

# Haverstock School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100049
<b>Local Authority</b>	Camden
<b>Inspection number</b>	307286
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bill Stoneham

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1234
Sixth form	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Mulligan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J Dowd
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	24 Haverstock Hill London NW3 2BQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7267 0975
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7267 3807

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Haverstock School is a larger than average school with nearly twice as many boys than girls attending. It has an average sized, but growing sixth form. It is located in an ethnically and culturally mixed area of North London. Though fringed by some areas of considerable affluence and large houses, the students come from a wide range of backgrounds and the socio-economic context of the school shows pockets of significant deprivation. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is well above average. Well over half of the students are members of minority groups, with many having a first language other than English, though few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is approximately twice the national average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. The school also caters for a mobile population.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Haverstock School offers its students a good education. There are some outstanding features especially in its curriculum, in the care guidance and support offered and in the way equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled. The school has made significant improvements since its last inspection. The headteacher and his staff accurately assess the effectiveness of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and what needs improving. The school provides good value for money. Given the level of improvements made in recent years and the strong planning that exists, the capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

Students enter the school in Year 7 with standards that are at least below average and given factors such as high mobility and students arriving from abroad during the school year, frequently without any academic records, entry standards may be well below average. By the end of Year 11, standards have risen closer to the national average, though they remain below average overall. The trend over time is upward and the students achieve well as they progress through the school. The small dip in 2008 has been thoroughly analysed and new systems have already been put in place. There are clear indications that current students, especially in Years 10 and 11, are working at higher levels. The school can also show that students with learning difficulties make equally good progress because the support given by learning support teachers and teaching assistants is very good.

The headteacher has an inspirational and determined approach to school improvement. He is supported in this by an able and skilled senior team and many competent and committed department and pastoral leaders. The desire to attain excellence permeates the work of the school, but it is acknowledged that the school is on a journey. Many good improvements have been made since the previous inspection, but the work is not yet finished. Further improvements are needed in English and mathematics to ensure that more students, most notably white students and especially white boys, gain 5 or more A\*-C GCSE grades including these two subjects. Some staffing difficulties that hindered the school's work in improving performances in English and mathematics have now been successfully tackled. Some aspects of teaching require refinement. Work is in hand to improve the frequency and quality of marking both in subject areas and across subjects. Most students say they are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve but the quality and frequency of marking is variable. While there is some exemplary practice, not all teachers mark work to the same high quality.

The students' personal development and well-being are good. They are well prepared for life in a modern and ethnically diverse society. They are taught to respect differing backgrounds and religious viewpoints. Behaviour is good. Attendance is satisfactory, but is improving at a good rate. The school tries hard to teach students to pursue healthy lifestyles. Healthy eating is promoted well with enthusiasm and outstanding efforts are made to encourage the students to adopt safe lifestyles. For example, highly effective work is done to educate the students about the dangers of drugs, smoking and alcohol. The students are given many opportunities to develop responsibility and the school works extensively, and most successfully, with many community, national and international partners. Very good efforts are made to promote international understanding and knowledge of other cultures. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well. Most students have an overwhelming enthusiasm for the school and greatly enjoy their education. The students' views are echoed by the vast majority of parents.

The progress that students make is helped by an outstanding curriculum and excellent care, guidance and support. Curriculum planning is detailed and thorough and various programmes have been developed to help the students progress to the next stages of their educational or working lives. Specialist status has enhanced the curriculum. The school is an extremely successful business and enterprise college. Students in all years benefit from various initiatives such as the annual enterprise week. Some thoughtful curriculum initiatives have taken place. For example, the teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 4 has been enlivened with students working with a quantity surveyor. Another impressive development has seen the school develop as a Finance Academy. This has had a profound impact on the educational experience of many sixth form students, including the opportunity to be mentored by senior staff from the financial services industry. Educational standards have risen with graduates from the scheme often gaining better than anticipated A Levels and progressing to university.

Considerable time and effort has been invested in improving target setting and ensuring that the advice offered to students is of the highest quality. Students are fully aware of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. The support, guidance and encouragement that they are offered on a personal level is outstanding.

