

Inspection of Yavneh College

Hillside Avenue, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 1HL

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Sixth-form provision | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Ofsted has not previously inspected Yavneh College as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

The executive headteacher of this school is Spencer Lewis. This school is part of Yavneh College Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Spencer Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roz Levin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive within this tight-knit community. They are well equipped as young adults to enter the world ready to work towards the school's vision of 'a world built on kindness'. Pupils demonstrate the school's values, such as 'yedidya' (friendship), by volunteering to help at school and in local community groups. For example, pupils in Project Smile send gifts and cards, extending their warm wishes to vulnerable members of the local community. Students in the sixth form model the school's values impeccably. They demonstrate the best of what the school seeks to achieve.

Pupils realise the school's high expectations. They achieve impressive examination results. Pupils are articulate and contribute many positive insights during class discussions. Students in the sixth form demonstrate exceptional sophistication when tackling complex concepts. They approach levels of scholarship usually found at degree-level studies.

Pupils behave well at school. In lessons, they focus on learning and work diligently. Social times are pleasant occasions during which pupils enjoy each other's company.

Pupils are safe at school. They feel confident that staff are vigilant to risks and signs of potential harm. Staff forge effective partnerships with parents and external agencies to keep pupils safe.

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

The school has an ambitious and thoroughly planned curriculum. Leaders provide staff with precise guidance about what pupils should know and understand. Teachers deliver the curriculum effectively using their expert subject knowledge and research-informed approaches to teaching. Teachers check that pupils know and understand what has been taught. When necessary, teachers swiftly provide effective support so that pupils do not fall behind. This helps pupils to learn the curriculum well and achieve high results in national examinations. Leaders have planned the knowledge and skills within the sixth-form curriculum exceptionally well. Students deftly use knowledge learned in one subject to consider issues in another.

The school has been developing its approach to the teaching of reading. This is making a positive difference for many pupils. The school is currently building its provision for pupils at earlier stages of learning to read. These pupils receive helpful one-to-one support outside of lessons to learn the basics of reading. However, some teachers do not match texts to pupils' reading abilities with precision. As a result, these pupils do not access the curriculum independently.

Many pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn and achieve remarkably well. However, the school is experiencing a growing number of pupils with SEND with needs not previously experienced at the school. In response, leaders have focused training on improving the way teachers support these pupils. There is more work to do. As a result, on occasion, learning activities and resources

are not as effective as they could be. Students with SEND in the sixth form do remarkably well. The finely tuned support they receive helps them to achieve the highest possible results and make positive next steps.

Pupils behave well at school. They understand the school's expectations and live up to them. Pupils benefit from the school's calm learning environment. On the rare occasion when pupils engage in unacceptable behaviour, teachers ensure that it stops and does not reoccur.

At the heart of the school's curriculum is the commitment towards pupils' personal development. Leaders have precisely planned each subject to be enriching and relevant within contemporary society. Pupils are taught about and given opportunities to engage with the different lifestyles and beliefs in modern Britain. The pupil-led Kavod (Respect) Committee contributes towards the school's respectful ethos. Pupils show remarkable understanding and sensitivity towards the differences of others. Pupils learn the value of 'chesed' (kindness) while assuming leadership positions and taking responsibility for themselves and others.

Sixth-form students are well prepared and have the skills and values needed to be strong leaders in whatever fields they choose to pursue. At school, they contribute towards what teachers know about their teaching by observing lessons and providing helpful feedback for teachers.

The school's provision for careers widens pupils' horizons and prepares them well for their next steps in education. Pupils benefit from well-planned work experience. Students in the sixth form gain a great deal of insight about career options from the school's alumni-supported mentor scheme.

Governors and trustees have an accurate view of the quality of the school's provision. When necessary, they challenge leaders and hold them to account.

Parents and staff are positive about the quality of leadership at the school. Leaders, governors and trustees have built strong partnerships with parents and staff to support the school's development over time. Staff appreciate leaders' positive approach in supporting staff well-being and maintaining reasonable workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, staff do not support pupils with SEND effectively. When this happens, staff do not provide learning activities that enable these pupils to learn the curriculum as well as they could. The school must continue training staff so

that they consistently arrange learning opportunities that meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

- Some staff do not routinely provide weaker readers with texts that match their reading abilities. Consequently, these pupils do not receive sufficient practice to master what they find difficult. Staff should receive support to be able to provide texts that match pupils' reading abilities so all pupils learn to read well.

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

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| Unique reference number | 136922 |
| Local authority | Hertfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10267916 |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy converter |
| 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 | 1,075 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 242 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Roz Levin |
| Headteacher | Spencer Lewis |
| Website | www.yavnehcollege.org |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Yavneh College Academy Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school has a Jewish ethos. The school's most recent section 48 inspection of its religious character was in December 2022, details of which can be found on the school's website.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with trustees, governors, the executive headteacher, teachers, members of support staff, parents, and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, English, history, mathematics, physical education, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, looked at samples of pupils work and consider planning documents in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and during social times.
- Inspectors looked at relevant documents, considered pupils' work and held discussions with leaders, staff and pupils about the provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses of 95 staff, 379 pupils and 422 parents to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Al Mistrano, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Kathryn Herlock | Ofsted Inspector |
| Sue Pryor | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jason Howard | Ofsted Inspector |

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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