

Northwood School

Pinner Road, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 1QN

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Both he and his senior team are determined to provide the best possible education for all pupils.
- Governors carry out their role of supporting and challenging leaders well. They have shown great determination in achieving their vision for Northwood School.
- Pupils make exceptional progress in all year groups and in almost all subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities also make strong progress.
- Teachers meet individual pupils' needs exceptionally well. Their detailed subject knowledge, clear explanations and expert use of questioning ensure that pupils make substantial progress in their learning.
- Leaders are meticulous in ensuring that pupils receive superb pastoral care. The supportive climate enables all pupils to feel safe and to flourish.
- The curriculum is rich, offering a range of academic and vocational courses and extra-curricular programmes.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are rightly proud of their school and are unfailingly polite and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils firmly reject all forms of discrimination. They celebrate diversity and are kind and thoughtful to others. As a result, pupils in the school are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- A comprehensive careers programme ensures that pupils and sixth-form students are well informed about opportunities for their next steps in life.
- Parents speak admiringly of the school and recognise the efforts of staff to ensure that their children thrive and achieve.
- Leadership of the new sixth form is strong, and effective teaching is enabling current students to make substantial progress. Nevertheless, to date, students have not achieved the highest grades in academic subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- As the sixth form grows, ensure that students achieve the highest grades across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher has created an open, tolerant and ambitious culture, underpinned by thoughtful reflection and a focus on support. He has ensured that all leaders share his high expectations and determination to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils. Consequently, leaders provide strong oversight of all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders set very high standards for the school's performance and rigorously evaluate how well they are meeting them. This ensures that where there are dips, whether in the quality of leadership or teaching or in the outcomes that pupils achieve, they act quickly and decisively to address them.
- The outstanding leadership of teaching means that teachers are well supported and benefit from excellent professional development. They flourish under the school's close care and attention and develop into highly effective professionals.
- Teachers work closely together to share best practice and reflect on one another's teaching. This approach is a key factor in the outstanding progress made by pupils.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funding, including for SEN, the pupil premium and the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium. As a result, pupils who are disadvantaged or who have SEN and/or disabilities demonstrate rates of progress in line with all other pupils across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- The curriculum is well planned and provides pupils with a very firm foundation for the next stage of their education. The majority of pupils in key stage 4 follow a challenging GCSE curriculum, which prepares them well for advanced level study.
- The extra-curricular programme is extensive and highly valued by pupils. The programme includes sports, music, drama, debating, Russian, Portuguese and chess. The schedule of school trips and visits is equally broad. Pupils in all year groups follow a personal, social, health and economic curriculum.
- The school's strong spiritual and moral ethos is reflected in assemblies and in the wider curriculum. The promotion of British Values, for example of tolerance, respect and democracy, is integral to the work of the school and a powerful force underpinning its culture and daily life. As a result, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- In responding to the Ofsted survey, parents were overwhelming in their support for the headteacher and his staff. One parent wrote: 'Well done Northwood for the great teaching and making my children feel safe and happy!'

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and of areas for development. They study a range of performance information, visit the school regularly and hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions.
- Governors are committed to the success of the school and undertake their statutory

duties. They work effectively through a committee structure. They are proactive in ensuring that they have the necessary training to stay on top of their roles. They monitor the impact of additional funding provided by the government to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up. They also track the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils carefully.

