

Inspection of Bentley Wood High School

Clamp Hill, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 3JW

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 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

Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Naseema Akbar. This school is part of The Bentley Wood Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Diana Gerald.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils develop into confident and caring young people at this school. The school sets high expectations for both behaviour and achievement. Pupils demonstrate exceptional behaviour and focus well in the classroom. They are respectful towards each other and their teachers, and understand the importance of positive attitudes. This is underpinned by the school's values of CARE: communication, achievement, respect and empathy, which are embraced by the school community. Pupils feel safe at this school. They are confident that teachers would respond if an issue were to be raised and that bullying is rare.

Pupils, including those students in the sixth form, achieve incredibly well. GCSE results in 2023 were exceptional. The wide range of subjects available to pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), gives them the opportunity to follow their interests.

Pupils benefit from many opportunities to do well and enjoy their time at school. Pupils are encouraged to be expressive and creative through the curriculum and through wider opportunities. They regularly contribute to school life through the many activities available during lunchtime and after school, including netball, slam poetry and a rock band.

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

The school has placed breadth at the heart of its curriculum decision-making. Leaders have thoughtfully set out a balance of subjects for pupils to study at GCSE level, supporting their vision of providing a diverse curriculum. This begins with an expectation that all pupils will study languages in Years 7 to 11 and allows almost all pupils to access the full English Baccalaureate. In the sixth form, students are offered a wide choice of qualifications through the school and its collegiate partners. Students achieve very well in their A levels and are given personalised guidance when choosing the right next destination for them.

The curriculum is structured with clarity across subject areas. Careful thought has been given to the order in which topics are taught and how to build in local and cultural relevance. Teachers are experts in their subjects and build pupils' confidence by offering clear and helpful feedback. This is evident in reading, where leaders quickly assess pupils' needs and provide clear support to ensure that pupils can catch up if they have fallen behind. Teachers are well trained and use well-selected resources to build up reading fluency. As a result, pupils love reading and read regularly outside the classroom.

Teachers have high ambitions for what pupils will achieve, and pupils rise to these. For example, in science, pupils can explain complex energy concepts in visual and written form from the start of Year 8 using high-level vocabulary. Teachers are quick to check that pupils understand the ideas presented in lessons and skilful in clarifying and closing gaps if these emerge. The needs of pupils with SEND are

identified accurately and met both in class and in the wider curriculum through a range of after-school clubs and activities. These pupils receive excellent support, and the school ensures that they access the same curriculum and opportunities as their peers.

Pupils show the utmost respect towards each other in class. They are attentive and work hard due to the clear routines that are set by the school. They are encouraged to show independent learning habits. They are self-organised and able to understand clearly what they need to focus on to improve their learning further. Leaders are very aware of pupils' attendance levels at school and ensure that expectations for being present are embedded, including in the sixth form.

The programme in place for pupils' personal development is unique. The school offers a 'learning journey' of connected opportunities, which starts in Year 7. Pupils take on a multitude of roles, including as human rights ambassadors and advocates for mental health. In the sixth form, responsibilities include organising activities and clubs for younger pupils and acting as clear role models. These roles extend into the community and include a student-led drive to volunteer at a local food bank.

The school is successful in teaching pupils to be active in the community through its personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. For example, pupils use their morning tutor time to explore 'wise thoughts', which includes giving presentations to each other on important issues, such as anti-bullying. They are also provided with personalised careers guidance that builds in meaningful work experience and interactions with industry to help shape pupils' thinking about their future options.

Trustees and the local governing body work effectively to oversee the work of leaders in the school. They know the school well, hold leaders to account and support them appropriately through changes as these occur over time. Leaders have ensured that teachers are well supported in becoming subject experts and well trained in their craft. Teachers and the wider staff are happy to be a part of this school's team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	137178
Local authority	Harrow
Inspection number	10290178
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,421
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	269
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Diana Gerald
Headteacher	Naseema Akbar
Website	www.bentleywood.harrow.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 May 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher of this school took up her post in September 2022.
- The school is part of The Bentley Wood Trust.
- The school forms part of a collegiate partnership in the sixth form, with boys and girls from other schools attending for some lessons.
- There is specially resourced provision for 12 pupils with SEND, specifically those with moderate learning difficulties in Years 7 to 11.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision.
- 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 had 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 met with the headteacher and school senior leaders. Additionally, discussions were held with trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, art, science, history and languages. 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 and visited lessons 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 visited the specially resourced provision and observed lessons in this area.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' school evaluation, the school development plan, information about pupils' personal development, records of behaviour and attendance, and reports to those responsible for oversight.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to understand their experience of the school.
- Inspectors took account of survey responses from parents and carers, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Karim Ismail, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Juliette Claro	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Cross	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Saunders	His Majesty's Inspector

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