

# Harrow Way School

Harrow Way, Andover, SM10 3RH

**Inspection dates** 10–11 July 2013

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Attainment has continued to rise and is now in line with national averages. Progress in English and mathematics is good, with all groups making similar progress. Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium students are now doing as well as their peers. Students attending off-site provision make good progress as a result of their highly personalised courses.
- Teaching is good and improving, with an increasing proportion of lessons that are outstanding. Relationships are strong, expectations are high, planning is secure and lessons are challenging. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to address common misconceptions and errors. Examination requirements are well known and shared with students. The majority of teaching observed was good and closely matched the school's own forthright assessment of the quality of teaching.
- Students behave well and their attitudes to learning are positive. They are courteous, polite and respectful to one another. Behaviour and attendance have continued to improve over time.
- The headteacher has high expectations of the school which are shared with staff, students, governors and parents. Self-evaluation is accurate, development planning is secure and the quality of teaching is monitored well, with much evidence of recent improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and students' literacy and information and communication technology skills are promoted well across the curriculum. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported.
- Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They ask challenging questions of the school's leaders and carefully monitor student funding and teacher performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to ensure that students consistently make outstanding progress given their starting points.
- Marking is variable and does not always provide students with clear guidance on how well students are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- The setting of homework is variable and opportunities to encourage independent learning skills and develop research skills are missed.
- Numeracy and problem solving skills are not sufficiently promoted across other subjects in the curriculum.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 lessons or part-lessons, including seven joint lesson observations with senior staff. In lessons, inspectors looked at the work of students and discussed their progress with them. They also conducted a number of shorter visits to lessons focusing on achievement and behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of students in both key stages and looked at samples of their work, especially English, mathematics and science, focusing on attainment and progress. They also used lunch and break times to hold informal discussions with other students across the school to gather their views.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle managers and other staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and two staff from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 46 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) as well as 34 responses received from the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information showing students' attainment and progress, performance management data, lesson observation records, governing body minutes and safeguarding documentation.

## Inspection team

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Paul Metcalf, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Sylvie Trevena               | Additional Inspector |
| John Viner                   | Additional Inspector |
| Stephen Williams             | Additional Inspector |
| Trevor Woods                 | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Harrow Way School is a smaller than average-sized community comprehensive school with specialisms in mathematics and computing. The school is a 'UNICEF Rights Respecting School'.
- The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2009, when it was judged to be good with many outstanding features to its work. The new headteacher joined in September 2012.
- The very large majority of students are White British, with very small numbers of African, Asian and mixed heritage students. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is in line with national averages.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action are below national averages. The proportions of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are in line with national averages.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for students in receipt of free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families, is in line with national averages. At the time of the inspection, there were small numbers of looked after and service family students in the school. The proportion of students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium is falling and now in line with national averages.
- A very small minority of students attend one-day vocational courses at Winton Academy and Andover College and a few students who are at risk of being excluded attend alternative provision at the Andover Education Centre.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement and the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that homework is regularly set in order to encourage independent learning and develop students' study, research and time management skills
  - making sure that marking provides students with useful feedback on how well they are doing and what they must do to improve their work and raise their achievement
  - promoting students' numeracy and problem solving skills in all subjects across the curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment which is well below the national average and the majority arrive with weak literacy skills. Students' attainment has improved over time and is now in line with national averages. Whilst in 2012 the proportion of students gaining five GCSE A\* to C grades including English and mathematics was below the national average, the school's robust tracking of current students' attainment confirms that this has improved significantly this year.
- Underperformance in art and science has been rigorously addressed, with stronger performance predicted in 2013 and confirmed in work samples and lesson observations. Attainment in the performing arts remains a strength. The school enters a very small number of students early for GCSE English but only if students are ready and will benefit from early entry.
- Students enter the school with low literacy skills which are addressed through additional support in English lessons as well as other subjects across the curriculum. Students' numeracy skills are developed in mathematics but not yet sufficiently promoted in other subjects. Students' information and communication technology skills are evident across the curriculum and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or work.
- Students' progress in Key Stage 3 is good as a result of the school's focus on developing their literacy skills and the programme of personal, social and health education. Progress in Key Stage 4 is more variable, with good progress in mathematics, computing and performing arts. Progress in English is improving rapidly and the proportion of students making and exceeding three levels of progress is now favourable so that progress is good. Progress seen in lessons was good and most parents agree.
- Students in receipt of Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding make similar progress to their peers as a result of the school's focus on students' literacy and social development. The attainment of pupil premium funded students was one grade lower in English and mathematics than their peers. The gap in English is reducing over time. Although the gap in mathematics widened in 2012, school information and observations on inspection show it is on course to close again in 2013.
- All groups of students, including those who are disabled or those who have special educational needs, make progress similar to, and occasionally better than, that of their peers as a result of the focus on teaching and learning and the better use of available data. Students who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers, because of the effective support offered to them. Students attending off-site provision make good progress and often flourish on their individualised courses.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and improving, with an increasing proportion that is outstanding, as a result of the school's focus on learning and progress. This has been reinforced by regular lesson observations and learning walks, together with intensive support by senior leaders where teaching needs improvement.
- In the best lessons, planning is well considered to take account of students' earlier learning and individual needs. Students are often given opportunities to decide their own starting points and level of challenge. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to address common misconceptions and link work to examination requirements. High expectations and strong relationships promote a positive climate for learning in the classroom.
- In a Year 9 physical education lesson, the teacher's secure subject knowledge and effective planning ensured that tasks and activities were well matched to students' capabilities. The lesson proceeded at a good pace and higher attaining students were challenged to think about how to

develop their techniques. There were high levels of motivation, commitment and enjoyment. Students confirmed that this was typical of lessons over time.

