

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

8–30 Galena Road, London W6 0LT

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Pani Matsangos. This school is part of Westside 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), Pani Matsangos, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Caroline Clark.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a highly inclusive school, where pupils are set up for success. Very strong relationships are established quickly between staff and pupils, so there is a climate of trust and respect. Pupils often arrive after being out of school for some time, or after a turbulent period. The school prioritises that every pupil is known as an individual and has a fresh start with higher aspirations. Consequently, pupils feel safe, understood and confident.

The school has established clear and widely used processes for managing pupils' behaviour. There are very high expectations, which pupils strive to meet. Staff are extremely attentive and quick to act should pupils fall short, providing boundaries and support in equal measure. This means pupils' conduct is very calm and purposeful, enabling highly effective learning to take place.

Pupils follow a broad and ambitious curriculum. They are prepared effectively for their next steps. Year 11 pupils leave with a range of useful, recognised qualifications. Most pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school meets individual needs very effectively, so that pupils are provided with the best curriculum for them.

Staff are dedicated and highly committed to providing the best possible education for these pupils. The school goes above and beyond so that pupils do not just have one trusted adult behind them, but a whole school community.

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

The school provides a highly ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to achieve exceptionally well, given their starting points. Pupils learn through individualised pathways that allow them to attain appropriate qualifications, such as GCSEs and vocational courses. Pupils are well prepared for employment by being able to study useful skills through the humanities, food and nutrition, beauty, sports science and art. The school is highly effective in adapting provision to meet each individual's talents and interests.

Individual subject curriculums are very well thought through. Teachers have extremely strong subject knowledge and deliver the curriculum with clarity. They revisit prior knowledge frequently to ensure it is embedded, before moving on to new content. For example, pupils in mathematics practise calculating the area of different shapes before applying more complex formulas to work out volume. This approach supports those who may have gaps in their knowledge from missing education previously.

Pupils take pride in their work. They often produce work of high quality that meets the high standards set by the school. Teachers check pupils' understanding often and address misconceptions, so that pupils build a strong body of knowledge and skills. For example, in art pupils replicate the style of Richard Hamilton and explore colour and image in paint confidently, while in cookery, pupils can talk through the steps of their recipes and reasons for their choices with authority.

The school is acutely aware of the individual needs of pupils. Before pupils take part in lessons, they are given a comprehensive induction that identifies their strengths, ambitions and areas of need. This detailed information is shared with staff so that adaptations are put in place diligently. Consequently, pupils make rapid progress through the curriculum. Where required, the school puts in place a range of highly effective therapies, mentoring and strong pastoral care so that pupils build their self-belief and perseverance.

The school puts reading at the centre of its curriculum. Those who need support are provided with a targeted reading programme. Pupils benefit from reading high-quality texts across the curriculum and an emphasis on oracy and key vocabulary. Library lessons, poetry slams, workshops at the Globe and reading groups mean pupils build their fluency and accuracy quickly.

The school's approach to personal development is exceptional. This is exemplified through the school's careers and alumni programme. Pupils are given bespoke guidance and opportunities. The school goes beyond the expected and continues to offer support to pupils even after they have left.

Pupils receive an impressive enrichment programme to build their understanding of the world around them. They visit museums, galleries, workshops and sporting events. Citizenship and personal, social, health and economic education are rightly given priority. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe very effectively, including online. They develop a strong understanding of consent, relationships and self-care.

Pupils are taught there is no ceiling to what they can achieve and to hold themselves to a high standard. This means pupils behave well and want to attend school. Leaders are aware of the complex reasons why some pupils struggle to come to school and work skilfully to remove these barriers.

Leaders and trustees are proactive in going the extra mile. Parents and carers recognise this. One parent summarised the views of many when they commented that the school 'genuinely cares about my child and their future.' Pupils rightly say they feel heard, seen and valued.

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 to be 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 October 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	140201
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10345973
Type of school	Free schools alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Caroline Clark
CEO of the trust	Pani Matsangos
Headteacher	Pani Matsangos
Website	www.westsideschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is the only school in a single-academy trust.
- The school uses three unregistered 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.

Information about this inspection

- 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.

- The inspectors met with senior leaders, a representative from the board of trustees, representatives from the local authority, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to pupils, parents and staff and took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspectors checked the school's policies and records, including those related to behaviour and pupils' wider development.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including as they arrived and left the school.
- 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.

Inspection team

Sarah Saunders, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Roberts

His Majesty's Inspector

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