

Inspection of The Harrodian School

Lonsdale Road, London SW13 9QN

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 May 2025

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations for pupils' academic achievement and behaviour. These expectations are reflected in pupils' high achievement in national tests in 2024. The school is a safe and purposeful place for pupils to learn. Pupils said there is always an adult to turn to if they have any concerns. Staff know the pupils extremely well at this caring and inclusive school. Pupils learn and follow the school's values such as being compassionate and independent. Staff promote pupils' development of their resilience and curiosity well.

Pupils' behaviour around school is excellent. They enthusiastically participate in their learning. Social times are calm and orderly. Pupils converse maturely with their peers. They are respectful of each other and the school environment, including the extensive grounds and facilities.

Pupils learn about the differences between people. This helps them to respect people who have different beliefs and lifestyles to their own. Pupils from older year groups provide 'buddy' support for younger children and take part in leadership programmes. Pupils are polite and confident. Sixth-form students are positive role models for younger pupils and participate in charitable work, for example in Tanzania.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. It includes an extensive range of subjects for pupils to select from at GCSE and A level. The school has reviewed aspects of its curriculum to promote more opportunities for pupils to study modern foreign languages in greater depth from Year 7 onwards. Across all subjects, the school has considered carefully what pupils need to know and when this content should be taught, especially in the sixth form. The curriculum sets out clearly the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn. However, the sequencing and continuity of the curriculum from the early years through the primary and secondary phases is not clear in some subjects. This means that on occasions in these subjects pupils do not develop a deeper understanding of subject content.

Children in the early years settle quickly to learning activities. Language and communication are prioritised successfully. Children enjoy practising their early number skills when building with blocks or counting with staff. Children learn to share and take turns. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to broaden children's knowledge and understanding as the curriculum intentions are sometimes not precisely linked to important content.

Knowledgeable teachers think carefully about the best way to present pupils with new information. They make effective checks on pupils' learning. Teachers identify and remedy any misconceptions swiftly. In the sixth form, teachers ensure students deepen their knowledge and understanding impressively. Students in the sixth form develop into successful and mature learners, achieving exceptionally well.

The school identifies any additional needs that pupils may have accurately. Staff are trained well to be able to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in their learning. This helps pupils with SEND to progress through the same ambitious subject curriculums as their peers.

The school puts reading at the centre of the curriculum. Pupils benefit from the revised phonics scheme, including opportunities to develop and practise their reading and writing skills. Those who are at the earliest stages of learning to read get the help they need from expert teachers. This helps them to catch up quickly. Staff select texts skilfully to broaden pupils' ideas and vocabulary and to deepen their thinking. The school identifies accurately pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. Recently, it has strengthened its systems to support pupils who struggle with their reading. Most pupils become more confident readers due to the support they receive. They have access to high-quality books in the library.

Across the school, pupils persevere on tasks and use a variety of strategies to help them work independently. They work hard in lessons and want to do well. This helps pupils to learn from their mistakes. The school has high, uncompromising expectations for pupils' behaviour. This ensures that the atmosphere is calm, orderly, and conducive to learning. Lessons are free from distraction. There is a clear system for managing behaviour that pupils believe is fair. Rates of attendance are high and improving. Bullying is rare and pupils say it is dealt with quickly by adults.

Leaders have carefully designed the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils learn about important topics such as healthy relationships, first aid and the dangers of drugs and vaping. Pupils value having access to a vast range of opportunities to explore their interests outside of the classroom. For example, pupils attend clubs including crochet, sports, Lego, dance, and drama. They talk about how they enjoy competing for the school in a variety of sports. Pupils enjoy being part of school productions and taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and art exhibitions. These experiences successfully develop and support pupils' personal development and prepare pupils well for the next stages in the lives.

The school ensures that students in the sixth form develop an impressive understanding of active citizenship. For example, they support local charities, fundraise, and help younger pupils across the school. The school organises a range of trips and visits that enrich pupils' learning and broaden their cultural understanding.

The school's careers programme is highly effective. Pupils learn about the world of work. For example, they meet a range of employers, and apprenticeship and training providers. Pupils visit a range of universities and workplaces and participate in work experience. This ensures that they are well equipped to make informed, ambitious choices about their next steps in education or employment.

The proprietor and leaders are unrelenting in their ambition for pupils. They have sustained high standards over time. They closely monitor the school to ensure that the independent school standards (the standards) and the school's duties under the

Equality Act 2010 are met consistently. The newly formed governing body knows the school well and is in the process of gaining further clarity about its responsibilities. Currently, some parents and carers do not feel that the school communicates with them well, particularly when they raise concerns. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to address this. Staff are proud to work at the school and appreciate that leaders prioritise their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In some subjects, the school has not fully considered what it expects pupils to learn in each phase of education. This means that in these subjects, including the early years curriculum, pupils repeat learning and do not learn important knowledge and skills as deeply as they could. The school should ensure that it is clear about the sequencing of knowledge and content pupils will be taught and when in these subjects.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	102950
DfE registration number	318/6078
Local authority	Richmond Upon Thames
Inspection number	10375100
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,038
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	185
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Alford Houstoun-Boswall
Chair	Alford Houstoun-Boswall
Headteacher	James Hooke
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,500 to £29,970
Telephone number	020 8748 6117
Website	www.harrodian.com
Email address	admin@harrodian.com
Dates of previous inspection	14 to 16 June 2022

Information about this school

- The Harroddian School is an independent day school.
- The school is registered to admit up to 1,050 pupils.
- The school is divided into different phases. Pre-prep caters for pupils up to Year 3, prep caters for pupils in Years 4 to 8, senior school caters for pupils in Years 9 to 11 and there is a sixth form.
- A sole proprietor owns the school. There is a governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school had its last standard inspection in June 2022 when it was judged to be good, and all independent school standards were met.
- An emergency inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to information which raised concerns about some aspects of the school's work. This inspection took place on 16 November 2023. The school met all the independent school standards that were checked during that inspection.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior staff.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the proprietor and two members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, music, and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, and spoke to pupils about their learning. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and heard pupils reading to adults. They also reviewed other subjects, including geography and PSHE.
- Inspectors also visited lessons, spoke to pupils, reviewed their work, and spoke to leaders about other subjects, including in the sixth form.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, risk assessments and case studies.
- Inspectors considered a range of evidence to evaluate compliance with the standards.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff. Inspectors met with parents at the beginning of the school day and by appointment.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lascelles Haughton

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Matthews

Ofsted Inspector

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