

Inspection of Footsteps Trust

New River Sports Centre, White Hart Lane, Wood Green, London N22 5QW

Inspection dates: 13 to 15 July 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection **Good**

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have high expectations for pupils to gain qualifications and develop personal skills so that they are well prepared for their next stage in education and employment.

Pupils are safe in school. Staff know the pupils well and provide them with plenty of tailored support. Staff are quick to identify any pupil who may be unsettled or unhappy and provide individual guidance to put things right. If pupils have occasional arguments or if there are any rare instances of bullying, staff are quick to resolve issues. Behaviour generally is settled and calm.

Pupils are positive about school. Staff encourage and praise pupils for their achievements, which boosts their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils can speak to staff if they have any concerns, and typically felt that their views are heard. Staff encourage pupils to recognise when they need to manage their behaviour better and give them strategies to cope if they are having any difficulties.

Pupils have positive working relationships with their teachers and learning mentors. Staff and pupils often eat lunch together. Pupils enjoy competitions such as in table tennis and are motivated to gain merit points that count towards outings. Pupils are keen to become a 'VIP student' for attending regularly and completing homework.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum in each subject is carefully thought through. They identify the key content that pupils need to know to achieve well.

Teachers regularly check how well pupils recall what they have been taught previously and identify the subject content that pupils need to revisit. They routinely provide opportunities for pupils to recap and reinforce their knowledge and understanding before moving on to more demanding work. Teachers use assessment information and their strong subject knowledge to help pupils overcome any misconceptions. They give pupils useful tips on how to remember key facts. Teachers ensure that pupils recognise the relevance of their studies to their everyday life and future aspirations. This motivates pupils to focus on their work.

Leaders ensure that careful nurturing and staff role-modelling over time help pupils to improve their attitudes towards their education and the way in which they behave around their peers and teachers. Pupils show levels of tolerance and respect for others, building positive relationships across the school's community. Staff give strong support to pupils to help them attend school regularly.

Staff work with pupils' mainstream schools and other external professionals to prepare pupils for their next steps in education and employment. All pupils receive one-to-one support to help them decide on the pathway for the future that is right for them. Through personal, social and health education, and the school's high

expectations, pupils are encouraged to develop work-related skills, such as teamwork, self-management and communication. Pupils receive guidance on completing applications and to prepare for interviews.

The school's recently revised relationships and sex education (RSE) policy introduces pupils to themes such as consent and raises their alertness to harmful sexual behaviour.

Leaders ensure that staff have information about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities before they start at the school. They make sure that all staff know what strategies to use to meet the pupils' needs. Teachers and learning mentors use these strategies effectively. Leaders liaise with parents and carers and outside agencies to support and inform their work with individual pupils, including those with education, health and care plans.

Leaders provide extra support for pupils who have weak reading skills so that they develop reading fluency. Across all subjects, pupils' technical vocabulary is promoted strongly. Staff have high expectations for pupils' correct pronunciation and use of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some pupils were not enthusiastic about reading. Leaders have introduced a range of initiatives to promote reading across the school and to increase pupils' love of reading. These are beginning to make a difference to pupils' interest in books. Pupils recognise the importance of reading to help them achieve well.

Parents, and pupils' mainstream schools, appreciate leaders' regular communications, including weekly mailouts that ensure all are up to date with each pupil's achievements and when further interventions are needed.

Staff are wholeheartedly positive about their experience of working at the school. They feel well supported by leaders, including with their workload.

The proprietor body works closely with the school's leaders. Members of the proprietor body make productive links with other providers and professionals to support school developments. Leaders and the proprietor body ensure that the independent school standards are met and that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are suitably trained so that they fulfil their responsibilities to safeguard pupils. Staff training means that all are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk. Staff know the correct procedures to follow if they have any concerns.

Leaders organise relevant training for staff and guidance for pupils on local risks to pupils. A range of activities, such as workshops and visiting speakers, including from

the Metropolitan Police, help to raise pupils' awareness of risks to their safety and well-being.

The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is published on the school's website.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and the proprietor)

- Some pupils are not enthusiastic about reading books. As a result, beyond their academic studies, some pupils do not read regularly. Leaders should embed their recently introduced initiatives to encourage pupils to read more and develop a greater appreciation of reading.

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

School details

Unique reference number	141859
DfE registration number	309/6004
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10210725
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent
Age range of pupils	12 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	16
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Footsteps Trust
Chair	Giles Hall
Principal	Christopher Hall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,600
Telephone number	0208 881 4050
Website	www.footstepstrust.com
Email address	info1@footstepstrust.com
Date of previous inspection	30 January to 1 February 2018

Information about this school

- Footsteps Trust caters for pupils who need support with their behaviour, attitudes and attendance.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school was operating from two sites. Owing to a fall in pupil numbers, the school now operates from one site. The principal informed the Department for Education of this change at the time of this inspection.
- Currently, all pupils are dual registered with a mainstream school.
- The previous standard inspection took place in January 2018.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

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

- Inspectors met with the principal, the head of teaching and learning, the academy leader and the chief operating officer. The inspectors also held telephone calls with the chair of the trust, and with leaders from two schools that have referred pupils to Footsteps Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, English, mathematics and physical education. This entailed meeting with subject teachers to discuss the curriculum, visiting lessons, meeting with groups of staff and groups of pupils, and looking at pupils' work. Inspectors also considered other curriculum areas, including science and business.
- The inspection of safeguarding included meeting with the leader with responsibility for safeguarding, looking at the records of the school's work related to safeguarding, discussions with staff and pupils, and consideration of aspects of the school's curriculum relevant to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to online surveys completed by members of staff. There were no responses to the online pupil and parent surveys. Inspectors took into account correspondence received by the school in recent months from parents and other stakeholders.
- Inspectors toured the school site accompanied by school leaders to check compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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