

Harris Academy Bromley

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137379
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	386085
Inspection dates	28–29 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,190
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ros Wilton
Principal	Corinne Franceschi
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 February 2009
School address	Lennard Road Beckenham London BR3 1QR
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 43 teachers and 45 lessons, and held meetings with a member of the governing body, staff and groups of students. They observed the academy's work and analysed 120 questionnaires from parents and carers, 127 from students and 63 from staff. Also, the team looked at documents and policies, including those relating to the safeguarding of students, information about students' progress and the academy's records of its monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Current attainment and progress, especially in mathematics, in the sixth form and that of lower-attaining students.
- In lessons, the extent to which work is matched appropriately to the ability of all students and how successfully students are directed to learn independently, including assessing for themselves how well they are doing.
- The effectiveness of all leaders' monitoring and evaluation in bringing about improvements as quickly as possible.

Information about the school

Harris Academy Bromley is a much-larger-than-average-sized school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average, but the proportion of students who do not speak English as their first language is average. The largest group of students is White British. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, although the proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. The academy has received many awards, including Healthy Schools status and the International Award for the promotion of an understanding of other cultures. The academy has specialisms in science and enterprise. The academy operates within the Harris Federation of 12 secondary schools and one primary school. It converted to being an academy from Cator Park School in September 2011. The academy has an Executive Principal and Associate Principal, who share the strategic overview of the academy during its transition phase. The Associate Principal is fully accountable for the running of the academy. The Associate Principal had been in post for four weeks only at the time of the inspection. Currently, the academy does not have any joint provision with other schools in the federation and was not inspected at the same time as other federation schools.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Harris Academy Bromley provides a satisfactory and rapidly improving standard of education. Many aspects of the students' personal development are good, including the extent to which they feel safe, their understanding of a healthy lifestyle and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The behaviour of the vast majority of students is good. Academic achievement, however, is satisfactory and this results in outcomes for students being satisfactory overall. Outcomes for students in the sixth form are good and, as a result, the overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good.

The leaders and managers of the academy are bringing about improvements rapidly through a culture of increased drive, accountability and reflection. Improvements are evident in behaviour, punctuality, the quality of learning and teaching, and the attainment and progress that students are making. Following a period when attainment declined, there has been an improvement over the past 15 months, resulting in gains in students' achievement. The improvement has been particularly apparent in science, one of the academy's specialist subjects. Areas of relative underachievement, such as attainment in mathematics, are being addressed well through the academy's extremely rigorous monitoring and evaluation. The rates of progress made by different groups of students are now more even, with that of White British students matching the progress of other groups better than previously. Students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who do not speak English as their first language make satisfactory progress also. That is due to the good, personalised care, guidance and support they receive.

The quality of teaching has also improved, particularly so recently, but it remains very variable. It is satisfactory overall. There is some good and outstanding practice within the academy, but this is not shared effectively enough at present. Students' good behaviour plays an increasingly strong part in their learning. However, there are occasions in a minority of lessons, when teachers do not work well enough with students to enable them to judge for themselves how well they are learning and this has a negative effect on the students' progress. There are also occasions when work is not always appropriately challenging for all students and, as a result, some do not make the progress they are capable of. The academy is encouraging the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology to be a routine part of lessons, but, currently, this is not as widespread as it could be.

The capacity for sustained improvement is good. That is because the academy's self-

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evaluation is very accurate and the areas that are being tackled are already bringing about rapid improvement. However, there are many new initiatives which have not had time to show their full impact. One such initiative is the work of the education welfare officer to raise attendance. Attendance has improved, but, currently, there are too many one-day absences, suggesting that parents and carers do not appear to understand fully the detrimental effect of absence on their children's education. The majority of students, staff, parents and carers are positive about the changes that are happening in the academy. However, a small minority has voiced concerns over the reasons for the changes and the way they are being implemented. They would like the reasons to be explained to them more clearly.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress through ensuring that all teaching and learning is good or better by:
 - sharing more effectively the good and outstanding practice in teaching and learning that exists in the academy already
 - giving work that is always appropriately challenging for all students
 - working collaboratively with students, so they can assess for themselves how well they are learning
 - introducing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT into as many lessons as possible.
- Improve aspects of leadership and management by:
 - embedding all the new strategies recently put in place, so they can show their full impact
 - gaining the confidence of all staff, students, and parents and carers in supporting the improvements being made
 - convincing every parent and carer of the importance of students' regular attendance and punctuality.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Inspection evidence confirms that learning and progress are satisfactory and some is good or better. Students enter Year 7 with attainment that is broadly average and leave in Year 11 with attainment that is also broadly average in most subjects. Students respond well to enthusiastic teaching and enjoy a challenge. That was exemplified well in a Year 11 geography lesson on economic activity, when they were seen making outstanding progress. Nearly all students behave well. They work well independently and in groups when given the opportunity to do so. In a Year 8 history lesson, students engaged very effectively with each other to discuss what is meant

