

Westwood High

Kelsall Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL9 6HR

Inspection dates

12 to 14 February 2019

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
Early years provision	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Westwood High School is outstanding in all respects. The principal leads the school with passion and skill. She has high aspirations and great expectations of pupils and staff.
- Senior leaders are exceptionally well supported by the proprietor and governors. Together, they ensure that teaching and pupils' outcomes are outstanding, and that all independent school standards are met.
- Throughout the school, teaching is exceptionally strong. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and deep, caring relationships with pupils, both of which help to ensure pupils' outstanding progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils benefit from an exciting and stimulating curriculum, which secures their full engagement and eager participation in lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are highly respectful, resilient, upstanding citizens, who are determined to achieve and enjoy cooperating with their peers.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils' learning. However, teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively. In addition, teachers do not always adhere to the school's feedback and assessment policy.
- Sixth-form courses are closely tailored to students' interests. Students have positive attitudes to learning and are excellent role models for younger pupils.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They say that their children are safe, well cared for and making good progress.
- Work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, and their appreciation of British values, is exemplary.
- Children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make outstanding progress in developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills, and they attain highly.
- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - ensuring that all teaching assistants are effectively deployed
 - making sure that the school's feedback and assessment policy is consistently applied.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- Leaders promote an ambitious culture within the school, based on a clear vision of academic excellence and spiritual enlightenment. The inspirational leadership of the principal pervades the school. She leads by example and ensures that staff have the right skills and experience to execute their responsibilities outstandingly well.
- With the highly capable vice-principal and the effective support of the proprietor, the principal has taken the school from strength to strength since the previous inspection, unifying staff and maintaining high standards. The proprietor and senior leaders work tirelessly to ensure that pupils' personal, social, moral and academic needs are well catered for, and the school meets all the independent school standards.
- Staff routinely work together and share best practice. As the school has grown, a small middle-leadership team has been created. However, all teachers, especially the most experienced, play a central role in improving teaching. They do this by observing each other's practice and giving advice on how to improve. Senior leaders also observe teaching. Feedback is precise and constructive, focusing on what teachers and teaching assistants need to do to maintain excellent outcomes for pupils.
- Staff say that they love working at the school, their morale is high, and they are highly positive about all aspects of school life. Staff hold the principal, senior leaders and the proprietor in high regard and say that they thoroughly enjoy helping pupils to grow and learn. Staff learn from good practice in other schools and benefit from regular training and development. All of which helps to ensure that they are at the forefront of developments within their respective subject areas.
- The way in which the curriculum is organised is one of the main drivers behind pupils' high achievement. Pupils benefit from a stimulating curriculum and a wide programme of studies. Pupils have a highly developed appreciation of the inter-relatedness of different subjects. They apply their mathematical skills and scientific understanding well to their various entrepreneurial and independent research projects. Their excellent reading and writing skills make them outstanding communicators.
- Senior leaders' and teachers' work to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is excellent. Pupils have an in-depth knowledge of the major world faiths, including Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. They are familiar with a wide range of cultural events and traditions within such religions and have hosted events to promote good relations between people of different faiths.
- Pupils have a deep sense of social justice and have a strong moral obligation towards others, especially those less fortunate than themselves. This is evident in their fundraising and charitable activities. The formal curriculum is enhanced by wider opportunities offered to pupils. These include drama club, football, baking and science club. All pupils study Arabic and the Quran during the school day.
- Pupils' appreciation of British values is strong. As British Muslims, they are united in their appreciation of the culturally diverse nature of British society. They take a keen interest in politics and debate issues, such as Brexit, during afternoon 'news round' tutorials. Pupils understand the notion of fair play. Older pupils know how and when British democracy



was first formulated. They have studied the Magna Carta and, more recent historic events, such as women's suffrage. Pupils like to put democratic principles into practice. They are very vocal and enjoy having their say on the school council.

- Parents and carers have nothing but praise for the school. They say that communication is excellent, staff are caring and approachable, homework is regular and pupils are well behaved. Typically, parents comment that Westwood is 'a great school with great teachers, an excellent ethos and strong leadership'.
- The school is keen to work with other schools and partners. For example, early years staff visit local early years settings to share and learn from best practice. Staff also visit schools for training purposes. Visits from representatives of local colleges help to ensure that Key stage 4 pupils are fully conversant with sixth-form admissions arrangements. The school works closely with the local authority to ensure that staff are conversant with the latest government guidance on safeguarding.

