

Insights Independent School

3–5 Alexandria Road, West Ealing, London W13 0NP

Inspection dates

18–20 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal, supported by senior leaders, provides good leadership. They ensure that pupils receive a personalised learning experience which caters to their needs. Most pupils thrive both academically and personally.
- School leaders and the proprietor, who is also the principal, have taken effective action to ensure that the independent school standards are met.
- The sole responsibility of governance lies with the proprietor, who has appointed an advisory board. Members of the advisory board offer guidance and good support to leaders for school improvement.
- The curriculum is carefully designed and reviewed. It motivates pupils to learn, as it is tailored to their needs, interests and career aspirations.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Strong teamwork and skilled teaching assistants make a noticeable contribution to pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- The school caters for pupils' personal development and welfare well. Pupils learn how to be safe, and the nurturing aspects of the school promote pupils' self-belief.
- Pupils' outcomes are good. Once pupils re-establish their confidence, many make strong progress from their starting points across the curriculum. Smaller proportions of key stage 4 pupils made good progress in mathematics and science than in English.
- Most pupils behave well and enjoy being at school. Despite leaders' concerted efforts to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance, this has not been successful for a few pupils. Although reducing, there are still too many exclusions and overall attendance is low.

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 pupils' progress by strengthening the quality of teaching, particularly in key stage 4 in mathematics and science, so that more pupils make substantial progress.
- Continue to manage incidents of poor behaviour so that the number of exclusions continues to fall below the national average.
- Evaluate the impact of actions to improve pupils' attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, who is also the proprietor, is supported well by senior leaders to lead this good school effectively. All staff collectively share the ambitious vision for every pupil to receive a positive and personalised learning experience. Staff and parents told inspectors that: 'The school adapts to pupils' needs and pupils are not expected to adapt to the school.'
- School leaders have ensured that all independent school standards and other requirements are met.
- The professional development of staff is effective. Staff have opportunities to observe different teaching strategies, including some teachers visiting other special schools to improve their own practice. Staff reflect, share and debate how they teach to develop their techniques and improve pupils' learning. Staff morale is high and their responses to questionnaires show that they are proud to work at this school.
- The curriculum is suitably planned and regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets pupils' diverse and challenging needs. As well as English and mathematics, pupils enjoy a range of subjects, such as humanities, art and music technology. Effective careers education and work placements ensure that pupils learn about the world of work. For instance, pupils and sixth-form students gained valuable experience of animal care, hair and beauty, retail and construction.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effective. Extra-curricular activities, including after-school clubs, enrich the formal curriculum and capture pupils' interests. Outdoor learning, such as fishing, cycling and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, develops pupils' character and social skills. Pupils were very keen to talk about their trips to places of interest, including to British institutions such as The Bank of England.
- The school promotes protected characteristics, such as age, gender and race, well. For instance, pupils explore different cultures and foods on 'International Food Day' celebrated at the school. This, together with the broad curriculum, allows pupils to gain valuable experiences and helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Funding, such as for special educational needs and pupil premium, is used effectively. Pupils receive timely and specialist support appropriate to their needs. This has a direct effect on pupils' personal development and outcomes.
- Although many pupils have improved their behaviour and achievements since joining the school, a few pupils have not developed self-discipline exceptionally well. Similarly, leaders have not secured substantial improvements in the progress of a few pupils, particularly in mathematics and science at key stage 4.

Governance

- The school does not have a governing body. The sole responsibility for governance lies with the principal, who is also the proprietor of the school.
- The principal has appointed an advisory board that includes parents to give an on-going

independent view for school improvement.

