

Inspection of Orchardside School

230 Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield EN1 4RL

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils arrive with a negative view of education. This does not last for long. Pupils want to attend school every day because they enjoy it. They report that staff genuinely care. It is not just a job to them. Staff are patient, kind and respectful towards pupils. Pupils show respect in return.

Pupils follow timetables that reflect their interests. They enjoy being in small classes. Teachers can give pupils more attention. Pupils can concentrate better. They begin to develop confidence. Staff encourage them to catch up on missed learning so they can have a better future. Pupils are well supported in taking their next steps. For some this involves returning to mainstream school. For others this means continuing their education through an apprenticeship or at college. All Year 11 pupils have completed a work experience placement.

Typically, the school is calm. Pupils improve their behaviour because they want to learn. They said that there is a family atmosphere in school. Some pupils enjoy participating in sports such as football, trampolining and basketball. Bullying rarely happens. If it does, pupils can speak to any member of staff. They know that staff will resolve the issue with sensitivity.

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

Staff assess pupils as part of their induction to the school. Teachers use this information to identify gaps in pupils' learning. They provide a timetable which meets pupils' needs. For example, pupils who struggle with reading learn how to sound out words.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the extra help they require. For some, this is in the form of in-house speech and language therapy. Teachers make adaptations in lessons. They provide pictures to help pupils understand unfamiliar words. Teachers meet often to review pupils' progress.

Staff offer well-sequenced programmes in each subject. Teachers build in opportunities to go back over content that pupils need to know. This helps pupils to remember it better in the long term. Teachers check pupils' understanding regularly. They break the learning down into smaller chunks. Younger pupils find this approach motivates them to get their work done.

In the younger years, pupils experience a broad and balanced offer. As well as English, mathematics and science, pupils enjoy art, humanities subjects, physical education (PE) and cooking. Each week, they spend a day off site involved in outdoor pursuits. This builds pupils' resilience and their ability to cooperate with others. Older pupils experience a more flexible curriculum. While science and PE are available to pupils in Years 10 and 11, both subjects are currently optional. This means that, for a number of pupils, many of whom remain at the school throughout

key stage 4, education in these subjects stops at the end of Year 9. Although recognising the desire to make curriculum programmes bespoke for each pupil, it is nonetheless important that all pupils take up opportunities to follow these important subjects. Ensuring that they do is an important area for improvement.

For the most part, pupils engage well with their learning. When they are more reluctant, teachers are skilful at drawing them into the lesson. They make learning relevant to topics of interest to pupils, such as the conflict in Ukraine. Pupils take pride in their learning. Over time they become more confident. Pupils read their work aloud and share ideas. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to read for pleasure. Rightly, leaders are developing plans for this as a priority.

Pupils appreciate the range of trips and clubs on offer. They can take part in competitive sports, after-school clubs and trips. The relationships and sex education curriculum builds on pupils' knowledge each year. This helps pupils to recall what they have learned about topics such as consent. Pupils develop a moral perspective. Teachers encourage them to view situations from different points of view. Pupils learn how to manage their finances. Older pupils experience a coherent careers programme. This is not yet in place for pupils in Years 8 and 9.

Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They are not afraid to ask questions of school leaders. Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel well supported, especially in managing their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have trained staff to recognise pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff know how to report any concerns quickly. They understand the significant contextual safeguarding risks in the local area. These include child criminal and sexual exploitation. Leaders draw on the expertise they have on site, as well as making referrals to social care and the police. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the enrichment curriculum and assemblies.

Leaders ensure that they make appropriate checks on staff. These help to guarantee that staff are suitable to work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders provide helpful careers information to pupils in Years 10 and 11. This is not yet in place for younger pupils. Leaders should plan a well-sequenced careers programme for pupils in Years 8 and 9. This will help to increase their ambition and levels of motivation.

- Leaders have adapted the curriculum to help develop pupils' literacy skills. While many pupils can read well, they do not always enjoy reading. Leaders should implement their plans to promote reading for pleasure across the school. This will further develop pupils' confidence in this key area of their learning.
- While science and PE are offered to pupils in Years 10 and 11, a number of pupils who remain at the school for key stage 4 do not study these subjects. Leaders should ensure that pupils take up programmes in these important areas of the curriculum. This is to ensure that they are thoroughly prepared for their future lives.

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	101972
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10212269
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Derek Goddard
Headteacher	Celeste Fay
Website	www.orchardside.school
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Orchardside school provides full-time education for pupils who have been permanently excluded and those at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream schools. The school provides a timed turnaround provision for younger pupils to help them reintegrate back into mainstream education.
- Some pupils who attend the provision have complex social, emotional and behavioural needs.
- A large number of pupils arrive at the school with undiagnosed special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many of these undergo assessment for education, health and care plans.
- The school uses six different alternative providers. These are: the Alternative Centre of Education; The College of Haringey, Enfield and Northeast London; Focus 1st Academy; Footsteps Academy; the Boxing Academy; and Hertford Regional College.
- The school uses two providers of tuition.

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 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 of the school.

- Inspectors met with the chair of governors, the headteacher, the behaviour lead and the designated safeguarding lead. They spoke to other staff about a range of relevant issues.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and PE. They looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with teachers.
- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum plans of the other subjects taught at Orchardside. They met with the heads of art, science and humanities to discuss their thinking about the curriculum.
- Through discussions with leaders, staff, pupils and governors, inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding. The inspection team spoke to staff about their workload in school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys which were completed by staff and parents.

Inspection team

Lisa Strong, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alice Clay

Her Majesty's Inspector

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