

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Nishkam School West London

152 Syon Lane, Osterley TW7 5PN

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 July 2022

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' attitudes. These are consistently met. Behaviour in lessons is positive and focused on work. Pupils enjoy their learning. They are taught well. Pupils show a more detailed understanding in some subjects than in others. Leaders are currently reviewing their curriculum planning to address this.

Pupils are calm and orderly around the school site. They understand what it means to be a good friend. Pupils do not tolerate any unkind language and know that leaders respond to it. Bullying is rare, but if it does happen teachers deal with it swiftly. Pupils feel safe and are safe.

Leaders prioritise an inclusive approach. The school community celebrates all faiths. Pupils value this about their school. Some pupils hold leadership positions, for example as faith leaders. This gives them opportunities to lead acts of worship. Year 10 pupils have the chance to be prefects in the school.

Trust leaders have identified 50 core virtues to guide pupils' character development. These include, for example, optimism and modesty. Parents and carers, pupils and staff value these virtues. Teachers reward pupils who display the virtues in assemblies at the end of each week.

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

For the most part, the curriculum is planned well. Nearly all the national curriculum subjects are taught, and the content of these subjects matches the ambition of the national curriculum. The one exception to this is design and technology. Primary pupils have specific lessons. However, secondary pupils are taught through stand-alone projects and other subjects. This provision does not identify the most important knowledge that

needs to be built up over time. This impacts on what pupils can know and remember from design and technology.

Pupils are well taught. Teachers use a range of assessment routines, and these typically identify and address misconceptions in the lessons swiftly. Subject leaders are currently fine-tuning their curriculum planning. This is to ensure that the most important knowledge and subject-specific skills are always clearly emphasised over time.

In the strongest examples, subject-specific knowledge clearly builds from the early years onwards. Pupils in the Reception Year embed their mathematical language. Through appropriate activities they develop their understanding of different measures. For example, when filling a jug of water, pupils described it as 'half full'. Leaders have planned a curriculum that builds pupils' knowledge of capacity over time. By the time pupils are in Year 3, they are confident completing their work on capacity. They correctly use subject-specific knowledge such as litres and millilitres. This careful curriculum planning around mathematical measure ensures that pupils in the secondary phase are able to complete their work with confidence, for example showing a clear understanding of radius and diameter.

Leaders successfully encourage pupils to develop a love of reading. For example, all primary classrooms have their own class libraries. Pupils across both phases speak enthusiastically about the books they are currently reading. When teachers give pupils books with the sounds that they know, they can read well. However, pupils are not always given the correct books. This means that they are not able to read with fluency. The school is currently moving over to a new reading programme, which is planned to include the correct books for all pupils. The resources are in place for this to start in September.

Appropriate support is in place for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) who need additional help with their reading. The needs of pupils with SEND are clearly identified. Leaders share this key information with staff. Teachers make effective use of strategies to support these pupils in lessons.

The majority of staff appreciate and value the support they receive from school leaders. They feel that leaders are accessible and that they can ask for help if needed, and it is given. However, a minority of staff feel that more could be done to take into consideration their workload and well-being.

Pupils receive broad advice and guidance about careers. However, the current provision does not meet all the statutory requirements. Leaders are aware of this. They have taken appropriate steps to improve the provision which is currently in place. They have appointed a leader with clear responsibility for careers for next academic year.

Pupils have access to a range of enrichment activities; some take part in these. Leaders make opportunities to recognise difference in the school community. For example, the school had a recent cultural day. Pupils celebrated the range of different faiths and cultures at the school. Leaders celebrate different religious festivals through assemblies and by providing traditional food at lunchtime, for example to celebrate Eid. This creates an inclusive environment at the school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the needs of their pupils well. Adults in the school are aware of the contextual safeguarding challenges in the school community. Staff know how to raise and record any concerns that they may have. These routines are well embedded.

Leaders make effective use of external agencies. The school has an in-school counsellor and pupils can self-refer for this support. Leaders have a weekly contact with a link social worker, which helps to identify the best support for vulnerable pupils.

Pupils have a clear, age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships, including consent. They understand how to stay safe online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all pupils are given books to read which are fully decodable. This means that not all pupils can develop fluency as there are words that they cannot decode and blend. Leaders are starting a new systematic synthetic phonics programme in September. They must ensure that they follow this programme with fidelity. This includes ensuring that all pupils are consistently given books which are fully phonically decodable.
- The clearest curriculum planning helps to ensure that pupils' understanding successfully develops over time. Leaders are fine-tuning their curriculum planning for next year. However, this is not the case for all subject areas. A key area for development is design and technology, which is taught through stand-alone projects and other subjects in the secondary phase. This means that knowledge is not planned to build logically over time. Leaders must continue their work on the curriculum and ensure that it is as effective in all subjects as it is in the strongest.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2016.

## 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.

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

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139720
<b>Local authority</b>	Hounslow
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227112
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1051
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Sarah Hauldys Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sukhjeet Rai (Primary) and Gerard Dineen (Secondary)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nishkamschooltrust.org">www.nishkamschooltrust.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Both headteachers are new since the last inspection.
- The school has moved from its temporary accommodation at the previous inspection to its permanent building.
- The school has now grown since the previous inspection. The school now includes pupils up to Year 10 and continues to grow. It is registered for pupils from the age of 4 to 19.
- The school uses no alternative providers.
- The school has a Sikh religious character. It last had a section 48 inspection in 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteachers and senior leaders from the primary and secondary phases of the school. They also spoke to two representatives of the trust and the chair and vice-chair of the local governing board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation and books for some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding leads for the primary and secondary phase. They also spoke to staff and pupils and scrutinised relevant documentation.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to the surveys from staff, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors held a drop-in for all school staff as part of their inspection activities.

### **Inspection team**

Sophie Healey-Welch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Guy Forbat

Her Majesty's Inspector

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