

Inspection of Waterside Academy

317–319 Kingsland Road, London E8 4DL

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Waterside Academy is a small school and a close-knit community. Staff here want pupils to succeed. They want to give pupils the best possible chance of fulfilling their dreams. Staff know pupils well. They seek to develop pupils' talents and interests.

Pupils and staff display the school's values of care, challenge, confidence and courtesy. Staff praise and reward pupils. Pupils receive 'golden tickets' for their achievements. Leaders organise visits to places such as theme parks as a reward for excellent attendance.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations most of the time. Pupils are polite and courteous. They respect and care for each other. Leaders do not tolerate bullying or discrimination. When bullying does occur, leaders deal with it effectively. Pupils feel safe here.

Pupils enjoy the challenge of learning. They work hard in lessons. When they find learning difficult, teachers help them to understand. Pupils grow in confidence as they secure their 'knowledge objectives'.

Poetry recitals at morning assembly set the tone for the day. Leaders provide an ever-increasing range of activities to enrich pupils' experience. These include sports, music and drama.

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

Leaders have transformed the school. They have a clear and ambitious vision to provide a high-quality education for pupils. Trust leaders have provided extra capacity. This has supported the significant changes that have taken place. Staff feel valued. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. They enjoy working at the school.

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have designed the curriculum so that pupils acquire essential knowledge and skills. Pupils learn how to think and work like subject specialists, such as mathematicians and scientists. Pupils study the full range of English Baccalaureate subjects at GCSE. The curriculum is coherent and well ordered, so pupils build on what they already know. When teachers identify gaps in pupils' learning, they adapt the curriculum accordingly.

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils complete activities that help them remember what they have learned before. Pupils have clear targets called 'knowledge objectives' that teachers help them to secure. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to explain new information and ideas. However, sometimes teachers could check pupils' understanding more precisely. This would support pupils' confidence when completing new work.

Leaders identify the specific support that pupils with SEND need. They provide teachers with appropriate strategies and resources. Teaching assistants provide effective support in lessons. This means that pupils with SEND cover the same work as other pupils and achieve well.

Literacy and speaking are features of school life. Teachers encourage pupils to speak clearly and with confidence, and pupils regularly read aloud in lessons. In Years 7 to 9, pupils often read in English lessons and some Year 7 pupils have reading mentors. Teachers develop a love of reading in pupils. They read to pupils from their favourite books and celebrate World Book Day with pupils. Teachers choose poems of the term for the whole school. These are linked to the school's values, one example being 'Invictus' by W E Henley. Pupils at an early stage of reading get extra help. This improves these pupils' reading fluency and comprehension.

Leaders have developed an effective behaviour policy. Teachers do not tolerate low-level disruption in lessons. They manage pupils' behaviour well. Pupils who do not meet the school's high standards spend time outside the classroom in a positive environment where they reflect on their behaviour. They also study poetry and complete work there. Leaders give a high priority to pupils' attendance. They strive to improve the attendance of those pupils who are persistently absent.

Leaders provide well for pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about diversity through events such as Black History Month. They help others by raising money during charity weeks. Leaders organise careers education and experiences to inform pupils' future choices. Plans are in place to develop this further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff report any concerns immediately. They go straight to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or one of the school's safeguarding team to do so. Leaders ensure that staff remain alert to safeguarding risks by providing regular training and updates. Staff know pupils well. This helps them to identify signs of concern. Leaders work in close partnership with external agencies to secure the help pupils need. They manage incidents and allegations appropriately. Pupils learn about staying safe. They know whom to go to if they need help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not check systematically for pupils' understanding, either of prior learning being revisited or new learning that has been introduced. This means that pupils' prior learning is not always secured, and/or that some pupils find it difficult to complete work without additional help and guidance. Teachers

should ensure that they check pupils' understanding fully before moving on to the next phase of learning, adapting teaching as necessary.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	147653
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10212083
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	379
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jan Tallis
Headteacher	Charlotte Whelan
Website	www.watersidecst.org
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Waterside Academy opened on 1 November 2019. It is a member of the Community Schools Trust. When its predecessor school, Hackney New School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the leadership team, other school and trust leaders, members of the governing body and members of the board of trustees, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders for history and science, looked at curriculum plans and visited lessons in these subject areas.
- Inspectors met with the school's DSL and two deputy DSLs. They looked at safeguarding documentation and record-keeping, including the single central record. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke to additional groups of pupils in relation to behaviour and attitudes and personal development.
- Inspectors considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, 28 responses to the staff survey and 33 responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alison Moore

Ofsted Inspector

Jeff Cole

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022