

Inspection of The Corner School

Douglas Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 4DT

Inspection dates: 3 to 5 December 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

The Corner School provides a supportive and inclusive environment where pupils feel secure and valued. Staff are dedicated to achieving the best outcomes for every pupil, fostering both academic success and personal growth. High expectations of behaviour and learning are underpinned by consistent routines and approaches, enabling pupils to succeed in their learning and achieve well.

Staff are attentive to pupils' individual needs, using a range of strategies to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence. When pupils face challenges, staff respond calmly and effectively, helping to de-escalate situations and maintain a positive atmosphere. As a result, pupils engage well in lessons and enjoy a calm and respectful environment during social times.

The school makes effective use of therapeutic provision to promote pupils' emotional and social development. This includes, for example, using tailored sessions which focus on pupils' specific well-being and learning needs. Pupils learn to respect others, take turns, and express their views constructively.

Strong relationships between pupils and staff provide a foundation of trust and security. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to their concerns and address any issues swiftly and effectively, including the rare instances of poor behaviour. Through personalised care, support and guidance, pupils make meaningful progress through the curriculum.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and generally well sequenced. Pupils learn a curriculum that is based on the breadth set out in the national curriculum. They have experiences in the full range of areas as required by the independent school standards, including creative education.

The school has identified the key knowledge it expects pupils to know and this is revisited to deepen understanding. In mathematics, for example, teaching promotes fluency and retention of number facts and calculation methods, including through regular times table practice. However, in a few areas of the curriculum, the school's work to ensure that pupils achieve highly is not as strong. Where this is the case, teaching choices do not help pupils to recall what they have learned and link this to new curriculum content. There are also times when teaching does not pick up on gaps in pupils' understanding, particularly when pupils first join the school. This means that these gaps can persist and prevent pupils from progressing as well as they could do through the curriculum.

The school's reading programme focuses on ensuring pupils learn and practise the knowledge that they need to build accuracy, fluency and understanding. Phonics teaching is reinforced throughout the day, enabling pupils to recall and apply the sounds and vocabulary that have been taught. Nevertheless, there are occasions

where teaching does not address pupils' misconceptions consistently, which limits pupils' progression in reading.

Behaviour across the school is generally calm and purposeful. Pupils learn to self-regulate effectively, for example by initiating their own movement breaks. Staff's use of consistent strategies, such as the 'time in, not time out' approach, help to create a supportive environment. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful, contributing to a positive culture.

Pupils' mental health and well-being are prioritised. Resilience and emotional regulation are taught explicitly within the curriculum. This is complemented by therapeutic approaches that support pupils' behaviour and learning needs well. For example, de-escalation techniques, self-regulation strategies, and the use of sensory or calm spaces all help pupils to manage their emotions effectively. In turn, this fosters positive behaviours, and enhances pupils' focus on learning. Staff are well trained to provide the teaching and support that pupils need to grow, both socially and academically.

The school works with pupils and parents so that they understand the importance of regular attendance. While attendance is improving through the school's pro-active engagement with families, persistent absence remains high for some pupils.

Pupils benefit from a robust personal development programme that includes learning about respect, diversity, and fundamental British values. The subject content taught is responsive to the needs of the pupils at that time. For example, teaching covers and addresses emerging issues, like unkindness at break times. Enrichment opportunities, such as educational visits to London's museums, broaden pupils' experiences and enhance cultural capital. The school has introduced an agreed approach to developing pupils' character and independence. It is currently working on ensuring that this approach is implemented consistently across the school.

Leaders at all levels demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous improvement. The proprietor body and governing body share a unified vision. They are actively involved in the school and visit regularly to check the quality of pupils' education and experiences. This includes visiting regularly to ensure that the premises are well maintained and meet health and safety standards. The proprietor and governors also hold leaders accountable for the school's educational outcomes and ensure that staff are equipped with the necessary resources to support pupils' needs and ambitions. The work of leaders and the proprietor body means that all the independent school standards are met. The school's accessibility plan aligns with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

Staff receive helpful and well-targeted professional development that focuses on both behaviour management strategies and how to best support pupils' learning. The school and proprietor proactively seek out external expertise to enhance the provision in place and make sure that it is tailored to pupils' needs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few areas of the curriculum, the school's ambition to ensure that pupils develop knowledge securely is not fully realised. Sometimes, pupils are not supported to recall what they have been taught and connect what they are learning to what they already know. On occasions, including in early reading, pupils' misconceptions or gaps in knowledge are not tackled and therefore persist. The school should take further action to embed the curriculum and check that pupils are remembering and connecting their knowledge over time.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	145849
DfE registration number	304/6007
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10342137
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Proprietor	UP - Unlocking Potential
Chair	Stuart Roden
Headteacher	Daniela Caton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£56,000
Telephone number	020 3325 2772
Website	www.thecornerschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@thecornerschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 to 3 February 2022

Information about this school

- The new headteacher took up her post in January 2023. She took over from the chief executive officer of the proprietor body who had taken on the role of interim headteacher from September 2022.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and the chief executive officer of the proprietor body. The inspectors also looked at a range of documents relevant to the independent school standards. The inspectors met with other senior leaders. They also held discussions with representatives of the board of trustees and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work 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.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils during lesson visits and observed their behaviour in lessons, at break and at lunchtimes. They also spoke to staff about their workload in the school and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents and staff.

Inspection team

Adam Vincent, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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