

School Information



Westside Students:

Westside serves young people, aged 12-16, in Years 8-11, who have either been permanently excluded, are at serious risk of permanent exclusion or have struggled to flourish in the mainstream due to complex needs. They have come to view educational establishments as adversarial places where they feel both unwanted and a failure compared to others. Many of our students have had an extremely disrupted educational background, are FSM, have learning challenges, or lack a nurturing home environment. 68% of our students come from a Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds; 80% of students have identified SEND needs although the reality is that every student who arrives at Westside has a variety of challenges to overcome. We work closely with schools and local authorities in Hammersmith & Fulham and in a wide range of neighbouring boroughs.

'When pupils join Westside, a dramatic shift starts to happen. Most rediscover their love for learning and find their own identity.'

Ofsted, October 2019

Expected outcomes:

We offer a rigorous and comprehensive suite of GCSE qualifications with English, Maths and Science as core subjects along with Citizenship, Religious Studies and Art. We also offer a range of additional vocational courses: Catering, Finance Management and Hair & Beauty. We aim for students to take at least 6 GCSEs including English, Maths and Science by the end of Year 11, and for all students to make good progress against Individual Learning Plans. This outcome is linked to our belief that every young person has the capacity to make a success of themselves, and all students who have the ability to sit GCSEs should be supported to do so. We aim for all our students' wellbeing and general social skills to improve by the end of Year 11 so that they can go on to be contributing members of the wider community. We also aim to broaden our students' horizons with extra-curricular activities and increase their confidence in dealing with different institutions and people. These outcomes are linked to our core belief that educational establishments should educate the whole student and prepare them for further study and work.

The wider staff at Westside understand what they are trying to achieve with their cohort. As one colleague explained, 'It's about giving these young people the best opportunities, so they can take their place in the world'.

Challenge Partners, April 2023

How we fit our students together:

We have found that confidence-building at the heart of our programme comes as much from the support of the peer group as it does from teachers and staff. Each student application is reviewed carefully to make sure we consider the needs of the applicant and those of the current cohort. Our admission process aims for an outcome with a mixture of needs and personalities within a group so that its members can work together cohesively. Students who have been described as bullies by their previous school can be seen taking less confident peers under their wings at Westside. Peer to peer support is a strength in the school and where relationships are less than harmonious, staff work to rebuild and repair them. Students come to the school on trial for two weeks to ensure that the fit is a good one, we can meet their needs and avoid situations where new students might disrupt the learning environment. Parents, students and feeder schools want us to maintain excellent standards in our school and it is this that ensures that our outcomes are successful ones.

All staff take responsibility for responding to student behaviour. Behaviour is generally good and supports learning. There are excellent relationships between staff and students and these provide a good basis for positive behaviour management.
North London Quality Assurance Partnership (NLQAP), June 2023

Our 2023 GCSE Results:

It has been another great year for KS4 outcomes for the vast majority of students in the school. Westside works hard to ensure that our students are given the opportunity to get back on track in education and achieve highly in a variety of GCSE and vocational qualifications. Whilst we understand that not all achievements are academic, we recognise that having good exam results is often what is required to re-engage young people in education, which is the cornerstone of our mission. Offering a broad and balanced curriculum is important to ensure that Westside students are not disadvantaged by attending an Alternative Provision. Often AP is seen as a poor relation to mainstream education and that opportunities for students are limited. Westside consistently demonstrates that our students can, and do achieve qualifications like their peers in other settings. Some of the highlights this year include:

- 100% of vocational students achieving a pass in ICT, Enterprise, Hair and Beauty, Sports Science at both L1 and L2
- 67% GCSE grade 4 and above GCSE Combined Science
- 50% GCSE grade 5 and above in Art
- 40% GCSE grade 4 and above in English Literature
- One student achieving 9 GCSE passes at grades 6-8
- Our first grade 8 achieved in French; our first grade 6 in computing.
- 20% of all students achieving five good GCSE passes including Maths and English

“Staff at Westside pride themselves on understanding the nuanced needs of every pupil”
Centre for Social Justice AP Quality Assurance Toolkit 2021

The Future ...

We are now in a position to evaluate our achievements over the last two decades and to say with some pride that our alumni have shown it is possible to make enormous progress in learning when support is available, and when others believe in them. We will not compromise on the levels of academic rigour and engagement that we offer. In our application to become an AP Free School, we underwent careful evaluation by the Department of Education on all aspects of our provision. They have endorsed our model, and we have continued to build on it, to further enrich what we can offer vulnerable young people who have missed out on many chances to learn.

As Central London’s first Alternative Provision Free School, we are committed to developing the Small-Scale Model of education and regularly exemplify what effective AP looks like. We support many other schools with outreach work and host training opportunities for our colleagues in mainstream settings. A programme of CPD is shared with some of our local secondary schools, AP nationally and our influence of support has spread to Korea, France and the Cayman Islands as we share with others the best practice that exists in our school. We are a small school with big ambitions for our students and with a commitment to continue our leadership in the Alternative Provision sector.

“I was impressed by Westside School and the professional expertise of staff. In particular, the caring attitudes and commitment towards the young people in your care.”
Professor Fiona Smythe, Empowering Teachers for Inclusion in Schools Project, University of Bordeaux
2023

The care that we offer the students does not start and finish in line with the school day. We offer an intensive programme of support for Year 11 students to ensure that they are ready for the next steps in their education, employment and training. Westside continues to provide support in the transition to further education or employment by establishing relationships with key personnel in those placements. With this collaboration, Westside can offer information about strategies that have promoted success for individual students. Westside works in partnership with these outside agencies to ensure that the support that our students received continues throughout young adulthood. A drop-in service is offered for all of our past students and Westside continues to develop methods by which we can support these young people and their families with some of the many challenges that they face: mental health; homelessness; leaving the care system; destitution; crime; relationships; education and employment. Our students know that Westside is a safe and welcoming place for them to return to when it's needed and also to celebrate their successes.

**I just wanted to say thank you to everyone at Westside School for everything you have done for my son.
He wouldn't have done it without you. Year 11 Parent GCSE results day.**

**I have to add that it isn't just the grades, it is my son's life that everyone at Westside School have
positively impacted and changed.**

**Thank you for consistently providing excellent communication, clarity and transparency which made my
life easier.**

...The Westside Small Scale Model of Alternative Provision

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