Governance

- Governors know that the principal, proprietor and senior leaders are doing an excellent job. They are successfully balancing tight budgets and managing the acquisition of new premises while simultaneously overseeing outstanding provision across all sections of the school.
- The proprietor is in school every day. His background in education qualifies him well to provide support to teachers. The proprietor has an excellent understanding of information and technology systems, safeguarding and maintenance, and plays an invaluable role in supporting the senior leadership team.
- Governance is strong. Governors are highly committed. The chair of the governing body knows the school exceptionally well. As with other governors, he is acutely aware of the school's strengths, as well as its development plans and the challenges faced by staff as provision expands.
- From their different fields of employment, governors bring much experience, which is to the benefit of both staff and pupils. Several governors come from education and youthwork backgrounds. They regularly come into school, to observe first-hand the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are trained well and keep themselves abreast of developments in education, finance and safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, and there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The school has a comprehensive and current safeguarding policy on its website. All staff sign declarations to say they have read the school's safeguarding policy and associated polices. Staff have had 'Prevent' duty and Channel training, both of which are part of the government's agenda for tacking radicalisation and extremism, and they are familiar with the latest government guidelines on keeping children safe in education.
- Clear procedures are in place for reporting and recording concerns. Staff are vigilant and



expert at spotting signs of neglect and/or abuse and know exactly what to do if they are concerned about a pupils' welfare or safety.

All appropriate checks are made on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are regularly carried out to ensure the safety and security of school premises. In addition, school trips and educational visits are risk assessed to ensure pupils' safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

- Teachers and teaching assistants are trained to a very high standard. They have a thorough knowledge of pupils' individual learning needs and make it their duty to be conversant with current developments in their respective specialist areas. Teachers have very-high expectations of pupils and make sure pupils enjoy learning and are fully engaged in class.
- Across key stages 1 to 4, teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They use highly effective questioning to assess pupils' understanding and ensure that work is challenging. Teachers know that pupils learn in different ways and are acutely aware of pupils' different skills and abilities. Various activities in class, and bespoke homework activities, ensure that all pupils achieve a deeper understanding of their work.
- Teachers normally follow the school's feedback and assessment policy. Accordingly, they give advice to pupils on how they can improve their work. However, occasionally teachers do not check to see if pupils have followed their advice. As a result, misapprehensions sometimes go unchecked.
- In science, English, mathematics and other subjects, pupils routinely read in class. Their reading ranges from sharing lesson objectives in Year 1 to describing complex problems in mathematics in Year 11. Teachers' approach to developing pupils' reading skills immediately secures pupils' full engagement and understanding of exactly what they will be learning.
- Across the school, teachers consider how they can develop and consolidate pupils' writing skills and encourage their use of 'adventurous' words. For example, in English pupils are asked to incorporate 'words of the week' into their writing. Words range from 'humongous' and 'spectacular', in the Reception class, to 'displeased' and 'impatient', in Year 4. Throughout the school, pupils produce excellent discursive texts and poetry, which include a wide range of interesting vocabulary, and accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Older pupils say that they 'love mathematics'. This was evident in key stage 4 mathematics where pupils were learning about functions and equations. All pupils found the work challenging. However, they were fully aware that they could talk to their 'mentor' or 'coach' before seeking advice from the class teacher. Pupils were eager to get the correct answers to the formulas presented to them. Those who ran out of time knew that they could attend booster classes at breaktime or after school, seek advice from the teacher after class or practise at home.
- In key stages 1 and 2, mathematics teaching is very strong. Teachers ensure that pupils engage in a wide variety of activities to develop their fluency in using various operations, such as converting decimals to fractions and percentages and using times tables.



Activities are challenging and the most able are provided with additional tasks, which usually require them to apply their mathematical skills. However, occasionally teaching assistants are not deployed effectively. At such times, some pupils are slower to grasp the more complex aspects of English, mathematics and science.

