

E-ACT Crest Academy

Address: Crest Road, Neasden, London, NW2 7SN

Unique reference number (URN): 135973

Inspection report: 24 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, generally achieve well from their starting points and are prepared effectively for their next steps. Published outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are broadly close to national averages. Most pupils gain the knowledge and skills that they need for their next steps. However, on occasion, the approaches used to deliver the learning mean that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders have accurately identified causes of underperformance and are addressing these. For example, curriculum and teaching improvements are strengthening current achievement, and gaps are narrowing. The work to develop pupils' reading and numeracy skills is having a substantially positive impact on vulnerable groups of pupils, particularly those who join the school after the start of year 7.

The school has taken effective action to identify other groups who are not yet achieving as well as they should be. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to improve outcomes. The broad vocational offer in the sixth form enables pupils to achieve well in their qualifications. This supports them to move successfully on to the next stage in their education or training.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have fostered a culture where attendance is promoted consistently well across all phases of school. Attendance is now in line with national averages, and leaders are committed to improving it further. Leaders analyse attendance trends and patterns carefully. Leaders identify pupils who need additional support to help them to attend well. The school has implemented a range of strategies to support pupils with low attendance, including those who are new to school. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly in recent years.

Leaders have recently made changes to the school's behaviour policy. This has helped to ensure that staff have high expectations of how pupils behave. Pupils and staff have a shared understanding of the school's values. Respectful relationships help pupils to feel valued and part of the school community. They want to come to school and attend regularly. Classrooms are typically calm and orderly. Older pupils comment positively on the recent changes to behaviour. Restorative approaches give pupils the chance to modify their behaviour. As a result, suspensions and exclusions have reduced markedly over the year. Pupils report that if bullying occurs, staff deal with it effectively. Most pupils engage well with learning and have positive attitudes. However, pupils are not always supported to consistently have the self-discipline and dedication to their learning that will enable them to achieve as well as possible.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that an ambitious, well-planned curriculum is in place. Leaders have set out a curriculum that identifies the knowledge pupils should learn and the order in which it should be taught. Subject leaders refine the curriculum when needed. Leaders have an

accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They use this understanding to provide additional oversight and support, where it is needed.

Staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge and typically explain new concepts clearly. Teaching is typically effective across the school. Staff use the evidence-informed teaching strategies through the 'Crest Way' to help pupils to build secure knowledge. However, there are times when pupils' experiences of teaching are not fully consistent across the school. Although teachers generally present new information clearly, at times, they do not check how well pupils have understood this knowledge. This means that some pupils' misconceptions persist over time, leading to gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders have prioritised the foundational skills that pupils need to be successful. As a result, pupils are largely secure in the fundamentals of writing and speaking. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics skills, such as calculations. Pupils who find reading difficult are supported through a well-designed phonics programme and range of interventions.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and promote an inclusive ethos across the school. They identify pupils' varied needs quickly and accurately, including those who arrive during the school year. Staff recognise the range of challenges that pupils may face, and they are committed to supporting these pupils to be successful.

Staff typically demonstrate a secure understanding of pupils' needs. They generally support pupils with barriers to learning effectively in lessons. However, teachers do not consistently apply adaptations with precision across all subjects for all pupils. For some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the guidance staff provide remains too generic. This sometimes leads pupils to leave work unfinished and have gaps in their learning. While leaders have established systems to meet pupils' individual needs, they now need to embed greater consistency in the quality of this support.

Leaders work closely with families and professionals, including the virtual school. They review support often and refine it when pupils' needs change. Pastoral support for vulnerable pupils is particularly effective, importantly for pupils who are known to social care. Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is allocated effectively and regularly monitored. The school uses alternative provision carefully and only when it is in pupils' best interests. Leaders check the quality of this provision closely and make sure that external partners understand how to meet pupils' needs well.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are committed to making decisions in the best interests of pupils. They lead by example, setting the standard for staff in terms of professionalism. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have a deep understanding of the community the school serves and the barriers that many of its pupils face. The new leadership has established an aspirational culture at the school. Staff reflect leaders' commitment to supporting all pupils' learning and wellbeing. The impact of leaders' work is evident in the progress they have

made, for example in raising pupils' attendance and improving behaviour. It is also evident in their well-focused work to secure the necessary improvements in the post-16 provision.

The trust and governors provide effective oversight. They understand the local community and offer leaders focused support and challenge in the best interests of pupils. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

Leaders work effectively with external organisations and agencies. For example, they liaise closely with the virtual school, the local authority, alternative provisions and other schools when adapting pupils' educational offer. This ensures that pupils are well supported and typically make progress from their relative starting points.

Staff, including those who are at the start of their careers, benefit from a coherent research-based professional learning programme. Staff value how training builds their expertise in curriculum, subject knowledge and inclusive practice. Staff speak very positively about leadership, recognising leaders' openness and their clear direction for the school. Staff feel valued by leaders. They are very positive about the support that they receive for their workload and wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a broad and well-designed programme for personal development. Leaders think carefully about the knowledge that pupils need to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. Pupils learn about equalities and what this means for them and for society. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and relationships. Pupils are well informed about wider society and the world that they live in.