- However, in a few lessons, students were passive and less engaged because teachers did all of the work and did not encourage them to think or contribute. In these lessons, teachers did not always take sufficient account of the spread of ability and behaviour management did not adhere to school procedures. Opportunities for independent learning, including problem solving, decision making and research skills, were occasionally missed and the quality of homework was variable.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs as well as those who speak English as an additional language benefit from the school's strong focus on developing literacy and social skills. Students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding receive good support from their teachers and teaching assistants, as well as other students in the class.
- Teachers make good use of a range of strategies to monitor students' learning and progress, including regular checks on learning. Students know their target grades very well but are less clear about what they need to do to improve. Marking is variable, with best practice seen in English where students are encouraged to be involved in checks on their learning..

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Students' attitudes to learning are good, especially for older students who take responsibility for looking after younger students. Students are courteous, polite and respectful to each other as well as to teachers and to visitors.
- In lessons, students want to learn and remain responsive, even in lessons that are less engaging. They behave well and discussions, as well as documentation, confirm that behaviour has improved over time as a result of clear systems, consistent application and a much greater emphasis on rewards.
- Attendance has improved over the past three years and is now in line with the national average. The proportion of persistent non-attenders has fallen as a direct result of the school's determination to improve attendance through home visits and legal action. Punctuality across the school is good and carefully monitored.
- The number of days lost to permanent and fixed-term exclusions has fallen over the past three years but increased in 2013 following the arrival of the new headteacher. The school is confident, and inspectors agree, that exclusions will fall as a result of improved behaviour management, consistently applied sanctions and the school's greater focus on rewards.
- Students feel very safe at school. They say that bullying is rare and any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Students are very knowledgeable about the different forms that bullying can take including cyber, racist and homophobic bullying. Relationships across the school are harmonious and supportive.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher has high expectations of the school which are shared with staff, students, governors and parents. His aspirations for students permeate the school and are shared by senior and middle leaders who support his commitment and vision. These factors contribute considerably to the school's strong capacity for further improvement. The school additionally benefits from the effective support provided by the local authority.
- Leaders have a clear view of what the school does well and where it could do better. Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders use their secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses to put in place well-focused plans for improvement. The school has rightly concentrated on the previous underperformance in art and science, and there are clear signs of success due to carefully considered targets and actions.
- There are effective checks on the quality of teaching. Performance management is robust and ensures that targets for improvement are challenging and linked to pay progression decisions.

The school's innovative Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching, Assessment and Learning (METAL) programme has enabled senior staff and middle leaders to judge lessons, provide detailed feedback and offer suitably personalised training.

- The school's curriculum is carefully tailored to meet the needs of all students with a range of academic and vocational pathways on offer, including courses in conjunction with neighbouring schools. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with a strong focus on developing students' literacy skills and many extra-curricular opportunities covering sporting activities and performing arts. Equality of opportunity and esteem are strongly promoted throughout the curriculum.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well supported by the school's accreditation as a 'UNICEF Rights Respecting School'. The school is successful at preparing students for life in a multicultural society, does not tolerate any discrimination and has a very high regard for students' safety and well-being. Students value opportunities to share responsibilities and take on leadership roles as peer mentors, for example Year 10 students helping younger students with their reading. Students show respect for those from different religious, ethnic and social backgrounds.
- Year 7 catch-up funding has been spent appropriately on staffing a Year 7 nurture group, allowing vulnerable students an opportunity to remain in the same classroom base for the majority of their lessons. Pupil premium funding has been used to provide support for students' literacy skills and fund the Flexible Learning Centre, which offers individual and small group support for anger management, social skills and academic progress.
- Parent questionnaires express confidence in the school and parents say that their children are safe, happy and well looked after. The school is working hard to engage with parents and address their concerns, for example concerns over arrangements for parent consultation meetings, which have now been changed. The headteacher has established a parent forum and offered parent workshops for parents of students in both key stages.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and off-site provision is carefully monitored.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly committed to the school and they know the school's strengths and weaknesses very well. They have a very clear understanding of attainment and progress as well as the quality of teaching across the school. External and school-based training has encouraged them to ask challenging questions of the school's leaders. The governing body holds the school fully to account. Governors carefully check that resources are used for the benefit of students, including those eligible for the pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up premium. They have a growing familiarity with performance management and ensure that performance and teachers' pay progression are closely aligned. They regularly review statutory policies and ensure that all requirements are met, including those relating to students' safety.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 116431    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Hampshire |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 412774    |

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

|  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Comprehensive                      |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                          |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                              |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 870                                |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                 |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Rebecca Burbidge                   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mike Serridge                      |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 4–5 November 2009                  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01264 364533                       |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01264 210210                       |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | adminoffice@harrowway.hants.sch.uk |



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