

Haverstock School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100049
Local Authority	Camden
Inspection number	376341
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Metcalf

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1284
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Watkins
Headteacher	John Dowd
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 October 2008
School address	24 Haverstock Hill London NW3 2BQ
Telephone number	020 7267 0975
Fax number	020 7267 3807
Email address	office@haverstock.camden.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 38 lessons and 32 teachers. They looked at a range of data and documentation, including school policies, development plans, assessment data, safeguarding documentation and minutes of governors' meetings. They held meetings with staff, students and the Chair of the Governing Body. The responses to questionnaires completed by staff, students and 118 parents and carers were also analysed.

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

- The extent to which evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and available data support the school's judgements about attainment and progress.
- Whether the quality of teaching is securing sufficient progress and learning for all students, especially White British, Bangladeshi and Black African students.
- The extent to which leadership and management of the sixth form are succeeding in raising attainment and supporting all learners.

Information about the school

Haverstock is a larger than average-sized comprehensive school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and the proportion of students who are learning English as an additional language are well above national averages. Students in the school come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds with the majority being of White British, Bangladeshi and Black African heritage. The proportions of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of those with statements are well above national averages. These cover a range of additional needs. Haverstock is a specialist business and enterprise school. It is part of the Career Academy programme and holds the Artsmark, Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Haverstock is a good school, where attainment is rising quickly and students make good progress. It has many outstanding features, including the curriculum and the quality of care, guidance and support. Since the previous inspection, leaders have focused resolutely on improving teaching and learning in order to raise students' attainment, especially in English and mathematics, with the result that it is now in line with the national average. The school has now rightly focused on raising the attainment and progress of students in the sixth form.

Improvements in teaching have ensured that students make good progress during their time at the school. The quality of teaching is now good and an increasing proportion of lessons are outstanding, with very few that are inadequate. Nevertheless, school leaders are aware of the need to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, particularly with regard to the level of support and challenge provided to match students' abilities, especially for more able students.

Teachers and other staff know students very well as individuals, and outstanding care, guidance and support contribute greatly to students' security, enjoyment and achievement. Behaviour is good and the number of exclusions has decreased, with no permanent exclusions in the past year. Attendance is above average and the school is tackling effectively the recent increase in the number of students who are persistently absent. Students participate in an exceptionally wide range of charitable, volunteering and enterprise work.

Students' artistic, sporting, cultural, moral and spiritual development is outstanding. They gain an excellent understanding of diverse cultures, and of moral and ethical issues through, for example, their study of Anne Frank and Nelson Mandela. Spiritual development is supported well by opportunities for reflection and students' capacity to recognise their own and others' spiritual experiences. Students enjoy very harmonious relationships with each other.

The headteacher and senior leadership team are passionate, determined and effective. Their vision for the school is shared by staff, students and the community, as well as the governing body, which is highly effective in supporting and challenging school leaders. Development planning is extensive, with an appropriate focus on teaching and behaviour to support learning, and is regularly updated to reflect progress towards well-defined targets. The school's success is enhanced and enriched by its engagement with parents and extensive partnerships from which students benefit a great deal. The school's arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are outstanding. There is a culture of high expectations and a track record of improvement which, together with the school's accurate and honest

assessment of its own strengths and priorities for further development, mean that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment and progress of students in the sixth form, and of the most able students across the school by:
 - improving the quality of teaching by sharing outstanding practice across the school
 - ensuring that teaching more fully takes account of the spread of ability in different classes
 - increasing the level of challenge in teaching.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students join the school with attainment that is below average and, by the end of Year 11, attain standards which are in line with national averages. This indicates that they make good progress from their starting points. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics more than doubled between 2008 and 2011. The school's very accurate tracking data show that Year 11 students are in line to achieve even better results in 2012. This is as a result of improvements in the overall quality of teaching and better use of assessment, which allows the school to quickly identify and address any potential underachievement.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are carefully monitored and supported so that their progress is similar to that of their peers. The previous underperformance of White British, Bangladeshi and Black African students has been successfully addressed, as confirmed by their improved performance in last year's examinations. The proportion of students achieving the highest grades has been correctly identified by school leaders as an area for further improvement.

