

Cranbrook School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Cranbrook School, situated in Ilford, is registered to admit up to 411 students aged between three and 16 years. Originally a boys' school, Cranbrook now admits both boys and girls. Cranbrook College was founded in 1896 and merged with Glenarm College in January 2011 to form Cranbrook School. It was purchased by the current proprietor, Cognita Schools Ltd, in May 2007. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2011. The students are from a range of cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds and there are currently 282 students on roll, of whom 29 children are in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are 21 children in receipt of free education for three- and four-year-olds. One student has a statement of special educational needs. There were no Year 11 students present during the inspection as they were engaged in the annual programme of GCSE examinations.

As stated in its vision and values, 'Cranbrook cares that staff and students alike enjoy their time at the school and strive to give more than they receive. The school aims to put excellence in teaching, with traditional values, at the heart of its education.' The school was last inspected in July 2009.

Following a material change visit to the school in June 2011, the Department for Education accepted the recommendation that the school may extend its age range to 18 years once suitable accommodation was provided. This inspection considered whether the accommodation is suitable.

Evaluation of the school

Cranbrook School provides a good quality of education for students across the full age range, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The good curriculum and the good quality of teaching ensure that students of all ages make good progress in their learning. Students throughout the school have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is outstanding. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students, including safeguarding, are outstanding. The school has made good progress since its last full inspection and all the regulations are met.

The inspection evidence confirms that the school has sufficient accommodation on its current site to extend its age range to 18 years.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Quality of education

The curriculum provided by the school is good.

The curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage follows the requirements of the statutory framework for this age group. There is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated learning, particularly in the Nursery class. The recently appointed Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a good vision and plans for the further development of provision for these children.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, students are taught well the full range of subjects in the National Curriculum, mainly in class groups with their class teachers. Effective specialist provision is made for the teaching of music, games and French. There is a clear and focused emphasis, up to the age of 11 years, on the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. Effective use is made of a commercial phonics programme to assist students with the development of their reading and spelling. The development of the school garden by students in Year 3, as a haven for wildlife and a suitable environment for recreation and learning, illustrates the good additional opportunities for learning beyond the academic curriculum. Students in Key Stage 3 enjoy an appropriate, well-planned curriculum which maintains the breadth of subjects of the National Curriculum. This is supplemented with a relevant programme of personal and social development (PSD), which makes an important contribution to students' ability to develop the skills and personal qualities required to take their place in the wider community. In Key Stage 4 the emphasis of the curriculum is on the study of a good range of subjects to GCSE accreditation. Students in this age range take part in two weeks of work experience and are provided with good careers guidance, which assists them with choices about the next stage of their education. Students are successful in gaining access to suitable sixth form provision at the age of 16.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good for learners of all ages. The headteacher and senior leaders have introduced a strong focus on the quality of learning and its impact on the rate of progress made by students.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have access to the full range of required areas of learning and their work is assessed accurately against the requirements of the early learning goals. Children work well together and take on responsibilities in the classroom with confidence. They are making good progress.

Teaching throughout the school is based on good planning with clear objectives to be achieved in each lesson. The quality of relationships between students and with teachers is excellent. Students are respectful towards adults and engage with interest in their work. Teachers have a good understanding of the individual learning needs of their students and of what they need to do to improve their performance. In the few lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, higher-attaining students are not provided with sufficiently challenging work from the outset of a lesson. In the majority of lessons students understand what is expected of them but are not always aware of the longer-term targets they are aiming for. The quality of questioning by

teachers and the resulting dialogue among students are often outstanding. Teachers are skilled at encouraging students to reflect on their ideas and to develop their oral answers with clear reasoning and explanation. The quality of writing for many students, across the range of subjects studied, is not as advanced as their oral work and understanding.

As a result of a good curriculum, good teaching and excellent behaviour, students make good progress over their time in the school. The school's recent emphasis on the use of the level descriptors of the National Curriculum to assess students' work, both in regular marking and in end-of-unit tests, is resulting in the raising of standards. The assessment methods provide effective information to judge the rate at which students are progressing. Teachers are developing their expertise in assessing in a consistent and systematic manner but currently lack moderation and sharing of assessment outcomes to secure the absolute accuracy of judgements.

Students are making good progress in each key stage. The external measures in Key Stages 3 and 4 demonstrate that students are progressing at a rate in excess of expectations. Students are performing well above the national averages at the end of each key stage, including in their GCSE results, and it is clear that this represents good progress from their various starting points.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes an effective contribution to their personal development. The school's vision places a strong emphasis on the development of personal qualities, including courtesy and respect. This begins well in the school's work with the youngest children. As a result of high expectations and good attention to students' personal needs, behaviour is outstanding.

