

Inspection of Harrow Independent College

308–310 East Cote Lane, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 9AH

Inspection dates:

28 February to 2 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school because they get on well with other pupils and have positive working relationships with their teachers. Teachers are subject specialists. They give clear explanations and useful resources which help pupils to learn successfully.

The school curriculum is narrow. Pupils studying GCSE courses do not gain knowledge and skills in a broad range of subjects. Pupils receive limited careers education and guidance about the range of options available to them for their next steps in education or employment.

Staff respond swiftly to any rare incidents of pupils' poor behaviour. Leaders work closely with staff, pupils, parents and carers to avoid recurrence of disruptive or bullying incidents. Pupils are confident that their teachers will help them if they have any concerns.

Beyond attendance at lessons and some online sessions accessed from home, pupils' wider educational experience here is limited. At break time, pupils enjoy socialising and playing table tennis. Occasionally, staff organise educational outings.

Leaders do not know or follow statutory safeguarding requirements. Leaders are not as watchful or thorough as they need to be to identify when a pupil might be at risk and to ensure pupils are kept safe.

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

The curriculum for secondary-age pupils studying GCSE courses does not include a broad range of subjects that is of comparable breadth and ambition to the national curriculum. The school's narrow curriculum for pupils aged 14 to 16 limits pupils' post-16 options. Pupils do not have regular timetabled opportunities for physical education or for learning humanities and creative subjects such as art and design and music.

Leaders have structured plans for the subjects taught at the school. Generally, these comprise examination board specifications. Teachers adjust the order in which subject content is taught to ensure that pupils are secure in basic knowledge and skills before moving on to more complex concepts. Teachers regularly check that pupils recall and can apply their knowledge. They anticipate pupils' misconceptions, give feedback to develop pupils' thinking and use of technical vocabulary. Teachers identify key content that pupils need to go over again and they make sure that pupils have opportunities to revise. These routines help pupils to achieve well in their public examinations.

Leaders and the proprietor have not ensured that they and staff know how to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, leaders expect untrained staff to identify pupils with SEND so that leaders may apply for adjustments when pupils with SEND sit GCSE and/or A-level

examinations. Leaders do not ensure that teachers use suitable strategies to meet pupils' needs. Pupils who struggle with reading fluency do not receive additional help to build their confidence. Staff do not encourage pupils to read widely beyond their course text books.

Leaders and the proprietor provide few opportunities for pupils to gain and pursue interests beyond their chosen academic subjects. Leaders do not organise activities that help pupils to gain an appreciation of cultures and faiths other than their own. Leaders encourage pupils to take part in physical exercise at breaktimes indoors. However, leaders and the proprietor have not made sure that pupils routinely have access to a suitable outdoor area for recreation.

Leaders and the proprietor have developed a programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education (RSE). The intended programme covers a range of themes to help pupils to be prepared for their next steps and ready to take on increasing independence. The planned programme includes concepts such as consent and unsafe situations, including when using social media. It encourages respect for other people including those who have protected characteristics. However, leaders and the proprietor have not fulfilled their statutory duty to consult with parents about the RSE programme content and the right of parents to withdraw their child from sex education. They have not prioritised the delivery of pupils' personal development education and ensured that all pupils access the planned PSHE and RSE programme. Students in Year 13 have not received the programme of PSHE and RSE as set out in the school's policies.

Leaders do not provide pupils with a programme of careers education that includes impartial one-to-one support. Careers guidance is limited to support for pupils with the completion of university applications. Leaders do not provide pupils with information regarding alternative options to enable pupils to make informed, independent choices about their future careers. Leaders are at the advanced stages of developing a programme of careers education, drawing appropriately on external support and training, to be launched in September 2023.

Pupils are settled and attentive in class because they are motivated by their teachers, interested in the subjects they study and want to do well in their examinations.

Leaders maintain regular communication with parents. Staff liaise closely with parents about their children's education. They enjoy working at the school and feel well supported by leaders, including with their work-life balance. They appreciate the training they have received to support their roles.

Since the previous inspection, the proprietor has not maintained close checks to ensure that the school's policies and practice reflect the latest requirements and guidance. Suitable policies are in place relating to health and safety. However not all aspects of these are routinely implemented. Leaders' expectations of staff are too low regarding the identification of potential and actual risks to pupils' health and safety and do not ensure that concerns are identified and addressed swiftly and

appropriately. Leaders and the proprietor have not demonstrated capacity for improvement.

Leaders ensure compliance with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. They do not ensure that all the independent school standards are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders and the proprietor are unfamiliar with current statutory safeguarding requirements. They do not ensure that these are reflected in the school's safeguarding policies and practice. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding have not received up-to-date safeguarding training. Leaders do not ensure that they and staff receive and act upon training and guidance to identify and support vulnerable pupils. Leaders and staff are not familiar with or vigilant to potential safeguarding risks to pupils. Leaders and staff are unclear about correct reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns. Aspects of the curriculum relevant to safeguarding are not delivered to all pupils. Leaders do not pay enough attention to encouraging pupils to recognise safe and unsafe situations.