In the majority of lessons observed, the quality of learning was at least good. Students demonstrated engagement in, and commitment to, their work, for example in a Year 10 science lesson where students responded well to the teacher's searching questions. They reflected carefully on the methods they were using when answering examination questions and shared their strategies with other students in the class. Students are keen to learn and happy to work individually or collaboratively in order to develop their literacy and information technology skills. Their numeracy skills, although satisfactory, are less well developed.

Students enjoy school and feel extremely safe. Incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying, are extremely rare and dealt with appropriately and promptly. Attendance is above average and behaviour is good. Exclusion rates are falling as a result of more engaging teaching and the consistent application of the school's policy on behaviour to support learning. The school's achievement of Healthy School status confirms students' good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They appreciate the healthy food served in the school canteen. Students engage well with their physical education lessons and high numbers take part in extra-curricular sport, as recognised

by the Sportsmark award. Students are actively involved in a wide range of community outreach activities, including working with partner primary schools, environmental projects in the Kings Cross area, and visits to a local care home for the elderly. Students’ increasingly good grasp of basic skills and their above-average attendance indicate that they are well prepared for further education, higher education, training and work.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Lesson observations highlight the excellent relationships teachers establish with their students, as well as their detailed lesson planning, secure subject knowledge and good use of technology to enhance learning. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are sensitively supported by teaching assistants and support teachers who work well with classroom teachers and have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. In a small minority of lessons, teachers talked too much and students became passive or disengaged, thus limiting their progress. These lessons often catered less well for the spread of ability in the class and rarely challenged the most able students. Teachers’ good use of assessment ensures that students are aware of their target levels and grades, and have a secure understanding of what they must do to meet them.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and carefully tailored to meet students’ diverse and challenging needs. For example, the Year 7 curriculum offers additional support for those with weak literacy skills, as well as a carefully planned integration programme for potentially vulnerable students. Improved option choices at the end of Year 8, as well as early entry for GCSE examinations, have resulted in increased commitment and motivation for Year 9 students. There are good opportunities for

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

students to develop literacy skills, and all students are able to gain accreditation in information technology. Students benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and participation rates are high. The school’s specialism contributes well to enrichment opportunities which develop students’ understanding of financial matters and their enterprise skills, as well as offering useful links to local businesses and arts-based organisations, including local theatres and concert venues.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding, and students’ feedback confirms their high levels of confidence in the school’s systems. Effective monitoring and targeted support enable staff to make very good use of the extensive data collected about students’ achievements. This information is regularly reviewed to quickly identify and support students who are underperforming. Transition arrangements are highly effective in helping students to settle quickly when they join the school, and in preparing them for the next stage of their education, and for training and future employment. Careers guidance makes very good use of the school’s extensive community and business links. The school works very successfully with a range of external agencies to offer appropriate and ongoing support for potentially vulnerable students and their families, which enables these students to overcome the barriers to achievement which they encounter.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and, with the support of his highly competent senior leadership team, has given staff a clear sense of direction and ambition to help them to improve their practice. A key factor in the school’s improvement has been the success of the headteacher in empowering his senior and middle leaders. Targets are challenging and morale is high. The school has established more robust systems for tracking the progress of students and sets them challenging targets. This has contributed to accelerated progress, especially during the current year.

The school has developed excellent systems to communicate and engage with parents and carers. For example, the ‘Parent Alliance’ organises workshops and discussion sessions covering topics such as ‘How we teach maths’ and ‘How we support children with learning difficulties’ and helps students to make appropriate choices. Family link workers liaise with specific groups of parents, including Bangladeshi families and the Somali community, offering specific sessions to help them to understand the school and to support their children’s education.

The school’s good promotion of equal opportunities is evident in policies which are

exceptionally well embedded and understood by all. The school has worked successfully to overcome variations in performance, such as underachievement by White British, Bangladeshi and Black African students, and has acted decisively and successfully to narrow gaps in attainment. Further improvements in the challenge offered to higher attaining students are now being implemented.

The school’s arrangements for keeping students safe are excellent. The school has detailed policies covering all aspects of safeguarding, with clear management structures and sufficient numbers of well-trained designated staff. Comprehensive risk assessments are regularly undertaken and the school regularly shares its excellent practice with other local schools.

