what bullying is and how to report any concerns should they arise. They trust that adults will listen to them when they speak up. Pupils typically behave well in lessons. However, the behaviour of some pupils around the school is less positive and staff are getting to grips with the new behaviour policies to manage this consistently.

Although there are some mixed views, staff typically feel supported in their roles. This is especially true of early career teachers who appreciate the protected time they are given for training. Governors understand their role and review aspects of the school's work. However, in places, the oversight and review of safeguarding, behaviour and attendance procedures has not been rigorous or urgent enough.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of safeguarding at the school, and pupils are safe here. Leaders and staff are well trained to recognise signs of potential harm. Any concerns are swiftly reported. Leaders work well with outside agencies to ensure pupils and their families receive the help they need. The curriculum has been designed to help pupils, including students in the sixth form, understand how to stay safe, including when online. Leaders ensure that the right pre-employment checks are made and recorded.

However, those responsible for leadership and governance have not maintained sufficient oversight of some administrative aspects surrounding safeguarding and attendance. Because of this, insufficient safeguarding checks have been made on pupils attending alternative provision or learning off site. These issues were resolved before the end of the inspection.

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

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

- Insufficient safeguarding and welfare checks are made on pupils attending alternative providers or learning off site. This limits leaders' oversight of these pupils. The school needs to ensure that sufficient checks are made on these pupils so that they attend well and attain the school's ambitions for them.
- In some subjects, the curriculum does not prioritise the key concepts that leaders want pupils to remember over time. This makes it more difficult for teachers to check for understanding and to address misconceptions when they arise. The school needs to ensure that key concepts are identified and taught with precision. Activities should also match the ambition of the curriculum and address pupils' misconceptions when they arise.
- The policies for behaviour are newly introduced and not applied consistently. As a result, some incidents of poor behaviour go unchallenged, and pupils have mixed views about how well behaviour is managed. The school should ensure that the agreed behaviour policy is consistently applied, and that staff, parents and pupils understand how incidents have been followed up.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2015.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102451
<b>Local authority</b>	Hillingdon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289845
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<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>	1,323
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Catherine Mosdell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Antonio D’Onofrio
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.harlingtonschool.org">www.harlingtonschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school has specialist provision for pupils with physical disabilities. It also has a designated unit for pupils with autism.
- The school makes use of three alternative providers. One of these is an unregistered provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, early career teachers, and governors.
- An inspector spoke with the local authority school improvement partner and to leaders at one of the alternative providers.
- The inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: English, history, science, physical education and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of behaviour and attitudes, inspectors evaluated the school's analysis of, and response to, pupils' behaviour over time; observed pupils' behaviour in classes, at breaktimes and between lessons; and gathered the views of pupils, parents and staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks; 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.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation provided by leaders, including their priorities for improvement.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

Matea Marcinko, lead inspector

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