

# Harris Academy Morden

Lilleshall Road, Morden, SM4 6DU

## Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The Principal, who was appointed to lead the new academy in September 2012, has ensured that the academy has made rapid progress in addressing the weaknesses of the predecessor school. As a result, students' achievement and the quality of teaching are now good.
- Students achieve well in most subjects. The progress students make in English and mathematics has risen significantly.
- Disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or have special educational needs are now well supported.
- The quality of teaching is good. Relationships in the classroom are strong. Students respect their teachers, feel confident in asking questions and share their ideas.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and around the academy is outstanding. They work hard and concentrate very well in lessons.
- Students' safety is a very high priority for all staff. They work exceptionally well to ensure that all students are safe and secure.
- The range of subjects studied is outstanding. It promotes and sustains students' academic achievement very well. It prepares students extremely well for life in modern Britain.
- The academy encourages excellence beyond the classroom. It provides a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, enrichment opportunities, trips and visits.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. As a result they mature into considerate and thoughtful young adults who have a very good understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Leadership at all levels, including that of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, is outstanding. Leaders are very ambitious and have successfully driven improvements for all students.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement is not outstanding. Disadvantaged students, and students who are disabled or have special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language, do not make progress at the same rate as other students.
- Teaching is not outstanding. Not all teachers use questioning effectively enough to probe students' knowledge and understanding of subject content. Students need more opportunities to write in depth, in order to show the development of their subject knowledge and understanding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, five jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed tutor times.
- Inspectors held meetings with several groups of students, members of the senior leadership team and leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the academy’s work. Inspectors also met with teachers new to the academy and the profession.
- The lead inspector met with members of the academy’s governing body and the chief executive of the federation.
- Inspectors discussed lessons they had seen with teaching staff. They examined a range of documents including the academy’s review of its own performance, its plans for improvement and students’ progress information.
- Inspectors evaluated the academy’s own information about exclusions, attendance and behaviour. They also considered evidence of how effectively students who receive their education in other settings are monitored by academy staff.
- Inspectors also considered evidence of how effectively additional funding (the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding) is spent.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students’ work in lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 91 responses from the academy’s parent survey, which used the questions from Ofsted’s Parent View questionnaire. There were too few responses to Parent View for the results to be shown.
- The inspection team considered questionnaires completed by 52 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Jackie Jones, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Jenkins	Additional Inspector
John Worgan	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Harris Academy Morden converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Bishopsford Arts College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- Harris Academy Morden is part of the Harris Federation. It is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has a specialism in enterprise.
- The students come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds including White British, Polish, African and Asian. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is double the national average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children) is double the national average.
- There are 25 students eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding. This is funding for students who did not achieve Level 4 (the nationally expected level) in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is 40% of the academy's population, which is double the national average.
- A small number of students receive their education from the following outside providers: Road2Success, which provides work-related courses; JustTlearn and Freshstart4excellence, both of which provide GCSE courses; the SMART centre, a short stay school; South Thames College; and Merrist Wood College.
- The academy leads a Key Stage 3 project funded by the London Schools' Excellence Fund.
- There have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring all teachers:
  - use probing questioning to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of subject content
  - encourage students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through increasing opportunities to write in depth.
- Speed up the progress of students eligible for the pupil premium, students who are disabled or have special educational needs and students who speak English as an additional language so that their achievement matches that of other students.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The outstanding leadership of the Principal has been fundamental in bringing about rapid improvement in all aspects of the academy's work since it opened in September 2012. As a result, academic achievement, the quality of teaching, and behaviour and safety have all significantly improved.
- The Ofsted monitoring visit in 2013 identified improvements that had been made after one year under the Principal's leadership and during this inspection it was clear that the momentum of change has been continued.
- The academy is very effectively supported by the Harris Federation in making and sustaining this improvement from the predecessor school.
- All staff are highly ambitious for the students. As a result, students are raising their aspirations for their future academic achievements and personal development. For example, many more students now see further education as a realistic prospect.
- The academy's view about its own performance is robust and accurate. It informs an outstanding plan to bring about improvements that have measurable outcomes. This is leading to high quality provision for all students.
- The management of teaching and its impact on learning are outstanding. Academy leaders' judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. They are informed by extremely rigorous checks by senior and middle leaders. Leaders are well aware, for instance, of occasional inconsistencies in teaching. These checks are verified through a robust quality assurance programme involving staff from the federation, as well as very experienced senior leaders within the academy.
- Middle leaders have an outstanding understanding of how to improve the learning opportunities for students. They very effectively review the performance of their subject areas to ensure the quality of provision is high for all students.
- Training for staff is highly personalised and based on an accurate analysis of need. All staff spoke very highly about the quality of training provided by the academy and federation. Systems for managing staff performance are extremely rigorous. They relate fully to the Teachers' Standards. Salary progression only occurs when merited by good performance.
- Senior leaders have taken robust action to challenge underperformance. Leaders only accept good or better performance from all staff so that students are challenged and encouraged to have the courage to succeed.
- The curriculum is outstanding. It is broad and balanced, providing a wide range of academic and work-related courses. Students make their option choices in Year 8. As a result, Year 9 students follow a preparation year so they develop the skills needed to achieve well in their GCSE subjects.
- An outstanding range of additional activities provides opportunities for students beyond the classroom. This includes the chance to take part in a variety of sports, arts and visits. Twice a year the academy runs Aspire, Experience and Explore weeks during which students have a wide variety of experiences. These include museum and theatre visits, careers fairs and focus days for Key Stage 4 students in their option subjects.
- Students very effectively take on a variety of leadership roles within the academy, for example as prefects and head boy and girl. They also act as peer mentors supporting younger students in improving their literacy.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of the academy. Leaders have planned a far reaching and extensive programme which ensures that students are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. During the inspection students were observed discussing the issues associated with terrorism and extremism during their tutor periods. An outstanding example of stretching all students intellectually is the CIT (Cake, Intellectual Discussion and Tea) programme. Students respond to a thought-provoking question, such as 'Why animals have stripes'; students are invited to tea and cake after school where the question is debated. The students really value this programme and the opportunity to debate in depth.
- Leaders very effectively ensure that there is no discrimination. All students, including disadvantaged students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs, are able to participate in the activities provided by the academy. The academy funds activities such as theatre visits and the Duke of Edinburgh Award as well as ensuring all students have the equipment needed to participate fully in subject lessons.
- The academy very effectively monitors the performance and well-being of those students who receive