- Members of the advisory board have a range of professional skills, including in finance, education, health and social care. Members use their experience to offer school leaders appropriate support, including review of policies and pupils' personal development. The chair of the advisory board assists independently, as part of the school's complaints procedure.
- The advisory board recognises the school's strengths and areas to improve, including extending the outdoor space to boost the curriculum.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The school's safeguarding policy, published on the school's website, takes account of current government guidelines. Pre-employment checks ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Regular communication with parents and external agencies secures help for pupils and their families who need support.
- Staff training includes current guidelines and how to identify and report signs of a child at possible risk of harm. This includes risks associated with radicalisation, extremism and child criminal exploitation. Sharing of information about pupils' needs and vulnerabilities ensure that staff are well informed to take timely action and seek early help when necessary. The school's detailed written records of referrals made to professional services confirm this.
- At the start of the inspection, there were some minor issues relating to the school's safeguarding policy. These did not pose a risk to the school's effective safeguarding procedures. Even so, school leaders took immediate action and by the end of the inspection they resolved all issues.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Overall, teaching across all subjects reinforces the positive climate for learning that characterises this school. Pupils learn effectively because teaching is purposeful, challenging and enjoyable.
- Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' progress and well-being. The skilled work of teaching assistants and effective teamwork support pupils' attitudes to learning well. Teaching assistants offer timely interventions to keep pupils on task with their learning.
- Teaching staff know the pupils well. Teachers and teaching assistants build trusting relationships, so pupils feel confident to try their best. Pupils make gains in their knowledge because of committed staff who help and nurture them to achieve.
- Teachers plan their lessons well and expect highly of their pupils. Teaching uses a wide range of resources to broaden pupils' knowledge and basic skills. For instance, the use of appropriate and interesting texts entuses pupils to read, particularly in key stages 2 and 3.

- Assessment of pupils' learning is effective. Leaders and teachers use a range of strategies to monitor pupils' learning, and their targets set out in the pupils' education, health and care plans. For instance, teachers use questioning effectively and set pupils specific targets to check pupils' understanding and progress.
- Although teaching is good overall, there are occasional inconsistencies where some pupils do not learn effectively in some subjects. This includes mathematics and science, particularly in key stage 4.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- During their time at the school, pupils develop a sense of belief in themselves. The school's values of acceptance, tolerance and mutual respect are key areas of the curriculum and promote pupils' self-esteem. Pupils reflect on their strengths and how to manage their emotions, particularly in times of conflict and uncertainty.
- Staff enable pupils to become successful learners. Teachers and assistants use their knowledge of pupils' needs to set realistic targets so that pupils can develop key skills. For instance, pupils create targets to improve their attitudes to learning and plan for their future career.
- The leadership team ensures that pupils' physical and emotional needs are catered for. Pupils undertake therapy sessions and take part in various activities that support their well-being, including trips, sports and swimming, which is part of the physical education curriculum.
- Pupils feel safe in school. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to know how to identify and minimise potential risks, including online risks.
- Pupils have a growing awareness of how to stay healthy. A breakfast club provides a nutritious meal, and other activities, such as football and board games, get pupils ready for their learning.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take. They told inspectors that sometimes bullying happens, but, when it does, teachers deal with it swiftly. School records show a slight increase in bullying incidents from 2017 to 2018. This is mainly because of the school's active procedures to prevent bullying behaviour from escalating.
- At the start of this academic year, a very small number of pupils started attending an alternative provision. There has been insufficient time to report on their progress, attendance and behaviour. Leaders have considered pupils' safety by making sure risk assessments are in place while the pupils attend the alternative provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct during learning time is generally good because teaching staff use well-established routines. The use of a visual timetable for pupils helps to provide a clear structure to learning activities. Teachers and teaching assistants understand pupils' needs

well and provide effective support that is tailored to individual pupils.