The school is proud to be at the heart of its community and it seizes every opportunity to develop its partnerships with community groups, whether at home or abroad. This work has been enhanced by specialist status. The school works well with a number of education partners in both the primary and secondary sector. Work has also been successfully extended to the wider community. Some parents for example have gained information and communication technology (ICT) qualifications. Last year a group of enterprising students ran a successful tuck shop and the profits were used to pay for a day at the seaside for a group of local senior citizens. The students worked with the Salvation Army on this initiative but they assumed much of the responsibility for the organisation of both the tuck shop and the actual visit to Broadstairs. Specialist status has been integral in further promoting the school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The sixth form offers a good education. The quality of this provision is improving. Self-evaluation is good and staff with management responsibilities have a keen understanding of the strengths but, equally, they know what needs to be improved.

Standards on entry are well below average. By the end of their courses, standards remain below average, but are closer to the national average. Most students, and especially those with good attendance records, achieve well and the progress some make is further boosted by the enterprising work undertaken as part of the Finance Academy. Recent results show that a small number of students, who have not attended regularly, make less progress. The school is well aware of this issue and is taking sensible steps to reduce its impact.

The students' personal development is good and is boosted by the many opportunities to exercise responsibility and to make a positive contribution to their school, the local community and beyond. Students can serve as school governors and they are involved in many charitable efforts for both national and international causes. A most noteworthy venture is that sixth formers are encouraged to run clubs both for themselves and for younger students in the school. They relish these opportunities.

Teaching and learning are good and are improving. The students say that they enjoy their lessons because they are challenging and that staff usually set high expectations. Monitoring of teaching and learning is robust and senior staff know that where learning is satisfactory rather than good, or better, it is because the challenges set are less exacting and the lessons are too teacher led.

The way the sixth form is led and managed has changed quite considerably. The curriculum has been improved to offer more choice. Care, guidance and support are good. Target setting is improving and the use of business mentors is an effective way of raising standards and encouraging the students to have higher aspirations. Consequently, leadership and management are good. The sixth form team know what needs to be improved and they are acutely aware of the link between good attendance and levels of achievement. The measures taken at the start of this term to improve attendance are already bearing fruit; the average weekly attendance rate has been in excess of ninety per cent and the students' work is showing improvement. There is a good capacity for further improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve overall GCSE standards, especially for White British male students, and challenge the significant number of students who do not attain grade C in both English and mathematics by raising standards in both these subjects in all years.
- Ensure all teachers are clear about the purpose of giving written feedback to students and establish greater consistency in the frequency and quality of marking across all subjects areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are below average but the trend is upwards, especially in Years 10 and 11 where students make faster progress than in Years 7 to 9. Well over 10 per cent of the students who sat GCSE examinations in Year 11 in 2008, had not been in the school at the start of Year 7 five years earlier. Standards at the end of Year 9 have remained below average in recent years although they improved in English in 2008. The percentage of students attaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C rose in 2008 to 55 per cent but the percentage of students who attained the same measure including English and mathematics dropped slightly to 33 per cent; 17 per cent of students attained grade C in English or mathematics but not both. The school has probed the complex reasons for the decline in mathematics results and taken positive action and present students are on course to do much better. Students make good progress in BTEC science, and GCSE citizenship, media, drama and art.

In all years Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Chinese students attain higher standards than White British students, especially boys. Somali students make particularly good progress. In 2008, targets for the school's specialist subjects were not met in mathematics, but were met in some business courses and they were exceeded in ICT.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Students are extremely happy with what the school offers them and they enjoy being there. Consequently, many choose to stay on into the sixth form. Attendance is close to average and improving. Students behave well around the school and in lessons. Students are fully aware of

