

Inspection of Freshsteps

Innova House, Kinetic Crescent, Enfield EN3 7XH

Inspection dates: 26–28 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this highly supportive school. Mutual trust and respect underpin the calm atmosphere here. This motivates all pupils to aim high in their learning. Pupils achieve exceptionally well. They become polite, well-behaved and considerate young citizens. They have excellent opportunities to learn about British values, especially during 'pupil voice' sessions.

Pupils feel very safe in this close-knit community. They are prepared thoroughly to keep themselves safe. Pupils told us that any kind of bullying 'is sorted out straight away'. They are very confident that staff will support them in dealing with worries.

Leaders and teachers have very high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development. They work with each pupil individually so that all succeed equally well.

Pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of their education and later life. They benefit from a wide range of experiences outside of lessons. Leaders make sure that these experiences build on what pupils have learned previously. They also choose activities which appeal to pupils' interests and talents. Examples include boxing and horse riding. Pupils enjoy visits to London and the celebration of religious festivals. These opportunities strengthen pupils' cultural awareness and tolerance exceptionally well.

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

Pupils achieve highly in all the required areas of study. The leadership team and staff are united in their work to ensure that all pupils receive an excellent education. The headteacher and her team plan all aspects of pupils' learning exceptionally well. Subject planning combines ambitious goals with careful consideration of pupils' needs.

Leaders are constantly looking at ways to improve pupils' achievement. Since the previous inspection, they have strengthened the teaching of science and design and technology. Teaching in these subjects is ambitious. Some pupils in Year 11 will be entered for GCSE science this year.

Leaders and staff check how well pupils learn thoroughly. In each area of study, they make sure that pupils develop new knowledge and skills in a sensible order. Teachers tailor work carefully to suit the individual needs of all pupils, including the most able. Pupils have frequent opportunities to practise and revise important concepts. This enables them to develop a deep understanding of what they learn. As one pupil put it, 'Things are repeated to ensure we remember.'

Teachers in the primary phase are experts in teaching reading. Pupils receive high-quality daily teaching of phonics. This enables them to develop their reading ability extremely well. Teachers make learning phonics fun for pupils. For instance, key stage 1 pupils enjoy dressing up as 'word detectives' to hunt for new words to read.

Teachers make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. As a result, pupils are confident about reading. They are keen to talk about their favourite books and authors.

Specialist teaching in physical education (PE), mathematics and science is highly effective. Pupils' learning in these subjects develops very well as they move through the school. For example, in key stage 1, pupils learn to tell the time in hours and half hours. In key stage 2, they use the 24-hour digital clock when telling the time to the nearest minute. Pupils are very positive about their learning. Typically, they made comments such as, 'Lessons are very engaging, and time goes very quickly.'

Tutor time and 'pupil voice' sessions have a very positive impact on pupils' behaviour and their understanding of life in modern Britain. For example, we saw pupils take part in a whole-school 'courtroom' role play. Pupils acted out what would happen if one of them broke a school rule. This enabled pupils to discuss the importance of fairness and taking responsibility for their behaviour. Pupils' very positive behaviour and attitudes make them keen learners. Disruption to pupils' learning is rare. Attendance at the school is high. Older pupils are supported very well with careers advice. Leaders encourage them to have high aspirations for their futures. Pupils know that what they learn will help them in everyday life.

Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the school community. For example, they help to revise the code of behaviour each year. Older pupils read to the younger ones. Pupils are trained by mentors from a professional football club so that they can coach their peers. One pupil summed up his experience of the school by saying: 'I am proud to be in this school. It gives us so many opportunities.' This view was shared by many pupils we spoke to.

Leadership ensures that all staff develop professionally and have a manageable workload.

The proprietor and governors carry out their responsibilities very well. They make sure that the independent school standards are met in full. The building is maintained well. Leaders make all the necessary health and safety checks regularly. The school complies with schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010.

Parents and carers receive comprehensive information about the school's work. This includes helpful reports on their children's learning and guidance on how to raise any concerns. Parents we spoke to were full of praise for the school. They are impressed by the improvements in their children's achievement and attitudes to learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are fully trained in keeping pupils safe. Staff report any concerns about pupils' welfare promptly. Leaders act effectively when concerns arise. The safeguarding policy includes the most recent statutory guidance. It is available to

parents on the school's website. Leaders carry out the required checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Pupils' social and emotional needs are met very well. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to relax in the soft-play area and gymnasium. Staff are always on hand to listen to concerns and resolve any difficulties.

Pupils are knowledgeable about health and safety. They understand the importance of making safe choices, including when using the internet.

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	135839
DfE registration number	308/6305
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10122984
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Diane Anderson
Chair	Fiona Curtis
Headteacher	Diane Anderson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,000–£35,000
Telephone number	020 8803 5827
Website	www.freshstepseducationcentre.org.uk
Email address	admin@freshstepseducationcentre.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October – 2 November 2017

Information about this school

- Freshsteps provides education for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, primarily related to social, emotional and mental health needs. A few pupils have complex needs. Pupils who attend the school have typically experienced difficulties in mainstream schools or have been absent from education for a long time.
- The school moved to its current site in September 2019. It is expanding in number and is now registered to take up to 80 pupils from the ages of five to 18. There are currently no students attending the sixth form.
- All pupils at the school are in placements funded by the local authority and have education, health and care plans.

- There are no disadvantaged pupils.
- The school was previously inspected by Ofsted in November 2017. Its overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

- We met with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor. We also met with senior leaders, subject leaders and the chair of governors to evaluate all aspects of the school's work.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and PE. When looking at these subjects, we spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils. We visited lessons and looked at subject planning and at examples of pupils' work. We also considered other subjects as part of this inspection.
- When looking at safeguarding, we checked the school's documentation, the website and the premises. We spoke with the proprietor, leaders, pupils, teachers and other staff.
- There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted surveys for us to analyse. We considered parents' views through informal discussions at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Ofsted Inspector

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