

Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Woodlane High School

Du Cane Road, Hammersmith, London W12 0TN

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 November 2024

Outcome

Woodlane High School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Woodlane High School is a happy and safe place where pupils thrive. Pupils get an education that is second to none. Pupils readily embody the school's values by being extremely kind and respectful toward their peers and staff alike. Pupils demonstrate high levels of independence, resilience and honesty. They live up to the high expectations staff have of them to work hard and try their best. This means they achieve exceptionally well, making considerable progress from their different starting points.

Pupils settle quickly when they join the school. They participate fully in activities including visits, parents' evenings and taster lessons before they arrive. Transition classes in Year 7 help them to learn the rules and routines of the school so they are successful. There is a razor-sharp focus on what is best for each pupil. Pupils receive high-quality one to one careers advice, participate in work experience, learn about independent living, money management and receive travel training. This means they are confident and well-prepared for their next steps in education and life beyond the school.

Pupils benefit from a very well-structured environment that supports their behaviour. They are expertly helped to identify when they become dysregulated and how to calm down. Pupils help each other to behave well, both in lessons and around the school at breaktimes.

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

The curriculum is broad, rich and highly personalised, often exceeding the ambitions of what is expected nationally. For example, pupils access a large range of accredited courses, including GCSEs, which prepare them well for their future.

Pupils achieve well because the curriculum has been meticulously designed. Knowledge builds on pupils' starting points so that their learning deepens from Year 7 to Year 11. For example, in mathematics, pupils identify and sort shapes according to their similarities and differences. Older pupils build on this knowledge when learning to calculate perimeter, area and volume.

Pupils' individual needs and what helps them learn best are discussed regularly, finely tuned and shared with staff, parents and carers. This information helps to inform the curriculum that each pupil learns. Teachers are experts in their subjects and very skilled at implementing the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make excellent use of the advice and guidance they receive from specialists such as speech and language and occupational therapists and highly trained support staff. Teachers present information clearly using a range of strategies, including images, gestures, technical support and objects to help pupils understand. Pupils are given many opportunities to practice and repeat what they have learned to help them remember it.

Teachers check pupils' understanding systematically. This ensures that any errors or misconceptions are identified and corrected quickly. The school robustly tracks pupils' progress from their starting points across all areas, including how they demonstrate the school's values. This helps leaders to refine the curriculum and how it is taught to maximise success.

Reading is prioritised and the love of reading promoted across the school. For example, pupils enjoy reading, in the specially designed 'Reading Nook'. The school has embedded a phonics programme for those pupils who need it. It is delivered with accuracy and precision by well-trained staff, who regularly check pupils' reading, providing further support where necessary. Consequently, pupils learn to read with accuracy, fluency and confidence.

Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is exceptional. This is because staff have consistently high expectations which are well understood by pupils. A range of highly effective strategies are used to support pupils to behave appropriately and regulate themselves. These include rewards, positive behaviour records, daily communication with home, reinforcement of school values, and therapeutic and sensory work. The school analyses closely pupils' attendance. It works effectively with families, pupils and other agencies to support those who struggle to come to school regularly and on time.

The school prepares pupils thoroughly for independence through a highly tailored, personal, social, citizenship and health education (PSHCE) curriculum. For example, pupils learn about how to maintain their own physical and mental health through understanding potential risks in the community, online safety, first aid and healthy relationships. Pupils' talents and interests are developed through a comprehensive programme of visits, workshops and activities. These include horse-riding, swimming, sports clubs, drama workshops, residential visits and outings to museums and galleries.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, are relentless in their drive for continuous improvement. This culture of excellence is shared by all. Staff are highly appreciative of how leaders consider their well-being, including how their workload is managed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	100379
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10345643
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alex Greaves
Headteacher	Claire Maynard
Website	www.woodlane.lbhf.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with a wide range of SEND, including autism, visual and hearing impairment, speech, language and communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.
- All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the school's education provision.
- 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 and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspectors met with school leaders including the head teacher, deputy and assistant head teachers, and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. They also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, met with pupils and looked at samples of their work. They also observed break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered documentation related to the curriculum and assessment, behaviour and attendance and pupils' EHC plans.
- 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 pupil's interests first.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions as well as their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Una Buckley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Neary

Ofsted Inspector

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