their education in other settings.

- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. The academy's safeguarding processes and procedures are highly effective. Leaders make extremely effective use of outside agencies to provide excellent support for students when it is needed.
- The advice given to students at all stages about their next stages in education or employment is very good. As a result, the vast majority of students go into education, employment or training when they leave the academy.
- The academy works very well with parents and carers. For example, parents and carers are fully involved in the monitoring of students who are receiving their education at other settings. This has a positive impact on the progress these students make.
- The large majority of parents and carers responding to the academy's own parent survey agreed that the academy responded well to concerns and provided valuable information about their child's progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governance of the academy is outstanding. Governors very effectively support and challenge the academy. They are highly ambitious for the success of the academy.
  - Governors are fully involved in reviewing students' performance and setting the academy's priorities. They discuss the academy's view about how well it is doing and its plans for improvement.
  - Governors are extremely well equipped to carry out their statutory duties, including ensuring the safeguarding of students, which they do very effectively. They have an accurate view of the academy's strengths and areas for improvement as well as a comprehensive understanding of the way students' performance is measured.
  - Governors manage the academy's finances extremely well and ensure that spending is linked to students' learning. They have, for example, ensured that the information and communication technology system has been upgraded.
  - They are very knowledgeable about the ways additional funding is used to support disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
  - Governors are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and are keenly aware of what is being done to reward good and outstanding performance.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. In lessons students show a strong commitment to learning regardless of the subject or year group. This ensures that they are now able to make good academic progress and outstanding gains in their personal development.
- Students enjoy positive relationships with their teachers and each other. In a Year 7 tutor time students were fully engaged in playing chess. This developed their social skills as well as their logical thinking, which has a very positive impact on their progress academically.
- Students arrive at school and their lessons on time, with the correct equipment and ready to learn. They take enormous pride in their academy, shown by the way they wear their uniform. There is no litter or graffiti around the academy.
- Behaviour is outstanding as a result of actions taken by academy leaders. Consequently, the number of exclusions has declined since the academy took over from the predecessor school.
- Students who reflected on the changes that have taken place since the academy started, commented that students now want to be in lessons and to work. As a result of this improvement in attitudes, their progress is improving rapidly.
- Leaders' high expectations of respect and good behaviour are reinforced positively during assemblies. Students develop a very good understanding of how these attributes will have a positive impact on their lives after they leave the academy.
- The behaviour of students attending off-site provision is closely monitored by the academy. This ensures that students continue to make at least good progress in their learning.
- Staff and parents and carers commented exceptionally favourably on behaviour and the way it is managed consistently.

## Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. All the students spoken to said they feel safe, which is confirmed by both staff and parents.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Curriculum time is used well to teach students about the risks associated with extremism and how to use the internet safely. Assemblies, tutor times and follow-up activities, including competitions, cover aspects such as bullying and e-safety.
- Students report that any incidents of bullying are dealt with very effectively. There is virtually no racist or homophobic bullying. The Sharp page of the school's website enables students to report any concerns, secure in the knowledge that these will be very effectively resolved.
- Attendance is now above the national average from a very low starting point when the academy took over from the predecessor school. The academy has very effective systems to monitor the attendance of students who receive their education at other settings.
- Exclusions have reduced significantly and are well below the national average. This is the result of the highly effective strategies put in place by the academy's leaders, which are consistently applied by all staff.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good. It is not yet outstanding because not all teachers consistently probe, through effective questioning, students' depth of understanding in all their subjects.
- A significant feature of teaching across the academy is the very strong relationship between staff and students. Students work well in lessons to improve their learning. They often assess their own and each other's work in a constructive way.
- Teachers have very clear expectations of the standard of work expected from all students. Students willingly participate in all learning tasks and, therefore, are now making good progress.
- Teachers plan to meet the needs of all students through the use of a variety of learning tasks. Work is adapted successfully to enable all students to learn well at their own level. However, not all teachers allow sufficient time in lessons for students to fully develop their extended writing.
- Support for disabled students and those with special educational needs is now good. Teaching assistants are used well in lessons to support students in their learning. Teaching assistants have a good understanding of the progress their students make over time through the thorough recording of their learning in every lesson.
- The academy has an effective reading, literacy and numeracy programme. Students whose literacy and numeracy skills are below expected standards are ably supported through specialised lessons and one-to-one mentoring. As a result they make good progress.
- Support for students who speak English as an additional language is very effectively provided by the academy through specialised provision. The academy employs language specialists to support students in Polish, Urdu and a variety of African languages. As a result, these students are making more rapid progress.
- The academy has well-developed systems to ensure that marking and assessment help students to make, at least, good progress. Lessons often start with students having time to respond to comments made by their teachers on how to improve their learning.
- The academy's well-defined homework policy is consistently applied by all staff. As a result, students develop the ability to work on their own to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of subjects.
- A significant majority of parents and carers said that their child was taught well.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- Students enter the academy with levels of attainment significantly below the national average. The proportion of students who attained five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was above the national average in 2014.
- Year 11 students in 2014 achieved well in a number of GCSE subjects including Spanish, history, geography, business studies and religious education.
- The proportion of students making at least expected progress in English and mathematics is above the national average.
- White British students make expected progress in English and mathematics. Students from ethnic minority groups make good progress in mathematics between Key Stage 2 and the end of Key Stage 4, or from their arrival at the academy, and the rate of progress in English is improving. In mathematics, these students make a quarter of a grade less progress than other students in the academy. In English it was one grade lower than other students.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make at least good progress. Their achievement is, therefore, improving. It is now in line with other students at the academy in English. It is improving in mathematics, so that they are catching up with other students in the academy.
- Disadvantaged students have previously achieved less well than others. The gap between the proportions of disadvantaged students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, and others in the school, is narrowing. In 2014 the gap in attainment in English was a quarter of a grade and in mathematics it was half a grade. Compared to students nationally, the gap in English attainment of the disadvantaged students was a quarter of a grade and in mathematics it was less than a quarter of a grade.
- The academy uses Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to improve students' achievement in English and mathematics. The additional funding is used to provide a specialised literacy programme for students who speak English as an additional language. Further support includes weekly grammar lessons and weekly booster mathematics lessons in topics such as number and algebra. As a result, students are making good progress in mathematics. Progress is slower in English. This is largely due to the significant number of students who speak English as an additional language and who have recently arrived in the country.
- The most able students' progress is now improving and is close to the national average. This is the result of the very high aspirations established by academy leaders.
- The achievement of students who receive their education at other settings is monitored well by the academy. As a result, they are placed on appropriate courses that enable them to make expected progress.
- The academy has entered students early in GCSE English and mathematics. This was carefully monitored and students were expected to achieve their target grade. Early entry has not affected students' achievement, which is now good.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138495
<b>Local authority</b>	Merton
<b>Inspection number</b>	447818

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	560
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tony Bayon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Mallin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14–15 May 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8687 1157
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