

Inspection of North West London Independent Special School

85 Old Oak Common Lane, East Acton, Ealing, London W3 7DD

Inspection dates: 19–21 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils excel at this school, both academically and socially. Pupils with complex learning needs join the school after multiple school placements. Most pupils have gaps in their education and some have a history of permanent exclusions. The school's 'community values', such as hard work and high expectations, are routinely upheld. The induction programme enables pupils to adapt quickly to school life.

Pupils respond well to the 'never give up' attitude they receive from caring staff. Passionate leaders and committed staff ensure that pupils are safe and busy. Pupils learn life skills and how to stay healthy. Pupils enjoy off-site sporting activities such as swimming, athletics and football.

Pupils are respectful towards others. The individual care they receive helps them to develop self-control. Staff know pupils well and are able to de-escalate situations quickly. Many pupils' attendance and behaviour improve significantly.

Pupils discuss the impact of bullying and create eye-catching posters. The school council debates ways to prevent bullying. Staff and pupils work together to deal with any situations that arise.

Parents and carers uniformly appreciate the work of the school. They are happy simply because their child is doing well and enjoys being at the school.

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

The inspiration and vision of the proprietor underpin the school's success. The ambition is for all pupils to recognise their talents and prepare for a successful life in modern Britain. Staff and governors share this vision.

The school offers an exceptionally broad and exciting curriculum, adapted to meet the individual needs of pupils. Staff, including therapists, ensure that pupils discover a joy of learning. Pupils learn independent skills, to prepare them well for adult life.

The school acts swiftly to address areas where pupils are not doing as well as they should. Teaching improves pupils' social and basic skills. Teaching staff encourage pupils to make gains in their reading, speaking, writing and mathematics. Secondary pupils and sixth-form students gain academic and vocational qualifications, such as employability skills, cooking and GCSEs, including in art.

Pupils and sixth-form students enjoy engaging experiences provided for them. These include music, visits to football stadiums and conducting presentations at places such as at the Houses of Parliament. This helps pupils to grow in confidence. They start to believe in themselves and in their achievements. Pupils are proud of their new-found interests and career goals.

Maximising pupils' well-being and personal development is at the heart of the

school's work. Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education helps pupils to develop their social skills. Talks by visiting speakers and trips to religious places raise their spiritual and cultural awareness. Supportive group discussions enable pupils to reflect and share their personal experiences and opinions on matters important to them.

Promoting pupils' social development is a strength of the school. Pupils take on roles of responsibility, such as head girl or boy and membership of the school council. Pupils get involved in fund-raising for charity. Pupils said they like these leadership roles and believe the school listens to their views.

Leaders, including governors and the proprietor, have ensured that the independent school standards and other requirements are met. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010, as leaders have plans in place to ensure that the school is accessible.

The school's leadership team engages regularly with staff to review their work. Leaders focus on developing teachers' practice and listen to any concerns staff might have. Staff said they value these opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A culture of safeguarding permeates the school. Staff are watchful and report any potential issues swiftly. Training helps staff identify possible risks, including those associated with county lines and knife crime. The designated leaders of safeguarding (DSLs) work closely with external services to provide timely support.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, especially beyond the school gates. They could explain what characterises a healthy relationship and internet safety.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	135794
DfE registration number	307/6401
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10115243
Type of school	Other Independent Special School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Thomas Keaney
Chair	Thomas Keaney
Headteacher	Camilla Azis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£57,500 to £88,000
Telephone number	020 8749 5403
Website	www.tces.org.uk
Email address	admin.nwlis@tces.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–9 February 2017

Information about this school

- North West London Independent Special School is a school within the TCES Group of schools.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan related to their autistic spectrum condition or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Fewer girls attend the school than boys.
- Since the school's last standard inspection in February 2017, a newly appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2019.
- The school does not use alternative providers.
- Off-site sporting activities are as follows:
 - sports and athletics activities at Willesden Sports Centre, Willesden
 - swimming at Phoenix Fitness Centre and Janet Adegoke swimming pool, London
 - sports and gym activities at Twyford Sports Centre, Acton, London
 - athletics at Linford Christie Stadium, London
 - football at Queen Park Rangers Football Stadium, London
 - trampolining at Oxygen Freejumping, Acton, London.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We worked closely with the headteacher and proprietor throughout the inspection.
- Prior to the inspection, we had a telephone conversation with the proprietor and the headteacher regarding the school's quality of education. We had additional meetings on site, including with the deputy headteacher, school business manager and two governors.
- We focused deeply on reading, English, mathematics, PSHE and art. We visited classes, looked at pupils' work, held conversations with pupils and held discussions with teachers and subject leaders.
- To inspect safeguarding, we reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's safeguarding policy and records of pre-employment checks for staff. We met with the two DSLs, including the safeguarding lead for the TCES group. We

spoke with staff to find out their understanding of their safeguarding duties.

- We reviewed many aspects of the school's work, including, the school's self-evaluation, the work of governance, and information on attendance, behaviour and pupils' wider personal development. We met with the school's pastoral and therapy teams.
- We checked the school's compliance with the independent standards, including a tour of the school's premises with the school's business manager and a governor.
- We considered pupils' and staff views through meetings and informal discussions around the school. We met with five parents to hear their views about the school.

Inspection team

Rosemarie Kennedy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Noeman Anwar

Her Majesty's Inspector

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