Students accept responsibility for their own behaviour in lessons and engage with interest and enthusiasm in their learning. From the time of entry to the school, they learn to understand the difference between right and wrong and behave extremely well. In their responses to the inspection questionnaire, a very large majority of students stated that they enjoy school. The school council provides students of all ages with good opportunities to make an active contribution to decision making in the school. However, despite these good opportunities, a small minority of students do not believe that the school takes sufficient account of their views.

The curriculum provides students with excellent opportunities to develop their understanding of public institutions and services in England. A range of cross-curricular themes, including the study of 'Black History Month' and 'Fairtrade' initiatives, and assemblies enable students to develop tolerance and respect for the variety of different cultural traditions nationally and globally. While the school provides a limited range of trips and visits to contribute to the curriculum and to students' personal development, a small minority of parents and carers expressed the view that this range could be profitably extended. The school has demonstrated

in its development planning that firm plans are in place to extend this dimension of the school's provision in the next school year.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of students is outstanding. Students are very well supervised in all areas of the school and they state in their questionnaire responses that they feel safe in school. Policies and procedures for child protection, the management of behaviour and anti-bullying are comprehensive and implemented effectively. All members of staff, including the designated responsible persons and those working with the youngest children, have been trained to the required levels in child protection, first aid and fire safety. All training is monitored rigorously and kept up to date. Arrangements for the recruitment of staff follow safer recruitment procedures and are implemented consistently. The school's fire risk assessment is up to date and monitored very closely together with all the required routine checks on the safety of the premises and fire safety equipment. Students are provided with regular and very helpful information about healthy eating and healthy lifestyles through the curriculum; a number expressed informal appreciation for the quality of food provided. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met. A major strength of the school's provision is the extent to which all arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are kept under constant review and monitored extremely well.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All required checks on the suitability of staff and proprietors to work with children are completed consistently and are up to date. Details of all required checks are recorded systematically on a suitable single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

Effective use is made of the restricted site on which the school is located. Extensive refurbishment and extension have taken place since the last inspection to provide much improved accommodation for the preparatory section of the school. The upper school is located in older premises, which are suitably organised to provide classrooms of adequate size, including specialist facilities for practical subjects such as science and information and communication technology. Teaching spaces throughout the school enable safe and effective learning. The outside space for play and recreation is limited but is organised appropriately to ensure that students of all ages have good opportunities to play safely. Recent arrangements have been introduced for physical education lessons to take place in a suitable local sports centre.

Provision of information

The school provides up-to-date and relevant information for parents and carers through its website, prospectus and regular newsletters. An appropriate annual report is produced for parents and carers providing details of students' progress in the subjects of the curriculum, together with comments on behaviour and attitudes

to learning. Additional end-of-term summary grade reports keep parents and carers further informed about their children's academic and personal development.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's policy and procedures for the management of any complaints meet regulatory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Ensure that there is a consistent focus on the development of writing, including higher-level writing skills, in all subjects and key stages.
- Ensure that higher-attaining students are always provided with a suitable level of challenge throughout all lessons in all subjects.
- Provide further opportunities for teachers to develop increasing consistency and accuracy in the use of National Curriculum levels of attainment in marking and assessment.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	✓			
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary and secondary day school		
Date school opened	1896		
Age range of pupils	3–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 229	Girls: 49	Total: 278
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 3	Total: 4
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,095 to £9,120		
Address of school	34 Mansfield Road Ilford IG1 3BD		
Telephone number	020 8554 1757		
Email address	info@cranbrook-school.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ivan Mulinder		
Proprietor	Cognita Schools Ltd		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Cranbrook School, Ilford, IG1 3BD

Thank you for your welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit, and the chance to see you at work and in the playground. The inspection judged that Cranbrook provides you with a good quality of education. Your questionnaires and conversations told us that the great majority of you enjoy school and feel safe there. We were particularly pleased to see:

- the way in which the youngest children learn to play and work together successfully
- the beautiful garden which has been constructed by those of you in Year 3
- your outstanding behaviour in all year groups, in lessons and around the school
- the way in which you respect each other and your teachers, and cooperate so effectively in lessons
- the excellent discussion which takes place in so many lessons where you listen to each other and think carefully about your answers
- the good standards of your work which show that you make good progress during your time at the school
- the opportunities which are provided for you to succeed in GCSE examinations and to prepare for further education, and eventually, employment.

To bring about further improvement, we have asked the staff to help you improve your writing in all subjects and make it as good as your reading, speaking and listening. We have asked staff to make sure that those of you who are capable of achieving high standards are provided with sufficient challenge in all lessons. We also want the staff to make sure that the targets set for you in all of your subjects are accurate and suitable to ensure that you make the maximum progress. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young
Lead Inspector