

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Harris Academy St John's Wood

Marlborough Hill, London NW8 0NL

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 March 2025

## Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Samantha Green. This school is part of the Harris Federation, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sir Daniel Moynihan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Harris. There is also an executive principal, Nick Soar, who is responsible for this school and two others.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish here. They are taught to embrace their school's values of dedication, determination and destiny. This supports them to succeed and grow. The school has high expectations for all pupils. The pupils meet these expectations by working hard and, as a result, achieve well.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are polite and respectful. Pupils are proud to be part of an inclusive, caring and supportive community. They share the high expectations that staff have for them and value the support they receive.

Pupils told us they feel happy in school and enjoy their learning. They know who to speak to if they have concerns and are confident they will be listened to. On the rare occasions when bullying happens, staff deal with it swiftly and effectively.

The school provides a huge range of extra-curricular enrichment activities, careers guidance and trips. Pupils readily embrace these opportunities, enhancing their experience of school life. They regularly attend clubs, including crochet and 'master chef', and compete in sporting events such as netball and basketball. High-quality school theatre productions involve many pupils from different backgrounds. Students relish the responsibility of leadership. For example, sixth-form students organise an annual Eid

party, which is attended by over 300 parents, carers and pupils.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school sets high academic standards, and pupils achieve extremely well in most subjects. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged.

From Years 7 to 11, pupils study a broad range of subjects in depth. The sixth-form curriculum is also carefully planned to cater for a wide range of interests and potential career pathways. Throughout the school, staff adapt learning effectively to support pupils' individual needs, including those pupils with SEND. Staff are quick to identify those pupils with SEND and to deploy support to maximise its impact on pupils' learning. The school uses an effective phonics programme for younger pupils who need extra support with their reading. This enables those pupils to quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent readers. In lessons, most pupils are enthusiastic about reading aloud and do so with fluency.

Teachers are subject experts. Teachers know what to teach, when to teach it and how best to teach it. This ensures that pupils are able to build on what they know to undertake more challenging learning. For example, in Year 9 geography, pupils were able to evaluate the relative importance of physical and human factors in causing climate change. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. This helps pupils recall and develop their knowledge and understanding and informs their next steps.

Teachers support pupils in developing their ability to recall previous learning and apply this to new topics. For example, students used their previous knowledge about Othello to discuss what it would be like to be an 'outsider' in Venetian society.

Pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning. Learning in lessons is rarely disrupted. Pupils are very well prepared for lessons and listen intently to their teachers and each other. Most pupils attend well. The school provides timely and effective help to pupils whose attendance is lower. Pupils are punctual to school and lessons.

The school provides remarkable opportunities for pupils' personal development. Pupils fully engage with the school organises. They help shape and develop enrichment opportunities through the 'Do More' Ambassadors programme. Students in Year 12 also engage in a community outreach programme supporting local primary schools and a care home. Pupils learn about fundamental British values as part of a diverse programme of personal, social and health education. Pupils are taught to be tolerant of diversity and difference, and staff expect pupils to treat each other kindly and with respect. The school also supports young people with initiatives designed to help them recognise and deal with sexual harassment.

Pupils receive helpful and well-planned careers guidance. Guest speakers give talks on employment opportunities and apprenticeships. Sixth-form students are positive about the

advice and guidance they receive. Therefore, they are very well prepared for higher education and employment.

Staff, including those new to teaching, receive ongoing high-quality training. Staff feel valued and supported by leaders in managing their workload. School leaders make effective use of the trust's support in developing the curriculum and teachers' professional development.

The governors and trust board have an extremely in-depth understanding of the school's work. School leaders' decisions are scrutinised robustly to ensure they always make decisions in the best interests of pupils. Governors and the trust board carry out their responsibilities very thoroughly.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2019.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

|                                                   |                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 145126                                                                           |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Westminster                                                                      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10346061                                                                         |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary                                                                        |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy sponsor-led                                                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 11 to 18                                                                         |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed                                                                            |
| <b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>   | Mixed                                                                            |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 1,332                                                                            |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 330                                                                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees                                                                |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | Philip Harris                                                                    |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                           | Sir Daniel Moynihan                                                              |
| <b>Principal</b>                                  | Samantha Green                                                                   |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.harrisstjohnswood.org.uk/">www.harrisstjohnswood.org.uk/</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>               | 19 and 20 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005               |

## Information about this school

- The current principal has been in post since September 2021.
- The school uses three registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the principal and other senior leaders, teaching staff, support staff, early career teachers and trainees. The lead inspector also met the director of secondary education for the academy trust and the chair of the board of governors.
- The inspection team looked at records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils as well as the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

### Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Laurence King, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Alex Hayes                    | Ofsted Inspector |
| Luisa Bonelli                 | Ofsted Inspector |

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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