

Inspection of Woodbridge High School

St Barnabas Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 7DQ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and students at Woodbridge High School receive an excellent education. They are happy and productive in this calm, well-organised learning environment. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe because they know that any worries they may have are listened to and taken seriously. The school's values of kindness, inclusion, respect and aiming for excellence are consistently demonstrated by staff and pupils.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It is well designed and enables pupils, and students in the sixth form, to excel and produce work of high quality in different subjects.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. There are strong working relationships. Bullying is not tolerated. When rare incidences do occur, staff deal with them quickly and effectively.

There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities on offer throughout the school day, such as drama club, barbershop choir, the daily 'SuperStudy' homework club and a full range of sports clubs. Parents and carers are effusive in their praise for the school. Many commented on the richness of both the academic and personal development offer that their children receive. They regard communication from leaders and staff as a strength.

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

Leaders have ensured that there is an ambitious and engaging curriculum in place for all pupils. Most study at least one modern foreign language. This means that a higher-than-average number of pupils study the full suite of EBacc subjects. In the sixth form, students study a range of programmes. These include, A Levels and equivalent vocational qualifications, as well as foundation qualifications at level 2.

In each subject, the important concepts that pupils should learn and remember have been clearly identified. Subject leaders have ensured that pupils' knowledge is secured over time because they have thought carefully about the best order for pupils to learn it. For example, in English, younger pupils learn how to compare in depth the structure and language of poems. This prepares them well to tackle more complex poetry later. Similarly, in geography, pupils learn detailed knowledge about physical and human features, including sustainable development. They go on to use this knowledge to deepen their understanding of the geography of Antarctica.

Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and present information clearly. Effective use is made of assessment to check pupils' understanding of what they have learned. This enables any errors or misconceptions to be identified and corrected swiftly. Teachers ensure that tasks support pupils to embed knowledge

into their longer-term memory. Staff teach pupils ways that they can remember the subject content taught.

Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Training about a range of different needs has ensured that teachers know their pupils well. Those who require additional help are identified early. High-quality support ensures that these pupils access the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible.

Leaders have focused on developing a love of reading throughout the school. Several initiatives run throughout the year. For example, sixth-form students support younger pupils through paired reading. Weaker readers are quickly identified and are supported through programmes of extra help targeted to their specific needs, such as phonics or vocabulary development. This means that pupils quickly overcome their difficulties and become confident and fluent readers.

Behaviour in and around the school is exceptional. This is because staff have high expectations, and clear routines are in place. Staff implement these consistently. Pupils' learning is rarely disrupted. Leaders understand the additional challenges that some pupils and students face. They have implemented a range of approaches to support these pupils to manage their behaviour. Leaders have effective systems in place to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and on time.

The offer in place to promote pupils' wider development is a real strength of the school. The 'life studies' curriculum has been designed to help pupils to develop and deepen their understanding of important issues. These include, for instance, democracy, respect, healthy relationships, finance and online safety. Pupils are expected to develop their leadership skills and contribute to the life of the school and wider community. For example, pupils can become house captains or anti-bullying ambassadors. Similarly, house groups raise money for different charities. The school's diversity, equality and inclusion programme is planned with the aim of helping pupils to understand and celebrate differences and promote respect.

Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance from Year 7 onwards. In the sixth form, all students take part in 'The Woodbridge Edge'. Through this, students participate in a rich range of activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, volunteering, debating and dissertation projects.

Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have the highest aspirations for the school community. They have established a culture of kindness, respect, inclusivity and excellence. Leaders ensure that all members of the community have a voice and feel trusted and listened to. Staff are clear that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there are robust systems in place to identify those who may be at risk. All staff have been trained thoroughly so that they recognise the signs of concern and know the importance of reporting these immediately.

Safeguarding leads work tirelessly with families and outside agencies to ensure that pupils get the help that they need.

Leaders place a strong focus on supporting pupils with their mental health. For example, promoting well-being is a key part of the curriculum. Trained staff are available for pupils who need additional pastoral support.

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	102854
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10240362
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	1848
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	362
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Mr P Pathak and Mr P Reynolds (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Steven Hogan
Website	www.woodbridgehigh.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school manages an alternative provision centre on site, which is funded by the local authority. This offers places for pupils from other schools who have social, emotional and mental health needs and may be at risk of exclusion.
- 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.

- The inspection team completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education. To do this, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons, had discussions with staff and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and their priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, and the safeguarding and attendance officers.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for governance, including one of the co-chairs of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by reviewing records and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Una Buckley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Katerina Christodoulou	Ofsted Inspector
Christian Hicks	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Fiona Jatta	Ofsted Inspector

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