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by the ‘American Dream’. However, in some lessons, students are not given enough responsibility for their own learning and they are unable to say if they are learning well. In those lessons, progress slows.

The vast majority of students say that they feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of what it means to be healthy and understand the significance of the academy having Healthy Schools status. They enjoy the opportunities to take part in sporting activities, including working as sports leaders organising events for pupils in a nearby primary school. They welcome the chance to take on other responsibilities in the academy, although the opportunities for them to do so at present are limited. However, members of the school council told the inspectors that they were delighted that the toilets have been refurbished at their request. Students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their understanding of international cultures is particularly good and is reflected in the academy’s international award. Their spiritual development is improving because of increased opportunities for reflection. Students are prepared adequately for their future economic well-being by having sound information and communication technology (ICT) skills and a keen sense of cooperation and consideration for others. Attendance and punctuality are improving, but these are still not good enough. The academy’s specialisms are beginning to impact well on the students’ achievement and personal well-being, with increased opportunities for enterprise learning. Some of the Year 10 and Year 11 students told the inspectors that they did not understand fully the reasons for some of the changes being made, although they did acknowledge that the teaching was ‘getting better’.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good and sometimes outstanding practice. Teaching is usually planned well, with a range of engaging activities, although, in some lessons, these are not always challenging enough. Work is increasingly meeting the needs of all students, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who do not speak English as their first language, and also the more-able students. In a Year 10 English lesson, students were seen to be supported particularly well. That enabled them to make good progress towards the learning outcome of using clear stylistic techniques to engage a reader. In many lessons, teachers work well with students to enable them to be able to judge how well they are learning. However, in a few lessons, students are not provided with clear enough criteria for success to be able to do so. Assessment to support learning is variable, both across and within subjects. The majority of marking is of good quality and helps students to improve their work. However, that is not yet consistently so throughout the academy.

The curriculum provision is meeting the needs of all students increasingly well, especially during this very early period while the academy is beginning to establish itself. The academy benefits from being part of the Harris Federation, receiving support in many areas, including in English, mathematics and science. Enrichment is strong and there are many opportunities for visits and trips, such as to Normandy and to partner schools in Uganda and India. Students enjoy activities, such as the 'Dragons' Pen', where a group of local businesses help them with their interview techniques. Cross-curricular provision is satisfactory and basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are being introduced increasingly well into different lessons, although the academy acknowledges that this is not always the case. A key strength of the academy is the effective way it looks after all its students, particularly those who have challenges in their lives that make them potentially vulnerable. There are significant successes in the way in which the academy helps students overcome any difficulties and barriers to learning. Transition arrangements are good, both for Year 7 students entering the academy and for Year 11 students moving on to the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

Despite being in their posts for a relatively short period of time, the executive principal, the associate principal, and the governing body have very clear ideas of how to develop the academy. They are working well with other senior leaders and have accurately identified where improvements need to be made. Effective steps are now being taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning and middle leaders are playing an increasingly effective role in this. Target setting, monitoring and evaluation have improved already. They are more rigorous and there is an increased clarity about what is expected in the use of assessment to plan effective lessons. Many of the initiatives are in their early stages of development, so it is too soon to see their full impact. Engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. The academy can give examples of acting on the views of parents and carers and in helping them to support their children’s learning. The large majority of parents and carers, students and staff are positive about developments, but not all are fully on board yet, as some are not clear about the rationale for change. Helping parents and carers to come to a better understanding of the process forms part of the academy’s forward planning already.