Leaders have a clear ambition for all pupils to feel part of the school community and to develop their individual character. They have developed a specific curriculum and targeted assemblies to strengthen pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils' positive conduct around the school reflects the focus that leaders have on developing character. Leaders ensure that pupils receive high-quality pastoral care, tailored to meet their individual needs. Pupils value the help provided by pastoral staff, for instance, when they have worries about school or difficulties managing friendships.

Leaders provide a wide range of clubs, trips and events that extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive additional support so that they can take part in these activities. Pupils learn about people with different beliefs and spiritual perspectives from a range of cultures, taking time to reflect on these. They also celebrate these differences through events such as the school culture day.

The school has an appropriate and effective careers programme. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, learn about a variety of training pathways and engage with a range of employers. They develop a broad understanding of their future options and are interested in exploring the world of work. Pupils learn about their choices post-16, as well as

developing their understanding of university and the world of work. Pupils receive individual careers advice so that they move on to destinations aligned with their future ambitions.

Needs attention

Post 16 provision

Needs attention 

The achievement of students in academic qualifications is below the national average. Leaders' recent improvement work has helped to improve attainment and progress in A-Level qualifications, though there is still work to do to bring them closer to national averages.

Leaders have created an inclusive sixth form where students feel welcomed. Leaders have an increasingly accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the 16 to 19 study programme. They have refined the curriculum so that courses match students' abilities and ambitions. This has created a more coherent and ambitious offer that meets students' needs. Attainment and progress outcomes in vocational subjects have remained above national averages over time.

Leaders respond effectively to inconsistencies in the curriculum design and delivery across subjects. Their actions are beginning to have a notable impact on improving the provision for all students. Even so, some variation in the quality of curriculum delivery across subjects means that some students do not achieve as well as they should.

Students benefit from a wide range of opportunities. They participate in a range of enrichment including international visits, clubs and leadership roles. Relationships in the sixth form are respectful and supportive, and students feel well cared for. Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for their next steps. They offer independent careers advice and comprehensive information about higher education and apprenticeship routes. Typically, students secure appropriate destinations, such as university, apprenticeships or employment.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

This is a caring and inclusive school where all pupils are welcomed, whatever their backgrounds and needs. Pupils benefit from a strong culture of care that is evident across the school. They feel safe in school and appreciate the support that they receive from staff. They know exactly who to turn to if they need help. Pupils feel confident celebrating their own culture and the cultures of others, for example through the school's culture days. As a result, the school has a friendly atmosphere, and pupils feel a sense of belonging to their school community.

Staff at the school get to know pupils well. They quickly identify the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school ensures that new pupils settle in well. Many pupils join the school during the school year, and many arrive with barriers to learning. Effective strategies to overcome these barriers are put in place. Most

pupils feel well supported. They generally progress well through the curriculum from their starting points.

Pupils enjoy their learning, and most are committed to doing their best in class. However, there is variability in how well some teaching checks what pupils know. Most pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve in line with national averages. However, some pupils and, in particular, sixth-form students do not make as much progress as they should. Leaders are aware of this and have put strategies in place to address these inconsistencies. Improvements to the curriculum and teaching are starting to have a positive impact on pupils currently in the school.

Expectations for behaviour and conduct are clear and understood by all. Leaders have introduced routines, for example morning 'line-up', that help to create a settled start to the day. Pupils respond well to these clear routines. Behaviour in lessons is typically calm and focused, and pupils learn without disruption. When bullying happens, leaders take appropriate action to stop it. Pupils recognise this.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching meets pupils' needs consistently well through highly effective adaptations in lessons, both to secure and deepen pupils' knowledge and to ensure that they make as much progress through the curriculum as they can.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers are skilled at checking pupils' understanding and starting points so they can expertly adapt teaching effectively, enabling pupils to achieve highly.
 - Leaders should ensure that recent actions to strengthen achievement in the sixth form are fully embedded and lead to consistently positive results for all post-16 students.
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About this inspection

This school is part of E-ACT 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), Tom Campbell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Jim Knight.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with the regional director and other trust representatives, including the trust's lead for safeguarding. The lead inspector met with the CEO and chief education officer of the trust and the chair of the trust.

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.

The school makes use of 4 registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher : Andrea Rosewell

Lead inspector:

Sam Johnson, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

JAN Shadick, Ofsted Inspector

Debbie Lebrecht, Ofsted Inspector

Eliot Wong, Ofsted Inspector

Gareth Cross, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 24 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,206

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

1,650

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

51.72%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.58%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

8.21%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	36.3%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	39.1%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	38.2%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	39.9	46.0	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.1	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	43.2	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.03	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.44	-0.03	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	29.1%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	28.3%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.7%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	35.7	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	37.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.3	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.24	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.14	-0.57	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	29.1%	53.1%	-24.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	28.3%	53.1%	-24.8 pp
2022/23 (final)	29.7%	52.4%	-22.7 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	35.7	50.4	-14.8
2023/24 (final)	37.0	50.0	-13.1
2022/23 (final)	39.3	50.3	-11.0

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.24	0.16	-0.40
2022/23 (final)	0.14	0.17	-0.02

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	86%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	85%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	90%	94%	Below

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	24.99	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	18.29	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	22.26	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.7	0.0	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	6.9%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.9%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	10.9%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	21.5%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	35.1%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	42.1%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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