

Edith Kay Independent School

32 Crouch Road, London NW10 8HR

Inspection dates

22–24 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Sixth form provision	No separate judgement made
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The curriculum is not as effective as it should be in meeting pupils' needs, particularly in developing their numeracy and scientific knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Plans for ensuring that pupils study a range of accredited courses are not fully implemented.
- Teachers and adults do not consistently make use of the information that they have about pupils when selecting activities and resources to meet pupils' specific learning needs. They do not have consistently high enough expectations about the quality of pupils' work.
- The training provided to teachers and adults has not ensured that pupils make good or better progress across a wide range of subjects.
- The headteacher, in part due to her teaching commitments, does not have enough time to implement some of the school's improvement work. The proprietor and governors recognise this, and are committed to appointing additional leadership, teaching and therapeutic support.
- The school's approach to assessing pupils' outcomes is a work in progress. Some staff do not follow school policies, such as the assessment policy, consistently.
- Due to small numbers of students in the sixth form, there is no separate judgement reported. The provision has been evaluated in determining all other judgements.

The school has the following strengths

- There is stronger teaching in the school, for example in English, art and pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- Staff prioritise pupils' welfare. Information that relates to pupils' well-being is shared quickly. Adults work well together to identify, help and manage any safeguarding concerns.
- Staff are particularly successful in helping to build pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Leaders have ensured that behaviour and attendance are good overall.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that the independent school standards have been met in full.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that:
 - the proprietor and governors follow through with their plans to strengthen support for the headteacher to enable her to have sufficient time to lead and monitor the quality of the school's work
 - leaders implement their plans to improve the provision for therapy and counselling to further help pupils who have more complex needs
 - the curriculum is strengthened, particularly in developing pupils' numeracy and scientific knowledge, skills and understanding
 - leaders implement their plans to ensure that there are more opportunities for pupils to achieve a wider range of accredited qualifications that better prepare them for the next steps in their education, training or employment
 - there is more sharing of the stronger teaching practice that exists in the school
 - the training that is provided to staff improves their teaching skills and enables them to more effectively meet their pupils' specific learning needs
 - leaders refine the school's assessment processes, including how they evidence the progress that pupils make, so that they can more effectively track pupils' progress across the curriculum
 - staff follow school policies consistently.
- Develop the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils' outcomes more quickly improve by ensuring that teachers and adults:
 - challenge pupils more and have consistently high expectations of pupils and the quality of work they should be producing
 - use the information that they have about their pupils to plan more effectively and make sure that their resources and teaching strategies better meet pupils' different needs and abilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- While there are strengths in teaching, leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good across the school and that staff consistently apply school policies. As a result, the quality of teaching and how well staff check on pupils' progress vary.
- Leaders have planned a range of curriculum pathways, each offering pupils, including students in the sixth form, a number of ways of gaining accredited qualifications. However, plans are not fully implemented. Furthermore, the curriculum is not strong enough in helping pupils to develop good knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics and science.
- While a variety of information is gathered about pupils as they begin their education at the school (each individual pupil's baseline performance information), this information is not used sufficiently well by teachers and adults to plan pupils' learning. As a result, the day-to-day curriculum for pupils does not help them to make good or better progress across the range of subjects that they study.
- The school's training for staff has prioritised safeguarding and ensuring that staff are able to manage pupils' behaviour and meet the range of their emotional needs. However, the training and monitoring of staff to improve their teaching and ensure consistency across the school have not been fully effective.
- There is no doubt that the proprietor, governing body and headteacher have high ambition for the school. However, the headteacher, in part due to teaching commitments, has been unable to turn all the school's improvement plans into reality. The proprietor and governing body are aware of this, and have committed to adding further capacity. For example, some additional appointments at senior leadership have already been made. There are also plans to improve the therapy and counselling support that are provided to pupils.
- All pupils start at the school having been out of formal education for a long time or having experienced challenging situations in their young lives. Leaders prioritise helping them to settle into school life and build stable relationships with teachers and adults. This is successful. Pupils' personal development and welfare are good. There is a particularly strong improvement in pupils' attendance.
- The school is welcoming. Since it opened in September 2017, staff have been particularly successful in developing a culture of inclusion. This is coupled with a willingness and ability to give pupils a much-needed fresh start.
- Leaders have placed significant importance on ensuring that pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and skills. Pupils have visited the local temple, they have experienced a well-being day, including a visit to the local gym, and they have helped to make a school vegetable garden. This range of activities helps pupils to learn how to socialise effectively and to work with each other, inside and outside of school.
- The headteacher leads by example and has the full confidence of parents, carers and staff. One staff member commented, 'I think the headteacher makes this school a very special place for students.' A parent also commented, 'We have been offered tremendous

support and help. Every obstacle has been overcome.'