Safeguarding procedures are good, overseen well by the governing body. There are clear safeguarding policies and secure risk-assessment systems. Child protection in particular is very thorough. Equality of opportunity is good, with gaps between groups of students closing rapidly. In addition, there have been very few racist incidents in the academy and this has been helped by the academy’s strong focus on the importance of respect for others. The promotion of community cohesion within the academy, locally, nationally and internationally is satisfactory. There are good international links involving the students and there are good links with neighbouring schools. However, links with other schools in the United Kingdom of a different socio-economic or ethnic make-up have not yet been established fully. There is a wide range of good partnership involvement, especially with the other academies in the Harris Federation, which is helping to raise attainment and improve teaching and learning. The academy provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

The number of students entering the sixth form is increasing, as is the retention of students from Year 12 into Year 13. The majority make good progress and reach above-average attainment at the end of Year 13. Almost all go on to higher education and the number who do not enter employment, training or further education is extremely low. Sixth-form students are highly articulate and good role models for younger students. Their contribution to the community is good; they play a leading role in the academy, through roles such as prefects. Sixth-form teachers have very good subject knowledge and students' progress in lessons is good. Many lessons offer a good degree of challenge, as was seen in a Year 12 Russian lesson, where students made outstanding progress when they conversed fluently with the teacher about the requirements of careers of business men such as Roman Abramovich. However, in some lessons, students are not always given enough opportunities or guidance to be responsible for their own independent learning. The curriculum provides a good range of courses for its current students and the academy has plans to widen the curriculum further by introducing vocational courses. Care, guidance and support are good and students appreciate the time teachers have for them. Increasingly, students are being given more focused academic guidance through tutorials. Even though there have been some changes in leadership recently, lines of responsibility are clear. There is good monitoring of teaching and learning and greater accountability through departmental reviews. The federation offers the facility of sharing good practice and leaders in the sixth form are benefitting greatly from this.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

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Views of parents and carers

About 10% of parents and carers returned the questionnaire, which is a lower-than-average response. The large majority were positive about most aspects, in particular, the extent to which the academy keeps their children safe. The inspectors judged that the quality of care, guidance and support is good and procedures for safeguarding students are also good, resulting in the extent to which students feel safe being good. A small minority of parents and carers felt that the academy does not help their children to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors followed up that concern and judged that the students' understanding of a healthy lifestyle is good and that there are opportunities for students to promote this understanding through roles such as sports leaders. A small minority of parents and carers felt that the academy did not help them to support their children's learning. Inspectors followed up that concern and the academy presented examples of doing so, such as through workshops in mathematics.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Harris Academy Bromley to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 120 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1190 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	37	31	65	54	8	7	7	6
The school keeps my child safe	38	32	69	58	6	5	3	3
The school informs me about my child’s progress	45	38	56	47	13	11	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	23	63	53	16	13	7	6
The teaching is good at this school	24	20	71	59	10	8	4	3
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	30	25	55	46	24	20	5	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	9	67	56	27	23	9	8
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	29	24	55	46	12	10	4	3
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	18	70	58	16	13	6	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	22	69	58	15	13	6	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	14	67	56	17	14	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	30	25	55	46	11	9	6	5
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	35	29	59	49	10	8	7	6

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

30 November 2011

Dear Students



Inspection of Harris Academy Bromley, Beckenham, London BR3 1QR

We would like to thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we came to inspect your academy last week. We enjoyed our visit and valued the opportunity to talk with you. We judge the academy to be satisfactory and improving strongly. Your academic achievement is satisfactory, but many aspects of your personal development are good. Most of you attend academy regularly. Nearly all of you behave well and treat each other with consideration. You told us that you enjoy academy and that you feel very safe there. The staff look after you well and give you good support and advice.

To help the academy to improve we have asked the governing body, the principals and your teachers to:

- Raise attainment and improve progress further through ensuring that all teaching and learning is good or better by:
 - sharing more effectively the good and outstanding practice in teaching and learning that exists in the academy already
 - giving you work that is always appropriately challenging for you
 - working collaboratively with you so you can assess for yourselves how well you are learning
 - introducing the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT into as many lessons as possible.

- Improve aspects of leadership and management by:
 - embedding all the new strategies recently put in place, so they can show their full impact
 - gaining the full confidence of staff, students, and parents and carers in supporting the improvements being made
 - convincing all your parents and carers of the importance of your regular attendance and punctuality.

You can help by working alongside your teachers to check for yourselves how well you are learning. You can also help by attending as often as you can and by being punctual. We believe that you want to do well and we would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely
Alison Thomson
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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