Science teaching is outstanding. This is evident in the quality of work in pupils' books. Teachers are highly adept at getting pupils' full cooperation in lessons. This was evident in an upper-school science lesson where pupils were considering how emissions from cars, factories and burning fossil fuels contribute towards global warming. Pupils' vigorous discussion enhanced their understanding of global warming and provided a solid foundation to their appreciation of the scientific principles underpinning the study of climate change.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Westwood pupils are very confident and self-assured. The positivity with which they approach learning is highly commendable and supports their outstanding progress. Pupils are independent. They debate with each other in class in their quest for answers and discuss their views with teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is always a top priority for staff. Senior leaders and teachers expect all pupils to achieve their absolute best. They also want pupils to be happy and to alleviate unnecessary stress. For this reason, the school has a very strong pastoral system. Pupils have the trust and support of all members of staff and regular access to tutors and mentors.
- All pupils in the school are active citizens who thrive on the many opportunities they have to demonstrate how responsible they can be. Older pupils take on their roles in earnest as teaching assistants, healthy eating ambassadors and lunchtime supervisors. All pupils have a fundamental understanding and appreciation of conservation issues, which they discuss on the eco council. Recently the school council put forward motions for more benches in the playing area, greater access to the library, a drama club and more mathematics and English homework clubs. Senior leaders considered and endorsed the council's motions.
- One of the central principles of the Islamic faith is to be charitable, which pupils are. They visit care homes, raise money for various good causes and carry out voluntary work in the local community. In addition, pupils are entrepreneurial and innovative. Recently, they engaged in a fund-raising project. Each class was given a £50 budget and tasked with making a profit. Pupils organised lots of different activities and raised money from food sales, 'pin the tail on the donkey', face painting, mehndi, 'bouncy castle' admissions and the 'spicy noodle challenge'. Pupils' ingenuity paid off. Classes raised up to £1,000.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors, as well as those who completed the inspection questionnaire, said that there is never any bullying in school. Pupils know what racism is

and say that it never happens in the school. Similarly, they say that there is no homophobic bullying in the school. Pupils explained that, 'We are taught to be tolerant



and to be respectful to others.'

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy living and healthy eating. They regularly participate in sports and physical exercise at the local sports centre, where activities include dodge ball, basketball, multi-skills, gymnastics and cardiovascular workouts. Through the personal, social, health and citizenship aspects of the curriculum, pupils learn about the dangers of smoking tobacco, drinking alcohol and taking illegal drugs.
- A strong culture of safety is evident in the school. Pupils know they can approach any adult at any time and secure an immediate response to their concerns. The school's own surveys and the inspection survey indicate that most pupils always feel safe at school. Pupils are taught about different potential dangers. For example, they learn about emotional and physical bullying and online grooming, and they are alert to the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which they see as an extension of their family. They rarely miss a day of school because they know that their absence will be detrimental to their learning. It is not unusual for attendance to be 100%, but very rare for it to be below 96%. Mentors and tutors meet with pupils and families to offer support if attendance becomes an issue.
- Those pupils who spoke with inspectors said that behaviour is, 'good pretty much all of the time'. They stated that there are sometimes friendship issues but indicated that these are always quickly resolved.
- During the inspection, pupils' behaviour in class was impeccable, as was their behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils move around the school sensibly and with due care and consideration for their peers. They are highly curious, insightful and eager to gain new knowledge and information.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy welcoming visitors into the school and were exceptionally well mannered and courteous to the inspectors. The chair of the governing body and the proprietor are of the view that behaviour is at least good. Staff, pupils and parents who completed the inspection questionnaire were all exceptionally positive about pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors agreed that 'behaviour is lovely', and said that, 'we are always greeted with a smile and lots of respect'. The school's own records and inspection evidence indicate that behaviour is typically outstanding over time.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

■ From their different starting points, pupils make exceptionally strong progress in a wide range of subjects and attain highly in national examinations. For example, at the end of

Year 11 in 2018, the proportion of pupils attaining 'good' GCSEs, including in English and mathematics, was well above average. Pupils attained highly in other subjects, including Arabic, religious studies and science.