how to lead healthy lifestyles and generally put this into practice. Older students willingly give up time to help people in the local community with charitable efforts. Students' ICT skills are good but some of them lack confidence with literacy and numeracy. Students' cultural sensitivity is nurtured by the respect evident between different ethnic groups and through citizenship work, overseas visits and by visits in London. Alongside this, the school actively promotes knowledge and understanding of different faiths and lifestyles. The school sets high moral and social standards, underpinned by staff being good role models and dealing with students respectfully. The many and frequently excellent partnerships with the international business community prepare students well for their futures which is having a positive effect on the school's specialist college status.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and are improving. The school has a robust system of monitoring teaching and learning and senior staff are fully aware of where strengths exist and where developments are needed. The improvements in teaching and learning identified by the school can be attributed to its training and coaching programmes. Students enjoy their studies and are able to work effectively with their peers and teachers during lessons in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Students do well because activities and tasks are used that help them to fulfil their academic potential. Teachers' high levels of subject knowledge, effective lesson planning, skilful questioning and good relationships with students ensure difficult concepts are explained in a clear and concise way. Most teachers expect the best of the students, who, in return, usually respond with enthusiasm. On the odd occasions where learning is less effective, students make less progress because teachers' planning did not sufficiently meet the varying needs of the class.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Through an outstanding curriculum with a rich range of opportunities to match students' aspirations and capabilities, the school promotes a great sense of community. Constant review, coupled with imaginative strategies, enable the school to meet the wide range of different needs. For example, the school has introduced innovative Key Stage 3 courses that foster the development of literacy skills and personal development well. Flexibility and a range of pathways, provide a good balance between academic and vocational courses. These are effective in promoting work related learning and enterprise, as well as encouraging students to be healthy and stay safe. There is an outstanding range of enrichment and extra curricular activities reflected in the numerous awards gained by the school. Through the Full Service Extended School provision the school very successfully works in close partnership with a wide variety of agencies and providers, so that a highly successful education is made available beyond the classroom. As a result, students develop personal skills, self-confidence and gain extra qualifications. As one parent commented, 'The curriculum is student centred. Extra courses and visits from outside experts offer intensive training and inspiration. Student life at Haverstock is very stimulating.'

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The quality of care, guidance and support available to students and their parents is outstanding, and underpins the learning ethos of the school. As one parent commented, 'Staff and students work together to create a community that all can prosper in. This is because staff work very closely together to ensure that students are extremely well supported, and students and their parents know where to turn for help with any academic or personal problems.' Stable school systems enable students to develop excellent working relationships with adults and with each other. Teachers have worked hard to analyse and understand students' levels of achievement and many teachers are confidently tracking, setting targets and giving advice on reaching the next step. Careers guidance and work-related programmes are strengths. In Year 9 for example, students, and their parents, receive detailed guidance about the academic and vocational options available in Key Stage 4. Detailed advice is also available in Key Stage 4 and parents can also seek advice on how to improve their own career and educational prospects. Effective child protection procedures are in place and provision for vulnerable learners is good. A highly skilled team provides flexible support that is well matched to the changing needs of individual students.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher appreciates that short-term interventions to raise standards, for example, in mathematics, need to be underpinned by long-term solutions; both are in place. The headteacher's desire to make the school even more successful and innovative permeates his thinking and dealings with all members of the school's community; his leadership is outstanding.

Following widespread consultation with all staff during the last academic year, the effectiveness of the senior management team was strengthened by restructuring to have three deputy headteachers. Already the line management of middle leaders and non-teaching staff is clearer and accountability more focused. This, and the staff's high morale and confidence in the headteacher, means that the capacity for further growth and improvement is excellent.

Governors give good support and work well as a team. They are fully involved in changes, such as the restructuring of the senior leadership team. They bring a wealth of expertise and knowledge to their deliberations.



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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Haverstock School, London, NW3 2BQ

Thank you for the welcome you gave us on our recent visit. We enjoyed learning about the work you are doing. We have concluded that you are offered a good standard of education. The standard of education is improving and there are some outstanding features, especially in terms of the curriculum and care, guidance and support. The school is well led and managed overall and is exceptionally well led by the headteacher. He is very well supported by his senior management team and all other members of staff. They are all working hard to help you. Your standards of work are below average compared with national standards; however, most of you are making good progress in your studies. The school provides you with a safe and caring environment in which to work. We were pleased to see how well you behave in your lessons and around the buildings. It was also pleasing to see just how much you enjoy your work and how that many of you are very keen to succeed. We were also impressed by the quality of the buildings and the cleanliness of the site. The site managers have worked hard to improve your facilities for you and the staff to enjoy.

We have suggested some areas for improvement. These are:

- improve overall GCSE standards, especially for White British male students, and challenge the significant number of students who do not attain grade C in both English and mathematics by raising standards in both these subjects in all years
- ensure all teachers are clear about the purpose of giving written feedback to students and establish greater consistency in the frequency and quality of marking across all subjects areas.

Thank you for your contribution to this inspection. We really enjoyed meeting you and I would like to wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Yours Sincerely

Bill Stoneham

Lead Inspector