

## **Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich - Context**

Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich opened in September 2006 replacing Waverley Girls School, the predecessor school on the same site. The students and staff of Waverley School transferred across to Harris Girls' Academy.

The school served a diverse community with students coming from some very affluent homes and others from more challenging areas. The Principal and Governors elected to seek Academy conversion as a means of providing the necessary further impetus and resources needed to bring about transformation in educational opportunity. This is an Academy fully supported by its community.

Harris Girls' opened a sixth form for the first time in September 2007 and this is now co-educational and partnered with our neighbouring boys' academy as of September 2010 with provision available over two sites. This provision is known as Harris East Dulwich Post Sixteen. It will grow to 400 students in time and therefore be able to offer a wide range of A levels and vocational courses. As of September 2010, we have also joined formally with the federation sixth form which has been graded as outstanding by Ofsted. This means that when our September 2010 Year 12 cohort sit their A2s, exams will be done through one joint centre number and reported as part of the federation results. 2011 is therefore our last year reporting our A level results under our own centre number.

The Academy is now undergoing its major capital build linked to Academy status. This sees the demolition of some parts of the site and the completion of a new Harris Wing which will house English, Maths, DT, Business Studies, ICT and the Study Centre. In addition to this, there will be a refurbishment programme to cover the existing buildings and bring these up to standard. This work is due to be completed at Easter 2011.

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Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich (HGAED) is part of one of the most exciting and innovative ventures in education today. We are a 11-19 Girls' Academy (co-ed at post 16) with our partner boys' school, Harris Boys' Academy East Dulwich, recently opened and moving in to a brand new building near to us in September 2010. Both Academies are part of a broader Federation of Academies across South London sponsored by Lord Harris.

Our Academy is part of a long tradition of education for girls' in Southwark that dates back to the time of the early part of the last century. In 1906 we were part of the Peckham Settlement offering educational opportunities to girls from working class backgrounds where none had previously existed. The school transferred to the current site in the mid 1920s becoming Honor Oak Grammar School. It became Waverley School in the mid 1970s as part of the move to comprehensive education with the successful merger of Honor Oak Grammar School and Friern School and in September 2006 became an Academy.

We have independent status as an Academy within the state sector, designed to raise attainment and transform educational experiences for young people and communities in areas of acute disadvantage. This gives us freedom and flexibility to innovate and it is an expectation that we will be innovative, creative and will engage in outreach, sharing good practice with our local community.

Lord Harris, who already sponsored the Academy at Peckham and Harris CTC Croydon, took up this challenge and is now developing a network of Academies in South London. There are currently 9 academies in the Harris Federation. This network will provide

limitless opportunities for students and extensive professional development opportunities for all staff.

The Federation has a national profile and is involved in working with many partners looking at pioneering and innovative practice and developing new ways of partnership working across a number of Academies in a 'hard' Federation. Our partners include groups such as Teach First, NESTA, GoddardPayne, Learning Futures and the NCSL.

HGAED opened as an Academy in September 2006. Our specialisms are Sport, Health Sciences and Enterprise. We have an annual intake of 150 Girls and a 6th form of up to 400 students shared with the Boys' Academy. For many years, families in the area have sought education for their children in other parts of South London and elsewhere, including the private sector. The two East Dulwich Academies aim to provide high quality education in the local community and become the schools of first choice for every family.

We are already a successful Academy. In December 2005 OFSTED described us "effective and improving with some outstanding features". In November 2007 HMI confirmed that we had made satisfactory progress since becoming an Academy and that we had a clear view of what needed to be done to effect further improvements. In November 2008, Ofsted revisited and said that we have the capacity to be outstanding when they next return. In November 2009, we received a monitoring visit from Ofsted who stated that we had made good progress against our key actions.

We are highly ambitious for our students and believe that our vision for transformation can have a real impact on their life chances. We also believe that there is much more still to do to ensure that the Academy is outstanding in its provision and we continue to move forward with our plans for ongoing improvement.

## **Curriculum**

We believe that all students can achieve well if the curriculum we offer is right. We therefore offer a wide-ranging curriculum which challenges our most able students right through to those who need specialist support and a flexible curriculum.

We have recently undertaken a student-led piece of action research into lesson length and this has led to variable lesson length within our timetable, including a whole day lesson in Year 9 where all students undertake a vocational qualification.

We have a strong skills focus to our curriculum and this is led from Year 7 by our 'My World' curriculum which is built around 7 learning powers and embedded within Humanities. We aim to disseminate this across the academy.

We believe strongly in student-owned, independent learning and our homework schedule at Key Stage 3 reflects this through Independent Learning Challenges.

We also aim to offer our students 'real world' learning which is meaningful to students, increasing motivation and engagement. To this end we are working with NESTA to explore how this can be achieved.

Sport and Enterprise have the power to be highly motivational and the Academy aims to utilise these alongside Health Sciences in its curriculum design as a vehicle to drive improvement, whilst at the same time offering a well-rounded, broad and balanced

education. The Sports specialism provides a strong identity to the Academy generally and through the curriculum and its delivery. Enterprise and Health Sciences are now also making their mark in the academy through a range of specialist resources, staff and opportunities for students.