- Governors have rightly identified the development of the sixth form as a key priority.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school is an exceptionally orderly environment. Relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are very strong. As a result, pupils feel very safe in the school and have great confidence that, should they have any concerns for their safety or well-being, staff will address them.
- Procedures for keeping pupils safe are well designed and managed. Leaders liaise effectively with parents and external agencies to keep pupils safe. All staff receive regular training about safeguarding. This makes sure that staff know exactly what to do if they are worried about a child.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns. Parents confirm that their children feel both happy and safe at school.
- Leaders and governors make sure that safer recruitment procedures are followed effectively. Employment checks are suitably thorough, and the single central record is accurate and up to date.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching and learning is a significant strength of the school. Strong leadership of teaching and learning ensures that standards and expectations are consistent across the great majority of subjects and year groups.
- Teachers have very high expectations of their pupils and sustain a high level of challenge. They use their excellent subject knowledge and passion for their subjects to enthuse pupils with a love of learning. They are well motivated and keen for all pupils to succeed.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are strong. Teachers understand the strengths and weaknesses in each pupil's learning. Teachers are aware of pupils' social and academic needs. As a result, teachers plan activities accordingly.
- Teachers' clear explanations and skilled questioning also support pupils' strong progress. Teachers use probing questions that require pupils to explain their thinking. Pupils rise well to the challenge and provide articulate and thoughtful responses.
- Across the school, pupils demonstrate strong engagement and interest. They are immensely proud of their work and talk with genuine enthusiasm about their learning. Pupils' presentation of their work is routinely of a high standard and often impeccable. They willingly accept responsibility for their own learning and progress, and constantly

seek to improve, both in their lessons and in the many extra-curricular activities that they undertake.

- Pupils develop a strong understanding of how to evaluate their own work. Teachers provide pupils with clear feedback so that they understand what it is they need to do to improve. Furthermore, they work with determination to make those improvements.
- Teaching is very well targeted to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers are also aware of any barriers that might limit the progress of disadvantaged pupils, and they take action accordingly.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were extremely positive about the quality of teaching in the school and the progress that their children are making.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders' work to safeguard and care for pupils is exceptional. Staff know pupils well and are very quick to put into place any early help that is needed. Pupils who need extra support for medical, social and emotional issues have access to a wide range of services provided, or brokered, by the school. The school's maxim of 'achievement through support' is very evident in all aspects of school life.
- Pupils are self-confident and self-aware. They are proud of their school and speak eagerly of their ambitions for the future.
- There is a strong commitment to developing pupils' leadership across the school. Pupils' opinions are valued, and they are encouraged to be active citizens. Pupils relish the opportunities to make a positive contribution to school life. For example, they willingly lead fundraising and charitable events. The school council actively works with school leaders to look at ways that the school can continually improve.
- The school's strong sports programme and a well-structured programme for personal, social and health education give effective support to pupils' physical and emotional well-being.
- In their discussions with inspectors, pupils spoke confidently about tolerance, respect and individual differences. Across year groups, pupils readily answered questions about the risks associated with the use of social media.
- The school's records show that there is very little bullying in any year group. This is confirmed by pupils, who say that bullying is rare and that, if it arises, it is dealt with fairly and promptly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves in an exemplary manner in lessons, in corridors and around

the school. They are thoughtful towards each other, respectful of their teachers and unfailingly polite to visitors.

- Pupils want to learn and they value greatly the strong relationships between themselves and their teachers. As a result, pupils thrive both academically and emotionally.
- Leaders track behaviour incidents carefully and take prompt action to address any incidents that occur. However, these incidents are very few in number. The proportion of pupils excluded from school for poor behaviour is significantly lower than the national average.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are rarely absent. Attendance overall, and for the majority of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, is above the national average. A small number of disadvantaged pupils have attendance which is below the national average. Leaders work effectively with these pupils, parents and external agencies to improve their attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Published results for Year 11 in 2016 and 2017 show that pupils achieved outcomes well above national averages in a wide range of subjects. For example, progress overall, as well as in English, languages and humanities, was in the top 10% nationally in 2017.
- Provisional results for 2018 show that outcomes continued to be very strong, particularly in English. Leaders noted that mathematics results, while still positive, were not as high as those in English, and have responded quickly. As a result, the progress in mathematics of pupils currently in the school is very strong, particularly for the most able.
- The school's current assessment information, which is moderated for accuracy, shows that pupils in all years are making strong progress. During the inspection, pupils were able to articulate their knowledge and understanding with clarity and confidence. The challenge presented to pupils in the work that they are given is a constant, and is evident both in pupils' work and in class discussion.
- Pupils benefit from work that closely matches their abilities and aptitudes. Pupils who join the school with weak literacy and numeracy skills make progress because of leaders' effective use of the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, is far better than that made by other pupils nationally. This is because teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. In addition, leaders' judicious use of additional funding ensures that these pupils make excellent progress and are cared for exceptionally well.
- The small number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those in the specialist resource unit, make strong progress because they are particularly well supported. Skilful teaching and targeted support, delivered by well-trained adults, mean that these pupils make similar or better progress than pupils nationally.
- In all subjects, pupils speak fluently, using specialist language accurately. This helps

them to engage in higher-level reasoning and to grapple with challenging concepts, so that they make substantial progress in their learning.

