

Inspection of Edith Kay Independent School

32 Crouch Road, London NW10 8HR

Inspection dates: 11–13 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff focus on helping pupils explore their unique talents and strengths. Pupils' learning is carefully tailored to their individual needs and abilities. Well-planned teaching, together with strong levels of pastoral care, enable pupils to overcome their barriers to learning. Over time, pupils rediscover their enthusiasm for learning. Staff support pupils to develop a 'can do' mindset, which in turn builds pupils' self-esteem.

The school has a strong sense of community. Pupils enjoy their daily communal lunches together. They are proud to help out by preparing nutritious food and baking cakes for each other, staff and visitors.

Staff have high expectations for all. They want pupils to fulfil their potential. Leaders and staff work well together as a cohesive and caring team. They support pupils to manage their behaviour and develop positive relationships with others. Pupils behave respectfully, both during and outside of their lessons.

Pupils reported that bullying is rare. Incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying, are dealt with swiftly by staff. Pupils feel safe. Staff listen to pupils' opinions and take any worries seriously.

Parents and carers are full of praise for the school. They value the school's flexible approach to meeting their children's needs and how staff inspire their children to learn well.

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

Leaders, the proprietor and staff are passionate about making sure that all pupils succeed. When pupils join the school, many have lost interest in their education. Leaders and staff work closely with families, therapists and external agencies. This ensures that they understand and meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils receive the support they need to learn well. They quickly become confident and motivated learners. This enhances the quality of education provided at the school.

The proprietor and governors are knowledgeable about the school's work. They work closely with leaders to improve pupils' learning. They also make sure that the school meets the requirements of the independent school standards and complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act. The premises are well maintained and safe.

Leaders make sure that pupils build up knowledge and skills in all the required areas of study. Leaders' goals for pupils are ambitious. They want pupils to be well prepared for their learning in the future. At the same time, leaders make sure that subject plans take account of pupils' abilities and interests. They aim to help pupils find and develop their talents. Well-planned vocational courses, for example in horse care and in cooking, enable pupils to gain new knowledge and skills. Pupils also benefit from many opportunities to apply what they learn and to deepen their

understanding. For example, pupils used what they knew about milk production to help them make their own ice cream. Outings, guest speakers and workshops enrich pupils' learning well. Leaders have developed close links with the local community to support this work.

Teachers check pupils' learning carefully. They know that many pupils have gaps in their knowledge due to previously missed education. Teachers are skilled in adapting subject plans based on what they know about each pupil. They select activities which inspire pupils to catch up with learning that they have missed. For instance, in mathematics, pupils enjoyed practising their calculation skills by devising a financial budget. Leaders have also strengthened how English is planned and taught, drawing on advice from an external consultant. Pupils apply and practise important knowledge regularly. For example, staff help pupils to use their phonics knowledge to write accurately for different audiences and purposes. These strengths ensure that pupils achieve well. Pupils leave school with a range of GCSEs, including in English, mathematics and science. They also obtain accredited qualifications in subjects such as cooking and healthy living. These qualifications support pupils' future career aspirations.

Since the previous inspection, the proprietor has appointed new subject leaders. Leaders have the necessary expertise to secure improvements in how well pupils learn. They provide staff with effective support and training to develop their teaching skills, particularly in mathematics and science. Staff appreciate the guidance leaders provide. They also value how leaders are considerate of their workload.

Leaders have not always acted swiftly to bring about further improvements in pupils' learning. Leaders have secured external support to strengthen the way English is planned and taught. However, they have not followed up on actions to develop pupils' knowledge in citizenship studies. Leaders have not made sure that citizenship is planned and taught as well as other subjects. Pupils are not taught important ideas or concepts about citizenship sufficiently well.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Teachers know exactly which strategies to use to help pupils feel at ease and be ready to learn. This means that pupils typically work hard and settle down to tasks quickly. Pupils also like the awards they receive for behaving well. A small number of pupils find it hard to meet leaders' high expectations for their behaviour. These pupils receive specialist support, including from external agencies. This support ensures that, over time, pupils learn to manage their behaviour and follow school routines.

Pupils take part in a range of experiences to support their personal development. Effective personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education underpins this. A range of appropriate topics help pupils to think about moral and social issues. Pupils showcased their acting and reading skills to relay the story of 'Oliver Twist'. Staff used the study of this text to discuss issues related to pupils' well-being, including gang-related matters.

The school prepares pupils and sixth-form students well for life in modern Britain. Pupils carry out projects to promote their awareness of British values, different faiths and cultures. Individual careers guidance provides pupils with options for further training, education or employment. Nearly all pupils secured college placements after leaving the school at the end of the last academic year.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders review policies and procedures regularly in line with recent government guidance. The safeguarding policy is available to parents on the school's website.

Leaders instil in staff that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training, including the risks associated with peer-on-peer abuse. Staff know the procedures to follow should they have a concern that a pupil is at risk of harm.

Leaders work closely with parents. They make prompt referrals to relevant services to seek help for vulnerable pupils. Leaders follow up planned actions meticulously to check pupils' safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have taken effective steps to secure improvements in key aspects of the school's work. More recently, this includes obtaining external support to strengthen the development of pupils' literacy knowledge and skills. However, pupils' learning in citizenship is not planned as effectively as other areas of study. This means that pupils' knowledge is not developed as well as it could be. Leaders should review the citizenship curriculum to ensure that it is coherently planned and sequenced. They should ensure that plans enable pupils to build their knowledge and skills 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	144796
DfE registration number	304/6006
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	10122999
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	12
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Ibrahim Adedayo Adeagbo
Chair	Jill Gander
Headteacher	Karen Dwyer-Burchill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,475 to £68,400
Telephone number	020 8961 4204
Website	www.edithkayschool.com
Email address	headteacher@edithkayschool.com
Date of previous inspection	22–24 May 2018

Information about this school

- Edith Kay Independent School is a small school located in the London Borough of Brent. It is registered to admit up to 15 pupils aged between 14 and 19.
- The school caters for pupils with a variety of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- The school's last inspection took place in May 2018. Its overall effectiveness was judged as requires improvement. Following this inspection, the current headteacher started the substantive post in September 2018. New staff appointments were made during the academic year 2018 to 2019, including the subject leaders for mathematics and science.
- The school uses two alternative providers:
 - EK Centre, 28 Green Street, Enfield EN3 7HQ
 - Abianda, Unit 2K, Leeroy House, 436 Essex Road, London N1 3QP.

Information about this inspection

We 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.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We held discussions with the headteacher and administrator.
- We met with the proprietor and three other members of the governing body, including the chair.
- We did deep dives in English, mathematics, science and PSHE. We spoke to leaders and teachers about how pupils' learning is planned, including for students who attend the sixth form. We visited lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils. We also took into account the quality of pupils' learning in other subjects.
- We talked formally with pupils to hear their views about their learning and the school.
- We met with leaders and staff and looked at a range of documentation to consider the school's work to support pupils' behaviour and personal development. We also looked at leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness and records of the work of governors.
- In order to inspect safeguarding, we scrutinised the school's single central record of checks on staff suitability. We met with leaders and examined records of the actions taken to keep pupils safe. We held discussions with staff, pupils and parents about pupils' safety at the school.
- We checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards, including a tour of the school's premises.
- We took account of nine responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey. We took into account responses to Parent View and spoke to five parents on the telephone, including those whose children are educated at home and at the alternative provision.

- We spoke to both alternative providers on the telephone.

Inspection team

Rosemarie Kennedy, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

David Davies Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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