Our School Sports Partnership is highly regarded locally and nationally based with us, it works alongside 10 secondary and 35 primary schools and recently gained national recognition by winning the Innovation Award at the 2007-8 Youth Sport Trust national conference.

## **Post 16**

The structure of our Post 16 provision has already been explained. We have a Vice Principal on site who works jointly for the Boys' and Girls' academies and leads the sixth form on our site. He is supported by a Sixth Form Manager.

We run our post 16 on a business model as we hold an Enterprise specialism. Students take part in a Dragon's Den event and are supported to run their own businesses, they are expected to wear business dress and the sanctions follow a business model as would be encountered in the workplace.

Our results shot up in summer 2010 at Post 16 with 89% A-C grades and 51% A-B grades, 100% A-E grades. Our APS per student is 742.5 and per entry is 219.

## **Students**

The diversity of the student body is one of the Academy's main strengths. The main ethnic groups are African 28%, Caribbean 26%, White 16%. 50% of our students speak English as an additional language and many are trilingual. Over 63 different languages are spoken. 33% register for free school meals. 31% are on the code of practice for special educational needs at school action and school action plus. 3% have a statement of special educational needs. In addition, we have a number of students who are in the care of the local authority.



## **Staff**

There are approximately 119 staff of which 67 are teaching staff and 52 professional support staff.

There is a comprehensive Federation staff benefits package.










All colleagues appointed to our Academy will be employed by The Academy Trust on an Academy contract. For teachers this includes 5 additional professional development days (in addition to 195 days). An Academy supplement of £2,000 is paid to all teachers to reflect their commitment to the demands of working in one of the most exciting and demanding but rewarding educational projects of current times.

## Federation

Lord Harris of Peckham sponsors a number of Academies, mainly in the South London area. His vision is that rather than have these Academies working in isolation, they should benefit from working as part of a wider, local Harris Academy Federation.

It is clear that nine or more Academies working together will provide a powerful tool for school improvement and for raising standards. The Federation operates with a central Board of Directors providing strategic direction which is able to speak for the Federation at a national level as well as with local Academy Governing Bodies. It is planned that the Federation will grow further in the coming years.

The Harris Federation currently comprises the following Academies

	<i>Harris Academy Bermondsey (Girls') – 2006 – capacity 950</i>
	<i>Harris City Academy Crystal Palace – 2007 – capacity 1300 Formerly Harris CTC.</i>
	<i>Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich – 2006 – capacity 950</i>
	<i>Harris Academy Merton – 2006 – capacity 1200</i>
	<i>Harris Academy at Peckham – 2003 – capacity 1450</i>
	<i>Harris Academy South Norwood – 2007 – capacity 1250</i>
	<i>Harris Academy Falconwood – 2008 – capacity 1000</i>
	<i>Harris Boys Academy East Dulwich – 2009 – capacity year 7 - 150 places</i>
	<i>Harris Academy Purley – 2009 – capacity year 7 - 180 places</i>

Lord Harris is also a major sponsor of the Harris Manchester College and Oriel College in Oxford and also Lucy Cavendish College Cambridge. Our aim is to link closely with these Colleges.

The Federation is led by a Chief Executive Officer with the overall aim being to derive the maximum possible educational, financial and personnel benefits from working in a group of co-operating Academies, rather than working in isolation. The Academies are run by their Principals working as part of a supportive community. The aim is to provide reduced bureaucracy, share best practice, co-operate in course planning, professional development etc and provide higher quality ICT, financial and premises support than would be available to any single school working alone. The Federation aims to create an internal market for promotion so that staff recruitment and retention is as attractive as possible.

## **Governors' mission, core aims and objectives for Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich**

The Academy has as its motto -

“Aspire, Learn, Succeed”

Academy Principles:

The Academy will provide an educational community that is calm, welcoming and inclusive, and in which diversity is celebrated.

Academy students and staff together strive for excellence by continuously improving on their personal best.



Everyone at the Academy will be an effective and self-motivated learner responsible for their own development and learning and for the development and learning of others.

Team leadership and membership, and opportunities to be coaches and be coached, will secure continuous improvement throughout the Academy.

Creativity, innovation, problem-solving and risk-taking will be features in all aspects of Academy life.

Academy students will develop financial awareness, economic independence and the skills to be leaders, employees, employers and entrepreneurs in the workplace of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The health and well-being of students' own lives and that of their community will be promoted at the Academy.

The Academy will promote access to a wide network of health communities who can support pathways to careers in this field and our curriculum will support these career choices.

Active citizenship will be encouraged amongst all students and will develop in our community a strong understanding of, and striving for, social justice locally, nationally and internationally.

When choosing staff, the Governors are looking for outstanding individuals able to inspire young people to achieve at the highest levels

## Location of the Harris Girls' Academy at East Dulwich

