

Inspection of The Lea Valley Academy

Bullsmoor Lane, Enfield, London EN3 6TW

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 October 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at The Lea Valley Academy are friendly and respectful. They belong to an inclusive school community whose diversity they celebrate. Leaders have created a school culture that is helping pupils to develop into confident young adults. Pupils here learn to take responsibility for their own actions.

Leaders encourage pupils to aspire to great things. They want pupils to succeed. Teachers show a commitment to the pupils. They care about them and help them to improve their work. Pupils listen to their teachers and work hard in lessons.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils meet these expectations most of the time. They behave well. Leaders do not tolerate bullying. When it does happen, they deal with it effectively. Pupils know that there is always an adult for them to speak to, should the need arise. They are safe here.

Trips and visits to London landmarks and museums are a feature of life at this school. Pupils lead assemblies, for example on Black History Month, and there is an active student council. Pupils can develop their talents and interests here, from music and drama, to sports and quilling. Pupils enjoy these aspects of their education.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. They develop the curriculum through careful consideration of pupils' needs and interests. In Years 10 and 11, pupils study at least one expressive arts subject. Also, they study at least one subject from French, Spanish, geography and history. Recent curriculum development work in history and geography is strengthening those subjects. Leaders ensure that pupils study a wide range of subjects at GCSE. They help pupils to choose subjects that give them the best chance of achieving well.

The curriculum is well sequenced. This helps pupils to acquire more knowledge and develop their understanding over time. In the sixth form, students can study A-level subjects and/or vocational courses, such as business studies and health and social care. They also have the opportunity to study subjects at the other secondary school in the trust. This widens their choice.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use many strategies to help pupils remember what they have learned before through, for example, homework and lesson-starter activities. Teachers check pupils' understanding and some teachers adapt their teaching well. This ensures that pupils secure essential knowledge. Other teachers are less skilled at adapting their teaching, and gaps in pupils' knowledge are not addressed successfully. In the sixth form, teachers help students to develop their understanding of more complex subject content, for example magnification and resolution in A-level biology, and literary interpretations in A-level English literature.

Leaders have high aspirations for all pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND complete the same work as other pupils and receive the specific help they need. Leaders assess pupils' reading, numeracy and learning skills when pupils join the school. This helps them to identify pupils' needs. They provide teachers with training and resources to meet those needs. Pupils at an early stage of reading get extra support with reading fluency and comprehension. This allows them to access the full curriculum as soon as possible.

Low-level disruption in lessons is quite rare and leaders do not tolerate it. They have embedded a clear approach to managing behaviour in lessons. Teachers apply this approach with fairness and consistency. Pupils show a commitment to their learning. They work hard and respond well to teachers' instructions and guidance.

Leaders give a high priority to pupils' personal development. They have established an extensive programme that includes enrichment days, and trips and visits. Pupils learn about citizenship, equality and diversity, and physical and mental health. They also learn about healthy relationships and consent in an age-appropriate way. In the sixth form, students take on leadership roles and help younger pupils. For example, several students are literacy or sports leaders. Pupils receive appropriate careers information, education and guidance from Year 7 to the sixth form. This helps them to make well-informed decisions about their future.

Leaders have a vision of providing pupils with a high-quality education. They have used principles and practice that are already established in the trust to develop the school's provision. Indeed, leaders have worked with intelligence and commitment towards their vision. Leaders give pupils a broad and rich set of experiences. They show a determination to give every pupil the best chance of success, both at school and in life. Staff enjoy working here. They feel valued and well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They train and update staff on safeguarding risks and promote a professional curiosity. This means that staff are alert to signs of concern in the behaviour and appearance of pupils. Staff report any concerns immediately. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to secure the help that pupils need. They also provide a range of support for pupils whom they identify as vulnerable to risk. This support includes counselling and mentoring. Leaders work with parents and carers to raise their awareness of safeguarding risks. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not adapt their teaching effectively, based on the responses they receive from pupils. They do not seek to understand why some pupils have not grasped essential knowledge and ideas and they move on to the next stage of learning too quickly. This means that some pupils do not secure the essential knowledge and understanding required to progress to more complex tasks. Leaders should ensure that teachers receive training and development to enable them to adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs.

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	144084
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10240109
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	839
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	151
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rob Leak
Headteacher	Stephen Kinson
Website	www.leavalleyacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Lea Valley Academy converted to become an academy school in May 2018. When its predecessor school, Lea Valley High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The Lea Valley Academy joined Edmonton Academy Trust in October 2019.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical educational 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 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 leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, members of the local governing body and members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, art and design, and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met 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 also spoke with subject leaders for science and physical education. They visited lessons in science, physical education, business studies and health and social care.
- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding lead and members of the school's safeguarding team. 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 32 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, 30 responses to the staff survey and 22 responses to the online survey for parents, Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
Ian Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Stumpf	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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