Leaders' awareness of and partnership with outside agencies to safeguard pupils' well-being is weak. Leaders do not ensure that referrals are made when concerns are raised.

The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders and staff do not know or fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders have not ensured that there is a culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders and staff are not alert to potential and actual safeguarding risks to pupils. Leaders with responsibility for safeguarding should ensure that they receive the up-to-date training necessary for their leadership of safeguarding roles. They should provide staff with safeguarding training and assure themselves of the impact of this. They should provide regular updates, so that staff recognise and follow up any concerns about pupils who may be vulnerable or at risk.
- Leaders do not provide a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. Pupils aged 14 to 16 study a narrow range of subjects that limits their opportunities for post-16 education. Leaders should extend the range of subjects studied so that the breadth of learning for these pupils includes all the areas of learning required by the independent school standards, and in particular aesthetic and creative, human and social and physical education.

- Leaders do not fulfil their statutory responsibility to provide RSE for all pupils of secondary age. They do not ensure that students in Years 12 and 13 are taught the school's RSE programme as set out in the school's RSE policy. Leaders have not consulted with parents about the content of the RSE programme or informed parents about their statutory right to withdraw their child from the sex education part of RSE. Leaders should ensure that their provision of RSE meets all statutory requirements.
- Leaders do not provide pupils with a programme of careers education. Pupils do not receive information or guidance on the range of options available to them to inform their next steps in education or employment. Leaders do not make sure that pupils are well informed to make decisions about their future career choices and applications to educational courses. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have access to a careers education programme and independent advice and guidance.
- Leaders do not have expertise or training to identify pupils with SEND and meet their needs. Staff do not routinely adjust their teaching to meet pupils' needs. Leaders should ensure that they and all staff receive training and guidance to develop their knowledge of strategies to identify and support pupils with SEND.
- Leaders do not ensure that the school's policies for health and safety and risk assessments are implemented effectively. Health and safety concerns are not identified and addressed swiftly. Leaders should oversee regular and routine health and safety checks of the school site and ensure swift identification and resolution of any hazards.

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	145568
DfE registration number	310/6011
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10254690
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Kandiah Kandeepan
Chair	Angela Hart
Principal	Kandiah Kandeepan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,700 to £11,950
Telephone number	020 8423 6227
Website	www.harrowindependentcollege.co.uk
Email address	kandiah@harrowindependentcollege.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 to 20 September 2018

Information about this school

- The school is registered as an independent day school for pupils aged 14 to 19 years. The school also provides full- and part-time education for students over 19 years.
- The school specialises in science, computing and mathematics subjects at A level and GCSE. Currently most students are following A-level courses in biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, computing or psychology. Some pupils are aged under 16 years and are studying GCSE courses in mathematics, English, biology, physics, chemistry and computing.
- The proprietor operates a separate tutorial college in the evening and at weekends from the same premises.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in September 2018.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school does not have a religious ethos.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with: the principal, who is also the proprietor of the school; the head of management and examinations; and the chair of the governing body.
- The inspection of safeguarding included meeting with the leaders with responsibility for safeguarding, looking at the school's safeguarding policy, consideration of records and correspondence relating to safeguarding, review of staff training materials, and holding telephone conversations with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, chemistry, English and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other areas of the curriculum.

- An inspector had a tour of the school premises, accompanied by the principal, to consider compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors looked at responses to Ofsted's online surveys completed by staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors also reviewed pupils' responses to surveys carried out by leaders.
- Inspectors considered the provision for pupils within the age range for which the school is registered. There were too few students in the sixth form for the post-16 provision to be judged. Inspectors did not take into account the provision for students aged over 18 years who joined the school after the age of 18 years, as set out in the non-association independent schools inspection handbook.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nigel Clemens

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively.
 - 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
 - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
 - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9]
 - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
 - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential
 - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.
- 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor–
 - 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2)
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools
 - 2A(1)(f) consults parents of registered pupils at the school before making or revising a statement under sub-paragraph (e), and
 - 2A(1)(g) publishes a copy of the statement on a website and provides a copy of the statement free of charge to anyone who asks for one.
- 2A(2) Arrangements made by the proprietor for the purposes of sub-paragraph (1)(b) must ensure that where a pupil's parent requests that the pupil is wholly or partly excused from sex education provided as part of relationships and sex education, the pupil is so excused until the request is withdrawn, unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupil should not be so excused.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–

- 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
- 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures
- 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable–
 - 29(1)(a) physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and
 - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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