- The school actively encourages and makes effective provision for reading. Pupils read widely and understand challenging books and extracts. The well-stocked library is a hive of activity. Pupils are given opportunities during their form periods and English lessons for silent reading. All pupils are expected, and supported, to read at home. One pupil commented that: 'Because of the teachers and the librarian, I read much more here than I did at primary school.'
- Each pupil is prepared very well for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Increasingly, Year 11 pupils are continuing into the school's sixth form to pursue an academic curriculum. Pupils who do not wish to attend the school's sixth form are helped to find places at local colleges or in employment that suit their abilities and aspirations.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form is strong, expectations are high and the quality of teaching mirrors the strengths seen at key stages 3 and 4.
- Until September 2018, the sixth form was a very small provision, with above average outcomes for vocational subjects. Outcomes for the very small number of students following academic subjects has, overall, been less strong.
- The sixth form relaunched in September 2018 with a significant increase in subjects taught, the majority of which are academic. As a result, the number of students joining the sixth form has risen dramatically, although it remains small in comparison to sixth forms generally.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the sixth form. They are highly ambitious and are determined to ensure that all students reach their potential.
- Teaching in the sixth form is highly effective. Students respond with enthusiasm to the high levels of challenge. Teachers give students incisive and well-targeted feedback on their work. Students value this feedback and are assiduous in putting their teachers' advice into practice.
- Leaders' rigorous checks on progress, and scrutiny of students' work, show that current students are making strong progress across a range of subjects. Effective support is in place for any students whose progress appears to have stalled or who are experiencing difficulties with their academic programmes.
- Students enjoy the opportunities to take responsibility and widen their experience through the Northwood Sixth Form Diploma. All Year 12 students take part in work experience and undertake community service. Sixth formers are trained to mentor younger pupils and to help them make progress.
- Sixth-form students' conduct is exemplary, and they provide excellent role models for younger pupils. Attendance is high, punctuality is excellent and students' work ethic is strong.
- Students benefit from high-quality and independent careers advice. They confirm that

the advice that they received before joining the sixth form, their induction into Year 12 and the advice that they receive about post-19 destinations have all been effective. The small number of students who left the sixth form at the end of Year 13 in 2017 progressed to university.

School details

Unique reference number	137829
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10058853

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	794
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	33
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Joan Greening
Headteacher	Mark Anderson
Telephone number	01923 836 363
Website	www.northwoodschool.org.uk
Email address	office@nwschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2018

Information about this school

- Northwood School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Northwood School is a member of the QED multi-academy trust. The academy trust is governed by a trust board. The trustees have established a local governing body for each of their schools.
- The sixth form was relaunched in September 2018. Currently, there are 30 students in Year 12 and three students in Year 13.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is slightly above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils identified as having SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school has a resourced provision for pupils who have speech, language and communication needs. There are six pupils within the provision. All pupils are taught within the main school.
- The school uses alternative provision at The Jubilee Academy, Harrow.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, alongside school leaders, observed a wide range of lessons in key stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, middle leaders and other teachers. Inspectors also met with two members of the governing body and the chief executive officer of the QED multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors met with three groups of pupils and discussed their learning and their views of the school. Inspectors listened to the reading of pupils in Year 8.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader and scrutinised a range of records, including the record of checks on the suitability of staff to work with children, welfare plans, and actions taken to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors also scrutinised a wide range of documentation that the school produces as part of its self-evaluation and development planning. Inspectors also looked at policies and documents published on the website and those made available during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered 124 responses received from parents to Ofsted’s survey. Altogether, 37 staff responses and 135 pupil responses to Ofsted’s surveys were considered. Inspectors also considered the views expressed by many pupils during lessons and social times.

Inspection team

Carolyn Dickinson, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Jason Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Abankwah	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Rodin	Ofsted Inspector

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