

Inspection of a good school: Avanti House School

Wemborough Road, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2EQ

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Simon Arnell. This school is part of Avanti Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Nitesh Gor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike Younger.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this school. They are happy and safe and they achieve well. By the time they reach the end of Year 11 pupils are very well prepared for the next steps in their education, whether it be in the school's popular sixth form or elsewhere. In addition to achieving well academically, pupils are very well supported to develop more widely. The culture and ethos of the school ensure that pupils are taught to be responsible and caring citizens. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own actions and are encouraged to think of others and to be kind. This results in very positive behaviour around the school. Pupils respect each other and others from different backgrounds or with different abilities.

Pupils benefit from a rich and interesting curriculum. The scope of the national curriculum is further enhanced through the study of additional subjects including yoga and Sanskrit. Leaders have thought very carefully about the content they want pupils to learn. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. These pupils also access the wide range of clubs, trips and activities that the school organises to further enrich the curriculum.

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

Leaders have put together a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. The school has considered carefully what pupils have studied at primary school, and what pupils need to know before the next steps in their education. Subject content has been chosen so that it helps pupils build up their knowledge over

time. For example, in English, pupils start to learn about gothic literature from Year 7. They revisit this genre each year, preparing them well for the challenges of both GCSE and A level. In geography, the themes of sustainability and climate change are threads that run through the curriculum, and pupils learn more complex concepts over time. In mathematics, pupils build up their knowledge of the important functions, and then apply these to real-life situations.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. This gives pupils, and the students in the sixth form, confidence in their teachers. Teachers present subject content clearly and are skilled at making sure pupils understand this content before moving on. This means that any misconceptions or gaps in knowledge are quickly identified and addressed. Teachers know their pupils very well. Pupils with SEND are identified quickly and benefit from a range of measures to enable them to access the same curriculum as their peers. Consistent classroom routines across subjects help pupils to learn more and remember more of the content they are studying.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Lessons run smoothly and without disruption. Social times are calm, safe and orderly. Leaders' very high expectations of pupils' behaviour are met through a culture of respect and kindness. Pupils are polite and engaging. They know that unkind or discriminatory language is not tolerated. Very high levels of attendance also exemplify pupils' positive attitude to learning.

The school is committed to developing pupils beyond their academic studies. There is a very strong focus on pupils' spiritual development. Pupils can select from 12 different types of collective worship. Pupils can choose to start their day with yoga, meditation, kirtan (praise), or reading holy books. In addition to timetabled lessons, pupils attend a range of clubs and activities including choir, coding and a range of sports. Participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is high, and the school has a popular unit of the Combined Cadets Force. Additional opportunities for leadership are valued by pupils. These include anti-bullying ambassadors and a 'girls on board' team.

Pupils learn important life skills through a carefully considered programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). They learn about staying safe and about relationships in an age-appropriate way. The school has embedded a programme of careers education from Year 7 to Year 13. This includes opportunities for work experience in Year 10 and in the sixth form. Some students in the sixth form benefit from mentoring by professionals from the world of finance.

Trustees and officers in the trust know the school well. They provide appropriate support and challenge to the school. This includes oversight of the school's safeguarding practices. Teachers benefit from high-quality training and professional development. They feel valued and supported by leaders. Leaders, staff and pupils are proud of their school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

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

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2014.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	138227
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10290202
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
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	1,189
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	284
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Younger
CEO of the trust	Nitesh Gor
Principal	Simon Arnell
Website	http://avanti.org.uk/avantihouse-secondary/
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Avanti House School is an academy free school with a Hindu religious character. The last Section 48 inspection was in July 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative education providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography and languages. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. The inspectors talked to leaders and looked at curriculum information for other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, and with members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the survey responses from parents, pupils and staff.
- The inspectors spoke with the chair of trustees. They also spoke with officers from the trust.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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His Majesty's Inspector

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