- Pupils make outstanding progress in key stage 1. At the end of Year 2 in 2018, a much higher than average proportion of pupils attained greater depth in reading and writing. Their attainment in mathematics was not quite as good. However, all met the expected standard, and an average proportion attained at greater depth.
- No national data is available for key stage 2. Currently, there are no pupils in either Year 5 or Year 6. However, the school's own tracking data indicates that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are making outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, data and work in pupils' books indicate that pupils make consistently strong progress in key stage 3. All pupils are very well prepared with the excellent literacy and numeracy skills required for their learning in key stage 4.
- Most pupils are avid and fluent readers who are able to tackle complex texts. Those who read for inspectors did so with excellent intonation. They enjoyed reading in character and talking about their favourite books. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of authors and genres. They have a good appreciation of poetry and have entered and won various local and national competitions for their work.
- Pupils have many opportunities to practise and refine their writing skills across the curriculum. Excellent examples of well-written texts on topical issues, linked to trips to places of interest, such as Manchester Museum of Science and Technology and Liverpool's Transatlantic Slavery Gallery, can be found in Year 7 pupils' books. The workbooks of pupils in Years 9 and 10 contain examples of very challenging poetry by writers including Wilfred Owen, Carol Ann Duffy, Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney, which they expertly annotated and analysed.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is exceptionally strong. Teachers provide pupils with different challenging activities and encourage pupils to always indicate how they calculate their answers. Across the school, books contain many problem-solving activities and evidence of pupils' in-depth understanding in areas such as probability theory, which they are adept at applying to climate and weekly weather forecasts.
- Pupils make exceptionally strong progress in a wide range of other subjects. In religious education, pupils make excellent progress in understanding the principles of the major world faiths. In their citizenship studies, pupils demonstrate their thorough understanding of equality legislation and the benefits of cultural diversity. In Year 11 science, pupils revise and refine their examination techniques. Coupled with excellent subject coverage, which includes ample opportunities for pupils to engage in investigations and experiments, outstanding teaching ensures that pupils make very strong progress in developing their understanding of scientific principles.
- When pupils leave Westwood High, they are very well prepared for their future learning. At the end of Year 11 in 2018, almost all pupils secured places in local sixth form colleges. They pursued A-level courses in subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, physics, biology, politics, economics and philosophy. Those seeking other routes are given comprehensive, independent careers advice.



Early years provision

- The leadership and management of all aspects of the early years provision are outstanding. Staff form exceptionally strong bonds with children and have an in-depth understanding of how they learn.
- All children speak English as an additional language. Their skills and abilities on entry to the school, especially their language and communication skills and understanding of the world, are below those expected for their age. However, children get off to an excellent start and make very strong progress through both the Nursery and Reception classes.
- For the last two years, a higher-than-average proportion of children have attained a good level of development. In 2018, almost all were very well prepared for their transition to Year 1. Outstanding teaching and provision ensure that, currently, children are making the same excellent progress as their predecessors.
- Children have many opportunities for purposeful outdoor learning and play. They play on their wheeled toys safely, and enjoy balancing, construction and exploring the world around them. A wide range of activities supports exceedingly well children's development in reading, writing, measuring and spatial awareness.
- In the Reception class, children learn about healthy eating, make orange juice and act as firefighters. Children like evaluating their own learning. For example, children take 'selfies' when they have completed various tasks. This was exemplified when children safely used scissors and staplers to make cards for their parents. When they had finished their activities, they proudly photographed themselves next to their creations.
- In the Nursery class, children enjoy writing, counting, measuring, drawing, painting, exploring the properties of water and sand and using technology. They particularly enjoy playing on their submarine and are adept at devising role-play activities relating to maritime themes.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They stop activities immediately when asked, clear away, sit quietly and are ready to learn. Staff focus on developing children's good manners and listening skills. This is evident during phonics sessions, where teaching is engaging and thorough. Children of all abilities demonstrate excellent phonics skills and knowledge, which they skilfully apply to their reading and writing.
- Children are highly communicative and like to share their learning. This was evident when children in the Reception class used magnifiers to identify various insects, such as spiders, worms and flies in the 'bug area'. They were eager to discuss texture and colour, and to describe the light refracted from the scales on a tarantula's body.
- Parents speak positively about their children's learning and development in the early years. All those who spoke with inspectors typically commented that, 'My child has made amazing progress at this school...'
- Parents appreciate the school's open-door policy and opportunities to engage in stay and play activities, phonics workshops and reading sessions. They say that their children are safe and looked after well. Details on children's development in school are regularly uploaded to a portal. Parents can access this information, and they can complement it with information on their children's learning at home.



Safeguarding is highly effective. Staff look after children well, making sure that all welfare requirements are met. The same well-established procedures in operation in the rest of the school are reflected in the early years.