- The school's environment is conducive to learning. Literacy and numeracy information on classroom walls captures pupils' interests. Well-equipped classrooms facilitates dynamic learning to support pupils' vocational studies in hair, beauty, barbering and music technology. Most pupils show considerable enthusiasm for learning and enjoy being at school.
- Most pupils move sensibly around the building during unstructured times. During the inspection, inspectors heard a few pupils using derogatory language, which usually stopped when challenged by their teachers. School leaders and teaching staff work hard to manage pupils' behaviour. Although the number of days lost due to exclusions fell between 2017 and 2018, there are still too many exclusions. Repeated behaviours involving a few pupils affects the school's exclusion rates.
- Attendance for some pupils is high and improving when compared to their attendance before joining the school. Leaders liaise with parents and external services to improve declining rates of attendance. Despite this, overall attendance remains low. Persistence absence among a small number of pupils affects the school's attendance figures.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Throughout most of the year groups, pupils make good progress from their starting points across the curriculum, including English and mathematics. Pupils thrive through good teaching and their positive interactions with staff at the school. As well as improving academically, many pupils make gains in their personal development given their special educational needs.
- Pupils are developing strong reading skills. Leaders and teachers adapt the curriculum and the books pupils read to support and extend pupils' reading skills. Teaching, particularly in key stages 2 and 3, encourages pupils to read widely and often, and pupils earn rewards, for instance.
- Most pupils achieve appropriate qualifications, including GCSE examinations and functional skills qualifications to support their next steps. As well as qualifications in English and mathematics, pupils have achieved qualifications in other subjects, including science, physical education, business studies and music technology.
- The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their employment, training or education, including going back to mainstream school. Some pupils and sixth-form students have secured college placements to study for various courses, such as sports, hair and beauty, and construction.
- At the end of 2018, some pupils in key stage 4 did not make enough progress in mathematics and science. At least half of pupils did not reach their targets, as confirmed by the school's records.

School details

Unique reference number	135493
DfE registration number	307/6339
Inspection number	10054295

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	5 to 21
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Barbara Quartey
Chair	Barbara Quartey
Headteacher	Barbara Quartey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,425–£49,015
Telephone number	020 8840 9099
Website	www.insightsesc.co.uk
Email address	info@insightsesc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–5 November 2015

Information about this school

- Insights Independent School is a specialist day school, which caters for pupils and sixth-form students with a wide range of needs, including challenging behaviours, mental health needs and social and emotional difficulties. Some pupils have a specific learning difficulty or autism spectrum disorder.
- Pupils come from 12 different local authorities, who pay their fees. There are many more boys than girls on roll.

- The majority of pupils are disadvantaged and all pupils have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is on two sites in the London Borough of Ealing, approximately half a mile apart. Primary pupils and the majority of key stage 3 pupils are taught at the site located at Alexandria Road. The older pupils, including post-16 students are educated mainly at Craven Road on the upper floor of a building above a charity and business.
- At the time of this inspection, there were no pupils on roll in key stage 1. The number of students on roll in the sixth form was low. For this reason, the sixth-form provision has not been reported separately, in order to avoid identifying individual students. The effectiveness of the sixth form is incorporated into the other sections of the report.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 3–5 November 2015. Following this inspection, the school extended its provision to cater for pupils aged five to 21.
- The school does not have provision for two-year-olds.
- School leaders provide the strategic development of the school, which is jointly monitored by an advisory board, which includes a chair.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider to support pupils' learning, Innov8 Training and Development.
- The school runs a breakfast club every morning and various after-school clubs twice a week.
- The school aims to 'provide interesting, interactive and inclusive learning opportunities for children and young people with additional educational needs'. The school's ethos promotes the values of acceptance, tolerance, mutual respect and support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across all key stages, except the sixth-form provision. Most visits to classrooms were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed activities outside normal lessons, including assemblies and breakfast club, and spoke to pupils during their social times.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils, spoke to others informally and examined pupils' books in a range of subjects. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, including subject leaders, and teaching assistants.
- Discussions were held with parents and with a therapist, and in telephone conversations with members of the advisory board and representatives of three local authorities.
- Inspectors examined school policies and a range of documentation, including those associated with safeguarding. The premises were examined on both sites to check compliance with the independent school standards. Records relating to attendance, behaviour and curriculum plans were also considered.
- Too few responses were made to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, to be reported directly. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the 36 staff questionnaires returned during the inspection.

Inspection team

Rosemarie McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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