

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



9 November 2017

Mr Nick Soar
Executive Principal
Harris Academy South Norwood
Cumberlow Avenue
London
SE25 6AE

Dear Mr Soar

No formal designation inspection of Harris Academy South Norwood

Following my visit to your school on 18 October 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your school.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour at the school.

Evidence

Inspectors considered evidence that included:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with them
- documentary evidence relating to behaviour and safeguarding
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

Having evaluated the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to maintain the high standards of behaviour and attitudes identified at the school's previous inspection.

Context

The school has shared leadership, governance and facilities in a hard federation with Harris Academy Upper Norwood from September 2014. You became executive

principal in September 2016. In September 2017, the schools amalgamated to become Harris Academy South Norwood. A large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a larger than average number of pupils speak English as an additional language. A much lower proportion of pupils than the figure nationally receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities. A large number of pupils begin or leave school during the course of their secondary education. This is in part because the school accepts pupils at risk of exclusion through Croydon's fair access panel.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

School leaders have rightly focused on creating a unified school where pupils on both the Upper and Lower Norwood campuses learn together as part of the Harris South Norwood family. During this period of change, the school has continued to offer pupils at risk of exclusion a place in the school through the local authority fair access panel. The high level of success in settling these pupils to school life demonstrates the care and attention given to individual pupils' needs.

Since the previous inspection, you have rightly identified a need to sharpen further leaders' monitoring of behaviour. You restructured your senior and middle leadership teams to create progress and welfare leaders for each year group. These leaders have a firm grasp on pupils' progress, attendance, punctuality and behaviour. Consequently, your teams are able to identify quickly those pupils who may be at risk of harm or educational underachievement. Therefore, support is given rapidly to pupils who need it. Your staff keep parents involved and work in partnership to overcome difficulties experienced by pupils and families.

You have taken steps to improve the school's engagement with the very small minority of parents who occasionally raise concerns or complain formally. Parents now have direct email addresses for key staff in each year group. A new centralised system allows you to check on any patterns developing in parental issues and feedback. Most importantly, you ensure that staff keep parents informed when concerns arise and when issues are resolved.

Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day. They arrive at school smart and are proud of their uniform. Pupils are polite and friendly. Evidence over time shows that, occasionally, their behaviour can become a little boisterous during social times and in lessons, particularly on the Upper Norwood campus. However, this is reducing as the school settles from the recent amalgamation. The vast majority of pupils show high levels of self-discipline. Nevertheless, staff have consistently high expectations. They supervise pupils carefully and ensure that, when necessary, they are reminded to be '100% respectful, responsive and ready'. Pupils spoken to during the inspection uniformly feel safe and have confidence in staff to take action when issues arise.

Pupils say that bullying is rare. Inspectors scrutinised available documents and this shows that there are only occasional instances of such behaviour. Pupils feel safe and well supported when they raise concerns with staff. Those pupils who have displayed challenging behaviour in the past speak highly of the support they have received from staff. Support is adapted to the needs of the individual and changes over time. This has been key to ensuring that behaviour has been maintained since the previous inspection.

You work proactively to avoid excluding pupils. Every effort is made to intervene and support pupils before behaviour issues escalate. Records and meetings show that leaders treat each pupil as an individual. When concerns arise, you work effectively as a team with parents to overcome challenging behaviours.

Use of alternative provision is rare and only when internal support has not met pupils' individual needs. You ensure that this external education is registered with Ofsted and meets the needs of individual pupils. Your leaders quality assure these external placements every other week. Consequently, you have evidence to show that these placements meet the education and welfare needs of pupils effectively.

Over time, the school has maintained a broad curriculum through the wide range of subjects and qualifications offered. Additional depth is provided through tutor times, assemblies and whole-school study themes. This helps to ensure that pupils have their own well-developed opinions about politics and social issues, such as poverty. During the inspection, inspectors observed Year 7 pupils listening to 'husting' videos developed by prospective head boys and girls. Pupils thoughtfully considered how best to use their vote in an informed way to improve their school.

One pupil summed up the views of many when they told inspectors, 'Treating everyone equally is an important quality for life. It is part of being a decent human being.' Consequently, pupils actively demonstrate the school's work to promote the Equality Act 2010. Pupils have a deep understanding of issues linked to equality, particularly in relation to sexuality. Pupils report a culture that has a zero tolerance towards homophobia.

Pupils' enthusiasm for learning, coupled with regular rewards for good behaviour, ensures that pupils want to attend school and do well. Attendance and outcomes for pupils continue to be above the national average regardless of a pupil's ability, ethnicity or social background.

The multi-academy trust has supported the school well. In particular, focused work to support and challenge your leaders during the amalgamation has helped maintain the quality of pupils' behaviour and your safeguarding of their welfare.

Priorities for further improvement

- Leaders of the now amalgamated academy should maintain their work to reduce

the rare instances of boisterous behaviour in lessons and during social times.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer for Harris Federation, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Croydon. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

David Storrie
Her Majesty's Inspector