- Leaders have worked together to make sure that all the independent school standards are met.

Governance

- The governing body includes the proprietor and has been in place since before the school formally opened in September 2017. It meets regularly and receives a range of information from the headteacher. Governors use this to help them understand the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. However, governors do not offer sufficient challenge around some aspects of the school's work, notably in relation to the quality of teaching and the delivery of the curriculum.
- The governing body understands that its role is evolving. For example, governors were open in sharing their plans to divide their roles up more effectively to improve their monitoring of the school's work.
- The proprietor has a detailed understanding of the school. While, overall, the self-evaluation of the school is too generous, the proprietor knows what needs to improve, particularly in relation to the curriculum and adding additional leadership capacity.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and staff have a well-developed understanding of the range of possible risks that could or do affect pupils at the school. These risks are built into staff training and also into the PSHE curriculum so that pupils can better learn how to look after themselves.
- Staff are sensitive to pupils' welfare needs and they all know the pupils well. Information is shared quickly and effectively, both within the school and with external agencies. Staff have been trained to 'think that it could happen here' and know how to report any concerns that they have.
- Pupils feel safe at the school. One pupil said, 'The school is friendly. I never used to get on with people at my old school.' This was echoed by another who said, 'I feel listened to.' Pupils' sentiments chimed with those of parents when a parent said: 'For the first time in my child's life, we both feel extremely happy and safe at Edith Kay.'
- The school's safeguarding policy is comprehensive, detailed and meets statutory requirements. It is available on the school's website. Leaders are aware of the need to continue to check that all school policies that contribute to the safeguarding of pupils are fully implemented. For example, although pre-employment checks that adults are suitable to work with children meet statutory requirements, a few administrative errors had to be addressed during the inspection.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers and supporting adults do not have consistently high enough expectations of the quality and presentation of pupils' work. This is particularly the case for pupils who have been on roll at the school for a longer period of time.
- Teachers and supporting adults do not make consistently effective use of each pupil's individual education plan. This is a document prepared by the headteacher when a pupil starts at the school. It contains their baseline information, including their reading age and relevant information. As a result, the activities and approaches that some staff use do not meet pupils' specific learning needs as well as they should.
- The school's assessment policy is not applied consistently. Teachers and supporting adults are not consistently effective in checking pupils' understanding or giving them guidance on their work. Furthermore, not enough staff take advantage of the different ways to record and track pupils' progress and effort, such as through the use of observation, technology or photography.
- Supporting adults are not consistently skilled in providing classroom support. They do not give enough support, either by questioning pupils deeply enough or intervening to keep pupils on track.
- Some staff do not model literacy skills well, either orally or in writing.
- There is stronger teaching in the school, for example in art, English and PSHE. In art, pupils take pride in their work and produce high-quality portfolios. Pupils use a range of resources, including information technology, and so develop strong subject-specific knowledge and skills. In English, teachers reinforce basic spelling, grammar and punctuation, as well as developing pupils' reading and speaking skills.
- Teachers and adults build positive working relationships with pupils. They use humour well and pupils feel that they are supportive of them. This helps to break down barriers to learning for pupils. The approaches used by staff have helped pupils to improve their behaviour.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders take a great deal of care in finding out about pupils' different behavioural, learning and medical needs. These are captured in well-written and detailed individual risk assessments, which are shared with and understood by staff. Staff use these risk assessments to monitor pupils and to be alert to any changes in their behaviour. Leaders shared several examples of effective actions being taken to help pupils and their families.
- Pupils learn a variety of age-appropriate ways to stay safe, including through the PSHE curriculum. Pupils are aware of the risks around them, including when online. The school is careful in designing and adapting the PSHE curriculum to cover the risks that pupils face and to help pupils learn how to stay healthy. Everyone takes bullying seriously. Pupils have all made pledges in relation to how they will treat each other, including not

using homophobic language.

