

Inspection of an outstanding school: The Harvey Grammar School

Cheriton Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5JY

Inspection dates:

13 to 14 December 2022

Outcome

The Harvey Grammar School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school with its rich and distinguished heritage. They show respect and support for one another. Incidents of bullying and racism are rare. Pupils know the difference between banter and bullying. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns. Pupils' attendance is high and persistent absenteeism is low. Pupils are happy and safe.

Staff are proud of the school's commitment to pupils regardless of their social background. There is staunch support for equality and a deep appreciation of diversity. Pupils value the academic ethos supported by a well-organised programme of personal development, welfare and well-being.

The school offers an extensive assortment of enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities. Active clubs cover horrible histories, fantastic films, coding, chess and draughts. School trips have already taken pupils to Italy, Barbados and America as well as cinema visits to enjoy foreign language films.

A thoughtfully planned careers programme makes exceptional use of alumni to talk about apprenticeships and finance, with memorable inputs from film directors, sports journalists and social media influencers. Careers provision is bespoke, so that significant numbers of students go on to university. Many of these are the first in their family to do so.

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

The curriculum is well planned, securely embedded and precisely sequenced across all years. It is hierarchical and developmental. The curriculum is ambitious. Content is carefully matched to the national curriculum and external examinations. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve as well as their peers. This is because they are well known, enthusiastically encouraged and sensitively supported.

The curriculum offers additional time in Year 7 to develop boys' English skills especially in writing. Literacy skills are supported well across the school. Workbooks are tidy and well presented. Pupils are proud of their work. Teachers work collectively to support the boys with their presentation and organisation skills. Reading for pleasure is encouraged well across the school. Barriers to reading are effectively tackled through quality literary interventions.

The curriculum in key stage 3 builds well on the work undertaken in the primary school. Identified gaps are suitably addressed. The sixth-form curriculum builds well on Year 11 and develops learning by adding greater depth and breadth. Approximately 85% of pupils stay on to the sixth form. Retention rates are extremely high. Increasing numbers continue to universities of their choice.

Teachers are experts in their subjects. They share their knowledge enthusiastically with their pupils. Lesson planning ensures that knowledge is revisited with an emphasis on learning more and remembering more. Assessments are undertaken regularly. Feedback from these assessments is detailed and fulsome. Self-assessment and peer marking are commonplace so pupils know exactly what to do to improve further.

Leaders expect exemplary behaviour from all pupils. Lessons seen were calm and orderly with very well behaved and respectful pupils. Pupils conduct themselves with maturity and their behaviour is exemplary across the school. Relationships were positive and supportive. Boys were very courteous and respectful towards one other.

The relationships and sex education programme has been carefully and coherently collated. Themes covering health and well-being, relationships and the wider world are carefully threaded through the programme. Content is age-appropriate and students value sessions covering mental health, prejudice and stereotypes. Links have been carefully identified across all subjects, but these are not yet highlighted sufficiently by all teachers.

The sixth-form curriculum is aspiring, ambitious and academic. It is complemented with a range of enrichment opportunities. This includes cooking at a local restaurant, community projects and charitable work. Students enjoy leadership opportunities such as peer mentoring younger pupils and reading to pupils at the local primary school.

Leaders have exceedingly high expectations of the school. Sixth-form leaders are knowledgeable and determined. The leadership of the headteacher is exceptional and he is competently supported by his senior leaders and the governing board. The school has strong links with neighbouring primary schools and other grammar schools.

Leaders at all levels are supported through highly effective line management, coaching support and access to appropriate training. School leaders have considered workload and teachers are mostly positive about this. Staff work hard and feel proud to be associated with the school. Relationships with parents are incredibly positive. Almost all parents and carers say they would recommend the school to other parents.

The governing board work cooperatively together and have a strong oversight of the school. Governors understand their roles and carry these out commendably. They are

passionate about the school and advocate strongly for its status as a local grammar school for local children. Governors ensure that safeguarding is a priority.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The single central record is well kept and suitably detailed. All required checks are conducted regularly and systematically. Information is meticulously recorded and cross referenced. Safe recruitment practices are used for selecting and appointing staff, and checking their references.

Staff know what to do in the event that they are required to report concerns. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and keeping staff updated on the latest safeguarding practise. Staff training is robust, ongoing and encourages vigilance.

Pupils and students are well known and well supported. The school is caring and compassionate and this shines through very clearly. Pupils report that they feel safe. They say that they know what to do if they encountered bullying. They are confident that it would be dealt with if passed on to a member of staff.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 outstanding in March 2016.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	138480
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211930
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1025
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	275
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	John Dennis
Headteacher	Scott Norman
Website	www.harveygs.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Harvey Grammar School is a selective 11 to 18 boys' grammar school situated in Folkestone.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative providers.
- A small number of sixth-form students attend some of their A-level classes at a neighbouring girls' grammar school.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders about the curriculum, visited a selection of lessons, talked with subject teachers, spoke to boys and looked at samples of their work.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, teachers, students and pupils. They looked at the single central record and reviewed safeguarding documentation, practices and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at policies provided by the school. They studied curriculum documentation, behaviour logs, attendance records and destination information. The lead inspector met with members of the governing board.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey of parents' views and other written comments provided. They reviewed the responses to the online surveys completed by staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Taj Bhambra

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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