

Inspection of Hampstead School

Westbere Road, Hampstead, London NW2 3RT

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school benefit from a welcoming and inclusive ethos. Leaders have established a calm and purposeful learning environment where pupils are encouraged to 'think big, work hard and be kind'. Pupils respond well to this. They behave well in lessons and around the school, and they show respect to each other and to adults. Diversity is celebrated and unkind or discriminatory behaviour is not tolerated.

Leaders have established a very carefully considered curriculum which is broad and balanced. Leaders and teachers make sure that this curriculum is accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Provision for these pupils is particularly strong. This rich curriculum prepares pupils well for the next steps in their education, training or employment. Sixth-form students achieve particularly well.

Pupils are taught important life skills through a structured programme of personal, social, health, citizenship and relationships education. This helps pupils understand about relationships and about risks to their safety. A structured programme of careers education and advice helps pupils to make informed choices about their futures. This includes dedicated work experience for pupils in both Year 10 and Year 12.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the design of the curriculum. They have made sure that this curriculum is ambitious and broad. At the end of Year 9, pupils choose from a wide range of subjects. This choice extends into the sixth form, where leaders offer courses that are suitable for students with different abilities and interests. Leaders continually review this offer.

Subject content has been considered carefully. For example, in English, leaders have included activities that develop pupils' analytical skills in the younger years. This means that pupils are ready for the challenges of GCSE. In mathematics, the curriculum continually builds on previous learning. For example, students in Year 13 can tackle complex problem-solving by drawing on content taught in earlier years.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge, and the scope of the curriculum is delivered in line with leaders' intentions. Sometimes, however, teachers' choices of tasks in lessons are not closely linked to the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This can hinder their checks of pupils' understanding and the clear delivery of new content. This, in turn, leads to some gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers, and they achieve well. Very clear information about these pupils is shared with teachers. Teachers use this information well to put helpful strategies in place that support learning.

Leaders have made reading a priority. Many pupils, including those new to English, benefit from extra help with their reading. This is delivered by trained staff. A well-resourced library helps pupils to develop their interest in reading.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They also know that some pupils need support to help them to behave well. Very clear behaviour systems are understood well by pupils and applied consistently by staff. This means that learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Corridors and social spaces are calm and orderly. The number of suspensions has decreased significantly because of the efforts of leaders and staff to improve behaviour. High levels of attendance demonstrate pupils' positive attitude to their learning.

Leaders have thought carefully about the provision for pupils' wider development, including for students in the sixth form. A well-thought-out personal development programme covers topics, such as healthy relationships, in an age-appropriate way. Leaders review and update this programme regularly so that the content remains relevant. The detailed careers programme helps pupils to make informed choices about their next steps. Class teachers and form tutors establish strong relationships with their pupils. This means pupils are confident to discuss any issues or concerns with their teachers.

Leaders provide a range of clubs and activities for pupils to attend at lunchtime or after school, including a range of sports and performing arts clubs. However, take-up of these activities is low, and declines further as pupils get older. Sixth-form students have recently started a community challenge programme, which encourages them to help others in the school.

Governors have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They provide support and challenge to leaders, and they regularly speak with parents and carers, pupils and staff. Staff feel valued and are proud to work in the school. Staff benefit from regular ongoing training and development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A dedicated safeguarding team ensures that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff are vigilant, and know how to report any concerns that they may have.

Case studies show that all relevant information is recorded and escalated to the appropriate authority in a timely manner. Leaders are tenacious in securing support for vulnerable pupils.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is adapted to reflect local safeguarding concerns. This means that pupils are taught how to stay safe in the community as well as online. Pupils know they can talk to adults about any concerns that they may have.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not select the most appropriate teaching task when delivering new content or checking pupils' understanding. This leads to some confusion and disengagement for pupils. It means that pupils do not progress through parts of the curriculum as intended. Leaders should make sure that teachers are further supported to select teaching and assessment activities that best support the delivery of new content and/or the checking of pupils' understanding.
- Many pupils do not take advantage of the range of enrichment opportunities that are on offer. This is more apparent as pupils get older, including in the sixth form. This means that pupils are missing out on opportunities to broaden their horizons and to develop new talents and interests. Leaders should implement strategies to increase participation in enrichment activities so that more pupils can benefit from a range of different experiences.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100052
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	10240235
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,319
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jacob Sam
Headteacher	Matthew Sadler
Website	http://www.hampsteadschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 October 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses a small number of registered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, physical education and art and design. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in some other subjects and looked at pupils' work and curriculum information.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and members of staff, as well as with a range of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for SEND, the sixth form, careers education, reading, behaviour and attendance, and pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the local education authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, responses to the staff survey and responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Eliot Wong	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Cross	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Clemens	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector

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