The governing body has made an outstanding contribution to the improvements that the school has made. The Chair of the Governing Body has an excellent awareness of the school and its strengths as well as a clear understanding of what is needed to make the school even better. The governing body takes good account of the views of staff, students, parents and carers, and uses them to inform strategic planning. Members are responsive to educational and political developments that affect the school and carefully appraise the implications of such changes. They discharge their statutory duties very responsibly and they are well aware of their duties regarding safeguarding.

The school has established outstanding partnerships, including with its partner primary schools, the school-based police officer, and local authority support services, as well as extensive community partnerships and contacts it has made through its business and enterprise specialism. The school’s good promotion of community cohesion is based on a strong understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics of its community. The school provides a harmonious environment where students from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds are offered an exceptionally wide and stimulating range of opportunities to engage with other faiths and cultures.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2
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Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Students in the sixth form make satisfactory progress from their starting points, and their achievement is rising rapidly because of improvements in teaching and in the curriculum. Enrolment, retention and attendance rates are increasing as a result of the wider range of courses the school now provides, clearer progression routes, students’ satisfaction with the school and the successful appointment of a sixth form attendance officer. Improved effectiveness of the leadership of the sixth form, as well as regular and extensive reviews of teaching, transition, induction and pastoral support, provide a secure foundation for further improvement.

Teaching is good but with some inconsistencies; these reflect those found in the main school, and are being tackled effectively. Students enjoy their lessons and the positive relationships with their teachers and each other. Lesson planning is thorough and students receive constructive feedback on their progress and on how they can improve their work. Tracking of students’ progress and intervention processes are now more robust. Students understand their targets and are clear about what they must do to meet them. The curriculum is rich and varied, with a range of subjects which meet the differing aspirations of students. The sixth form provides a wealth of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities, including membership of the school council, mentoring younger students and running lunchtime clubs. Sixth-form students make a good contribution to the local community by running monthly bingo and film clubs, as well as hosting an annual Valentine’s Day tea dance and a New Year party for senior citizens.

Students benefit from high levels of personal and academic support, including the Career Academy programme which brokers assistance from the business community in offering lectures, visits, seminars, mentoring and internships. Leadership and management in the sixth form are good and leaders have a clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. Recently introduced procedures and practices are already bringing about improvements in attainment and progress.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was well below average. Of those that responded, a very large majority of parents and carers were positive about, and supportive of, the school. The overwhelming majority said that the school kept their children safe and that they felt suitably informed about their children's progress. A very large majority of parents and carers said that their children enjoyed school; they felt that teaching was good and that the school was well led and managed. A very small minority commented that the school did not do enough to help them support their children's learning and that the school did not meet their children's particular needs. A small number of written responses commented on the lack of progress made by students especially the lack of challenge provided for higher attaining students. Inspectors endorse parents' and carers' many positive views of the school, including the response which concluded, 'As a parent of two boys at Haverstock, I know that they are in a safe and happy environment'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Haverstock School 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1284 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	61	52	51	43	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	51	55	47	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	75	64	40	34	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	42	60	51	5	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	43	58	49	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	56	47	45	38	15	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	36	60	51	11	9	1	1
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)	47	40	63	53	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	44	37	54	46	13	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	51	45	38	8	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	36	59	50	8	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	60	51	53	45	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	62	53	48	41	4	3	1	1

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.



3 December 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Haverstock School, London NW3 2BQ

On behalf of the inspection team, I am writing to thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school and to tell you about our findings during the inspection. Thank you for telling us about your school as well as answering the questionnaires, which confirm that you feel safe, enjoy school and agree that you are well prepared for the future. We were pleased to note that you learn a lot in lessons and feel that the headteacher and senior staff do a good job.

We have taken your views and those of your teachers, parents and carers into account in arriving at our judgement that your school provides a good level of education. It has many outstanding features such as the curriculum, the quality of care, guidance and support, and leadership and management. We judged the quality of teaching to be good. Examination results are improving and you are making good progress in your academic and personal development.

We have asked your teachers to improve the quality of teaching and take more account of the spread of ability in the class. We have also asked them to raise the attainment and progress of students in the sixth form and to ensure that able students are offered work which is more challenging. You can help by working hard to achieve your targets, and by aiming to exceed them.

Once again, thank you for your contribution to the inspection and please accept our very best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Paul Metcalf
Lead inspector

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