Sixth-form provision

- Sixth-form provision is in its third year, the school has had less than five graduates. Currently, there is a small number of students in Year 12. Nonetheless, provision is growing, and students make exceptionally strong progress. The opening of the school's new sixth-form block is imminent. However, current students have all their lessons in the high school. They benefit from the same exemplary safeguarding procedures as their peers.
- Senior leaders and teachers have exceptionally high expectations of students. For example, sixth-form students are expected to set an example for the rest of the school in their behaviour, presentation, attitude and overall conduct in and out of school. In addition, there are high expectations in relation to students' attendance. Currently, they rarely miss a day of school.
- Programmes of study are tailored very closely to individual students' learning needs, academic skills and career aspirations. All students in the sixth form are studying for a BTEC diploma in health and social care, and all are exceeding expectations. In addition, students choose various extended projects in areas such as crime and punishment and law and liberty. Those interested in acquiring teaching qualifications work alongside teachers in the high school to develop their skills. Others can improve their GCSE grades. Almost all study for a combined English language and literature qualification at A level.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Lessons are engaging and require students to think deeply about their learning. This was evident in a class where students were learning about the Paris riots in 1968. Students were asked to look at a picture of 'foreign' male rioters in France and discuss it. Students noted that the juxtaposition of upturned bins in the foreground with a blazing fire in the background placed the men in the 'thick of it', in the centre ground. However, they also noticed that on closer examination it was evident that most men were passing by while others were onlookers. Therefore, they concluded that the photograph was biased.
- Students who spoke with the inspectors said that they feel cared for very well. They are adamant that behaviour is good and say that bullying never happens in the school. As ambassadors for the school and mentors to their younger peers, they take on their role unquestioningly. Students are highly appreciative of workshops and support available to enhance their well-being.
- Students benefit from wide-ranging external careers advice. They have attended careers fairs and talked with doctors, pharmacists, optometrists, teachers and entrepreneurs about their work. In Year 13, students are given one-to-one support in making applications to universities via UCAS and writing personal statements. To inspire and maintain students' high aspirations, Year 12 students attended the Irene Manton lecture, which celebrates the significant contribution made by women to the natural sciences.
- BTEC Health and Social Care students complete work experience in Westwood pharmacy, local nursing homes and at the Oldham general hospital. Students have access to a small



sixth-form base in the preparatory (primary) school during free lessons and study periods.

The school has increased in size and the curriculum has expanded to include subjects such as biology, chemistry, physics and mathematics at A level. Well-qualified and experienced teachers have been appointed to teach the new curriculum. Until recently, most pupils continued their learning in sixth-from colleges after leaving school. A much larger proportion of students than previously is opting to study in the school's sixth form at the start of the next academic year.



School details

Unique reference number	137822
DfE registration number	353/6000
Inspection number	10067912

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2	Mixed
Gender of pupils in key stages 3 and 4	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	263
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	The Green Dome Academy
The proprietor's representative	Kamal Khan
Chair	Jamal Uddin Khan
Headteacher	Khadija Khan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,250-£2,500
Telephone number	0161 622 1947
Website	westwoodhigh.org
Email address	admin@westwoodhigh.org
Date of previous inspection	4–6 May 2016



Information about this school

- The school's main aim is to `... deliver a world class education in an environment that nurtures the love for Allah; where both staff and students enjoy the best possible learning experience and actively promote the highest of moral and spiritual values.'
- Westwood High is a small Muslim school located in Oldham. All children, pupils and students in the sixth form speak English as an additional language. A very small number of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has rapidly expanded since the previous inspection, doubling in size to include additional pupils and students in Years 3, 4, 12 and 13.
- Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have acquired new premises, including a building for the early years provision and a sixth-form block.
- The school operates from three buildings at the same premises. The school is comprised of a high school, preparatory school (primary) and kindergarten (Nursery and Reception classes). At the time of the inspection, the proprietor was in the process of applying to the DfE for a material change to include a recently-rented sixth-form block. The five learners currently in the sixth form are educated with their peers in the high school.
- The proprietorial organisation is The Green Dome Academy, an educational charity. Closely supported by the proprietor's representative, the day-to-day running of the school is led and managed by the principal. The governing body consists of four members.
- The school does not use alternative providers.



Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed learning in a range of subjects, including English, science, citizenship, mathematics, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils and sessions aimed at helping pupils learn to read. One lesson was observed jointly with the principal.
- Pupils' work and assessment folders were scrutinised during observations and separately.
- Meetings were held with the proprietor, principal, vice-principal, teachers and teaching assistants. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with pupils from across the school, including the sixth form. Inspectors read 65 text responses submitted by parents during the inspection and considered 65 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. A formal meeting was held with nine parents.
- Responses to the inspection questionnaires completed by 26 members of staff and 52 pupils were also considered, as were the school's own surveys of pupils' views.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentary evidence. This included checks on the quality of teaching, safeguarding documentation, including risk assessments, various records of pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour, development plans and the school's records and checks on the suitability of staff to work with children. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the school's development plans and reviews of its own performance.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Maggie Parker

Ofsted Inspector Ofsted Inspector



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