

Inspection of Nightingale Community Academy

Beechcroft Road, Tooting, London SW17 7DF

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Dedicated staff have high expectations for all pupils at this school. They take the time to understand pupils' complex and varying needs and help pupils to have positive experiences of education. Staff are patient and caring. They build up relationships and trust with pupils and their parents and carers. Staff make sure that all pupils are included in the life of the school. Some pupils here experience feeling part of a school community for the first time and they enjoy it.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and well-being. Pupils know that staff are there to help them. The school is a safe place. Pupils have trusted adults they speak to if they have any concerns.

Staff support and manage pupils' behaviour well. They use the school rules to remind pupils of the high expectations. This includes teaching pupils to be accountable for their actions and to be empathetic to others. Staff are quick to deal effectively with any bullying when it happens.

Pupils enjoy the various opportunities they have here, including spending time on the school's highly acclaimed working farm. They enjoy helping in the kitchen and making meals from the produce that they grow on the farm.

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

Leaders offer a broad and ambitious curriculum from Years 1 to 13. All pupils study a wide range of subjects up to Year 9. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 study for GCSEs in English, mathematics, citizenship and science, as well as selecting optional subjects such as art, and design and construction. In the sixth form, students can choose from an extensive range of vocational courses. These include land-based studies, hospitality and barbering. Some students opt to complete apprenticeships at school, for example in animal care. Close links with local colleges enable students in Years 12 and 13 to study additional courses. Pupils have every opportunity to gain qualifications that will help them to move on to the next stage of their education, training or employment.

Many pupils have significant gaps in learning due to long periods out of school. Staff assess pupils' prior learning carefully when they join. They tailor teaching to meet individual needs. Teachers work closely with support staff and ensure that all pupils can access their learning. Staff break down learning into manageable steps and check pupils' understanding regularly. Staff develop pupils' vocabulary well. For example, students in Year 12 learned the name of technical equipment used for jacking and lifting in vehicles before starting practical work in motor mechanics.

In most subjects, learning is well planned and follows a logical sequence. In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not so well developed. They have not identified precisely the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember.

Leaders are still developing links between the primary and secondary phases in some subjects such as history and geography. Where this is the case, leaders have not focused sharply on how pupils can build up knowledge cumulatively from Year 1 to Year 9 and beyond.

Leaders give reading a high profile in school. All pupils have time allocated for reading each day. Leaders have rolled out a new phonics programme successfully to help pupils at the early stages of learning to read. These pupils are taught phonics daily and read books which are matched to the sounds they know. Staff accurately identify the weakest readers and provide further support to help them to catch up quickly. Selected pupils enjoy reading with volunteer staff, for example.

Staff are well trained to understand what lies behind pupils' behaviour. They use a range of de-escalation strategies to help minimise any disruption to lessons. 'Movement breaks' and 'reflection walks' give pupils the chance to let off steam so that they can return to lessons ready to focus on learning. Pupils of all ages enjoy the time they spend in the sensory room because they find it calming. Leaders develop positive relationships with pupils' families. For example, staff run various workshops to help parents to support their children at home. One parent comment about the school was typical of many: 'Its nurturing approach and the amazing, dedicated staff make it such a special place.'

Leaders provide a range of after-school clubs and educational outings. Structured activities at break times help pupils to improve their social skills and develop new interests. Careers provision is a strength across the school. Older pupils and sixth-form students complete work experience, visit colleges and universities and learn about the world of work from different employers. Sixth-form students are well prepared for adulthood.

Staff are well supported by leaders and enjoy working at the school. Staff spoke of the positive actions taken by leaders to reduce workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team is fully aware of all pupils' individual needs and circumstances. Leaders ensure that staff understand the risks and additional challenges that their pupils may face. Staff receive frequent training and updates to keep their safeguarding responsibilities at the forefront of their minds. In-house specialist staff and therapists and, where needed, close partnership with external agencies provide additional layers of support.

Pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe. Visitors, including the police, regularly talk to pupils about risks to their safety such as county lines and knife crime, for example. Leaders provide a range of resources to support pupils' mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified precisely the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This means that sometimes teachers are not clear about what pupils need to be taught to achieve ambitious outcomes. Leaders should refine further their curriculum thinking in these subjects so that teachers know what subject content needs to be taught and when and what pupils need to know and remember in the long term.
- Leaders have started to develop closer curriculum links between the primary and secondary phases. However, this is still a work in progress. At times, learning does not build on pupils' prior knowledge as well as it should. This sometimes leaves pupils unprepared for future learning. Leaders should strengthen curriculum links between the primary and secondary phases to help ensure that pupils' knowledge in all subjects builds cumulatively 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 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.

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	143175
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	10241134
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	17
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Jay Mercer
Headteacher	Andre Bailey
Website	www.nightingaleca.org
Date of previous inspection	23 and 24 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- A number of students in the sixth form are dual registered with other local schools or colleges.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for their pupils.
- 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 graded 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 headteacher and other members of the school leadership team, including leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspectors met remotely with a group of trustees and governors and had a telephone conversation with a representative of Wandsworth local authority. Inspectors held discussions with support staff and members of the therapy team.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read and spoke to pupils about reading.
- Inspectors talked to leaders about the curriculum in other subject areas, including land-based studies, computing, science and art and design. Inspectors visited lessons and reviewed samples of pupils' work in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils from different year groups. Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, pupils and staff about the arrangements for safeguarding and reviewed safeguarding documentation including pre-recruitment checks.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey of parents' views, Ofsted Parent View, and to the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Teresa Neary

Ofsted Inspector

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