

Inspection of Woodmansterne School

Woodmansterne Road, Streatham, London SW16 5UQ

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 September 2024

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils meet the school's high expectations which encourage pupils to aim high, work together and show respect. From the Nursery to the sixth form, pupils regularly enjoy learning, focus in class and make frequent use of the many activities available beyond the curriculum. As one parent and/or carer, typical of many, said: 'My daughter loves going to school and feels she is an important member of the school community.'

Pupils behave exceptionally well and support each other to succeed. They are safe. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), typically achieve highly.

The school's approach to boosting mental health and managing staff workload is exemplary. The trained mental health team supports the well-being of pupils, staff and parents. This support includes Pepper, the school's therapy dog, pupil mental health ambassadors and strategies to help pupils understand and regulate their emotions.

As part of the 'Woodmansterne Pledge', all pupils access a wide range of high-quality enrichment. These include performing, cooking and learning to play a musical instrument. Pupils in the primary phase attend residentials where they learn to camp and administer first aid. Pupils can develop their interests at popular clubs such as forest fun, ballet and chill club. Pupils are also elected to the school and eco-councils, where they contribute to school-wide decisions.

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

The school has designed a well-rounded curriculum for pupils across all phases. This curriculum enables pupils to learn a rich breadth of knowledge and, when appropriate, choose to study subjects that they enjoy in greater depth. In the new sixth form, students have access to many courses, including A levels and professional cookery. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. This is reflected in the strong published academic outcomes for pupils in many subjects across the primary and secondary phases.

Teachers across different phases take part in effective professional development together. For example, secondary and primary colleagues often visit each other's classes in order to refine further their teaching practice. The governing body holds the school to account, scrutinises the school's work effectively and, where necessary, provides professional challenge.

The school has thought in detail about what pupils should learn and when, including how knowledge builds smoothly from the primary to the secondary phase. For example, in mathematics, where pupils achieve particularly highly, the approach to teaching key knowledge is consistent across phases. This starts in the early years, where children learn and can show the difference between 'full' and 'half-full', developing their understanding of parts of a whole. In the early years, the school is sharpening its curriculum thinking in some areas so that it is equally strong across the school.

Pupils meet the school's very high standards of behaviour across all phases. Pupils are taught systematically how to behave and to listen to those with differing opinions. Pupils' high level of engagement in class enables staff to prioritise teaching without distraction. In the early years, children play happily and are kind to each other. On the very rare occasions that pupils struggle to maintain the school's high behaviour expectations, leaders provide pupils with the support they need to get back on course with their learning.

As part of the 'Woody way', teachers regularly check that pupils remember the key content they have been taught. In class, teachers present new information clearly so that pupils understand and remember what is taught. For example, in computing in the secondary phase, pupils learn successfully about binary by building on their learning from primary mathematics and computing. In the sixth form, students are well supported by staff with strong subject knowledge. However, students in the sixth form do not develop their curriculum knowledge in as much depth as they could, and the quality of their work is not as high as it could be.

The school prioritises reading for pleasure. As a result, pupils enjoy reading widely and often. Pupils in the secondary phase help younger pupils practise their reading. In the primary phase, the majority of pupils are supported effectively to learn to read and write, and they achieve well. This is reflected in the school's published outcomes for early reading. The school provides support for the small proportion of pupils who need help to catch up on learning with their peers in these areas. However, this support is not as impactful as it should be.

The school provides high-quality support for pupils with SEND. It swiftly identifies pupils who may need help and works closely with external agencies where necessary. Pupils with SEND are typically well aided by staff, who are provided with clear guidance by the school on how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND.

The school continues to prioritise attendance. Leaders understand why pupils may be absent from school and build strong professional relationships with families to help pupils attend regularly.

The school has carefully planned educational visits so they expand pupils' knowledge across all subjects in the curriculum. For example, children in Reception go to the post office to post a letter, Year 6 pupils visit France to learn about European history and languages, and in the secondary phase, pupils travel to Barcelona and see the work of the architect Gaudi.

The school provides pupils with extensive and high-quality careers opportunities, which pupils appreciate. They make regular use of the individualised, independent careers guidance available. All pupils in Years 10 and 12 take part in work experience. The school has recently secured funding for students in Year 13 to take part in work experience in Europe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the sixth form, the implementation of the curriculum is less embedded than in other areas of the school. As a result, students in the sixth form do not learn and remember key knowledge and skills with as much depth as they can and do not achieve as well. The school should continue to strengthen the delivery of the curriculum across the sixth form so that students achieve equally highly across the school.
- Occasionally, the actions the school takes to support a small proportion of pupils with lower prior attainment are not as effective as they could be. This means they do not catch up learning with their peers as quickly as they could and do not build their curriculum knowledge across subjects as effectively. The school should ensure that the support these pupils receive helps them to catch up with their peers as quickly as possible.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100590
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10345662
Type of school	All-through
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,627
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Clark
Headteacher	Samantha Palin (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.woodmansterne.london
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of the WCL Federation, which also includes Crown Lane Primary School. The governing body is responsible for both schools in the federation.
- The school uses three registered alternative provisions.
- 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 sixth-form provision is new since the last inspection and opened in September 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act

2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, early years, sixth form and pupils' wider development.
- The inspectors met with representatives from the governing body and had discussions with the local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing, secondary English and secondary art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the respective responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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