

Inspection of Harris Academy Peckham

112 Peckham Road, London SE15 5DZ

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February and 11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of Harris Academy Peckham is Claudette Bergin. This school is part of Harris Federation multi-academy trust, 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 Lord Harris of Peckham. There is also an executive principal, Peter Groves, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has remarkably high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Pupils learn exceptionally well in a wide range of subjects. They study a broad and academic curriculum, which sets them up very well for the next stage of their education. Expectations of behaviour are equally high. Pupils appreciate the calm and caring environment within the school. They know that adults will always listen to and support them if they are concerned about anything. This has contributed to a school environment where pupils rightly feel safe.

The school's values of 'leadership, enquiry, aspiration and perseverance' (LEAP) are at the heart of what they do at Harris Academy Peckham. The way that the school goes about developing pupils' character is exemplary. Pupils benefit from a wide range of targeted programmes, including mentoring and life coaching. These opportunities broaden pupils' horizons and inspire them to think ambitiously about their futures.

Pupils develop their talents and interests through the school's extensive extra-curricular offer. This includes pupils in younger year groups and those studying GCSE music being provided with free musical instruments and tuition. Pupils have performed at prestigious concert venues, such as Drury Lane Theatre and the Southbank Centre.

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

The education provided by this school is transformational for many of its pupils. Often pupils join the school with low starting points. A large proportion of pupils join after Year 7, with many coming from overseas without fluent English. Despite this, pupils go on to achieve consistently above national averages by the end of Year 11. The curriculum is highly ambitious. This is evident in the impressive proportion of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate, which is equally high for pupils who are disadvantaged, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school's curriculum has been designed so that pupils acquire important knowledge and skills in a logical order. This curriculum is delivered consistently effectively by teachers with excellent subject knowledge and an expert understanding of how pupils learn. Teachers know their classes extremely well. They use information about the needs of pupils with SEND to adapt the curriculum skilfully. Teachers routinely check pupils' understanding and use this information effectively to ensure that gaps in learning are filled. Pupils' literacy and language barriers are identified quickly. Those who need help to catch up benefit from highly effective support. This includes a very strong phonics programme, which enables pupils to become fluent readers so that they can access the curriculum fully.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. It is rare for learning to be disrupted and the school addresses any such incidents quickly. The school's work to promote attendance is extremely effective. The school identifies pupils quickly if their attendance drops and uses a range of initiatives, such as before-school basketball sessions and a 'principal's breakfast', to motivate them to come in.

The school's approach to personal development is exemplary. At the core of this is a well-sequenced programme of personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils have a strong understanding of issues such as online safety and criminal exploitation. Careers provision is strong and pupils hear from a range of employers and further education providers. The school rightly prioritises the development of pupils' character. Pupils reflect on how the school has taught them to make moral choices, understand others' beliefs and treat everyone with respect.

Leaders are highly ambitious for the school and the role it plays in their local community. They are very aware of the high levels of disadvantage within the area but are determined that this should never be an excuse. The school benefits from being part of a multi-academy trust, which provides robust oversight and access to extensive expertise. Staff appreciate the excellent professional development offer at the school, particularly the induction for new teachers. This leads to high levels of consistency in the classroom, and ultimately very strong outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	134225
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	10345896
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	544
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lord Harris of Peckham
CEO of the trust	Sir Daniel Moynihan
Principal	Claudette Bergin
Website	www.harrispeckham.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Harris Federation academy trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.
- The inspection started on 11 February. Inspectors returned on 11 March to gather additional evidence in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#) policy.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, principal, members of the senior leadership team and a range of staff. They also met with representatives of the governing body and the academy trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: music, drama, mathematics, science, English and history. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke to subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, had discussions with pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The curriculum in other subjects was also considered.
- When gathering additional evidence, inspectors carried out further activities to evaluate the quality of education. This included visiting lessons, talking with pupils and looking at examples of their work in English, history, geography and art. Inspectors also observed social times and spoke with pupils and leaders about aspects of behaviour and attitudes, including attendance.
- 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 considered the views of parents, pupils and staff, including through responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
Amanda Torpey	Ofsted Inspector
Terry Millar	Ofsted Inspector
Luisa Bonelli	Ofsted Inspector
Lydia Pride	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025