- The school recently appointed a careers adviser. All pupils have had an individual meeting and a documented careers interview. A new accredited course on employability skills has been introduced. This is helping pupils to think more carefully about possible career routes. There has been effective support for students capable of undertaking work experience to help them develop job-related knowledge and skills.

Behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is good.
- Pupils have made great strides in improving their behaviour. An example of this is the way in which leaders have managed lunchtime arrangements. Pupils and adults sit together to enjoy a healthy cooked meal, often prepared with help from pupils. At social times, pupils behave well and learn how to develop their communication skills.
- Pupils are typically respectful to the adults that work with them. They show good manners and are typically compliant. When pupils are having a bad day or need time out, adults supervise them carefully and help pupils to talk about their emotions and feelings.
- Pupils' attendance significantly improves during their time at the school. This is because, over time, the school successfully re-engages pupils with school life. One parent noted that, since their child had started at the school, they had seen a change in their behaviour and their child was smiling more.
- Leaders know that there is still scope to build on pupils' good behaviour by all adults supporting pupils in developing even more positive learning habits, for example consistent promptness to lessons.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Reviews of pupils' work show that pupils' progress varies across the range of subjects they study. English and art are typically strong. However, pupils are not producing the same high-quality work in some other subjects, including mathematics and science.
- Pupils' literacy skills are more effectively promoted than their numeracy skills. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop basic numeracy and problem-solving skills in mathematics and across other subjects.
- Some teachers and adults are not consistently good at using teaching approaches that meet pupils' needs and build on what they can already do. Some teaching lacks challenge and limits pupils from making the progress of which they are capable.
- Through courses such as cooking for independent living and PSHE, pupils learn about healthy lifestyles and how to improve their physical well-being. This helps pupils to be prepared for life after school.
- The school opened for pupils in September 2017. Most pupils started at the school well after this time and, therefore, have not yet had any work formally accredited. Pupils' art work is about to be moderated and pupils are completing work with a view to gaining accreditation in employability skills. Plans are in place for pupils to gain a range of qualifications, including GCSE subjects, during their time at the school, particularly as

most pupils settle into their one- or two-year learning journeys.

- Overall, given pupils' different starting points and their individual circumstances, they are being supported in preparing for their next steps in education, training or employment.

Sixth form provision

No separate judgement made

- As the number of students in the sixth form is small, and so as not to identify individual students, a separate section has not been written. All other judgements and associated commentary included an evaluation of the sixth form.

School details

Unique reference number	144796
DfE registration number	304/6006
Inspection number	10044421

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	14 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	10
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Ibrahim Adedayo Adeagbo
Chair	Jill Gander
Headteacher	Louise McLaughlin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,000–£49,000
Telephone number	020 8961 4204
Website	www.edithkayschool.com
Email address	headteacher@edithkayschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2017. It is a small school and most pupils currently on roll started at the school well after this date.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Pupils have a variety of different needs.

- The school is not currently using any alternative provision.
- The school offers a variety of what are called 'learning journeys'. These include a four-year journey for those joining the school at age 14 and a respite journey for pupils needing some intensive support. Most pupils are on the one- or two-year journey. At the end of their journeys, they are expected to gain a range of accredited qualifications that are linked to their needs, abilities and aspirations.
- This is the school's first inspection since it opened.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector, sometimes with the headteacher, visited lessons in a range of subjects across the school. The inspector considered a range of pupils' work to evaluate the quality of pupils' learning over time.
- The inspector held a number of meetings with school staff to evaluate the impact of their work. The inspector held a meeting with the governing body and with the proprietor. The inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority special educational needs service.
- The inspector reviewed the school's surveys of pupils', parents' and staff views. Replies to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, and Ofsted's survey for staff were also considered.
- The inspector scrutinised a variety of documentation provided by leaders, including: leaders' self-evaluation; improvement plans; case studies; minutes of governing body meetings; attendance and behaviour information; a variety of school policies; the single central record of pre-employment checks; and a wide range of other information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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