

Inspection of North Brent School

East Lane, Wembley HA0 3NT

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Luisa Bonelli. This school is part of Wembley Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the co-chief executive officers, Paul Bhatia and Jeremy Evans, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gareth Whiley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They are clear that their teachers are supportive and available to help them when needed. As a result, pupils are happy and feel safe. They treat each other with high levels of respect and their interactions with adults are courteous. Pupils' behaviour is positive. They remain focused in the classroom and know what is expected of them as they move around the school. On the rare occasion that learning is disrupted, pupils respond well to teachers' quick reminders of what is expected.

The school places remarkably high expectations on pupils, and on what it believes that they can achieve. This is rooted in the school's high ambition for what pupils are able to learn and by when. Almost all pupils are able to meet these expectations, and some demonstrate very high levels of achievement.

Leaders have carefully thought about the experiences pupils should have during their time at this school. A full selection of activities are available to both support learning and build pupils' interests. For example, pupils join clubs to learn Mandarin, play football, perform speech and drama, and take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

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

The school's curriculum is highly ambitious. For example, pupils in Year 7 are expected to understand how rural and urban cities in Tanzania experience uneven development. Similarly, they learn how to recognise and work with quadratic expressions in mathematics. Teachers are confident experts in their subject, and develop pupils' confidence and passion for learning. Many pupils achieve well and are able to remember what they have learned over time. However, a few pupils struggle to keep up with the pace of teaching, including some with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not remember well what they have learned. The school is aware of individuals who require additional help, but some pupils are not receiving the support they are entitled to and need to keep up with their learning.

Pupils are keen readers and have developed a real interest in books. Teachers encourage this and offer many opportunities to read for pleasure. A few pupils are not yet fluent readers. While support is being offered, it does not have a sharp enough focus on building fluency for some pupils who have fallen behind.

The school has established clear expectations and routines for pupils to follow. Pupils recognise that they can make 'mistakes' in how they behave, and learn to apologise and improve their conduct. As a result, pupils need minimal supervision and can be trusted to behave well. The school carefully monitors attendance. When a pupil's attendance dips, leaders take time to understand the reasons for this, and work with families to find solutions. This means that pupils attend school punctually and regularly.

Pupils receive individual attention to help shape their interests for the future. This includes careers interviews and visits from those in industry. As a result, pupils can confidently explain their plans for the future and possible careers. They know which qualifications and experiences they need in order to achieve their goals. The school takes pride in increasing what pupils know about the world around them. All pupils visit museums, the theatre, art galleries and local landmarks to help them appreciate a wide range of cultures. They appreciate that this helps them understand better what they are learning in the classroom. The school's approach to teaching pupils about themselves, relationships and how to keep safe is rigorous. Leaders prioritise this aspect of teaching, and the offer in this area is exceptional.

Staff are well looked after at this school and are proud to work here. Leaders listen to their concerns and respond to changing workload patterns. The school has been through a period of instability of staffing, and trust leaders have prioritised ways to minimise disruption to learning. However, at times the oversight of key areas does not receive enough attention. This means that the school and trust are unable to be fully assured that the needs of some pupils are met, especially those with SEND.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The needs of pupils with SEND are not routinely met, and oversight of this area does not hold leaders to account to ensure that pupils' entitlements are being provided and reviewed as required. This means that some pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as their peers and are not making sufficient progress through the curriculum. The school and trust should ensure that practices in the classroom to meet the needs of pupils with SEND are securely embedded, and that processes are established to identify when provision is not consistent, so that leaders are held to account accordingly.
- The school's strategies to identify and support pupils who need additional help with reading fluency are not securely developed. This means that some of these pupils do not quickly become confident and fluent readers. The school should review strategies to support weaker readers, ensuring that staff have the expertise needed to support these pupils to become fluent readers.

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 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	143718
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10255298
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gareth Whiley
CEO of the trust	Paul Bhatia (co-CEO) Jeremy Evans (co-CEO)
Headteacher	Luisa Bonelli
Website	www.northbrentschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is operating from temporary premises until it moves to a new purpose built school.
- The headteacher was away from school during the inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Pupils in the school are currently in Years 7 to 10 only.
- Some lessons are delivered at Wembley High Technology College, which is a school in the same trust.
- 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 met with a co-CEO of the trust, senior trust leaders and members of the school leadership team.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science and Spanish. 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 reviewed and discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, looking at pupils' work and speaking to them about their learning.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector/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 considered responses to parent, pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Karim Ismail, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christian Hicks

His Majesty's Inspector

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