

Inspection of Eko Pathways

Flanders Road, London E6 6FE

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils come to this small school so they can get the support they need with their social, emotional and mental health needs. In the past, many have found it hard to learn in a mainstream school. At Eko Pathways, class sizes are small and pupils receive personalised, high-quality support from their teacher and other staff. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and be ready to learn.

Leaders and staff share a vision of providing the best education for all pupils. Pupils study a broad range of subjects, alongside receiving support for their individual needs. Staff focus on preparing pupils for the next stage of their education or for work. For example, in Years 10 and 11, all pupils spend one day a week on work experience placements. Support is carefully tailored to pupils' specific needs and goals. For some pupils, this may be a return to a mainstream school, for others it may be preparing them for college or an apprenticeship.

Pupils are happy in school and they enjoy their learning. They are safe and receive the help and guidance they need to manage their feelings. As a result, pupils behave well. Pupils are taught about bullying and respect in personal, social, health and economic education and assemblies. Bullying is not common in this school. If it does occur, pupils know who to tell and staff deal with it swiftly.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils and want them to acquire secure knowledge in a broad range of subjects. They have recently extended the range of subjects on offer in both the primary and secondary phases of the school. For example, pupils now study a well-thought-through curriculum for geography and history in the secondary phase.

The curriculum is typically delivered well, particularly in mathematics, English and science. Staff's expertise in these subjects mean that leaders' curriculum goals are translated effectively into everyday classroom practice. However, in a few other subjects, some staff are not fully confident about how to deliver leaders' new subject planning. This means that pupils' knowledge is not developing over time in the way that leaders intend.

Those pupils who stay at the school until Year 11 study a broad range of GCSE and vocational courses. Leaders and staff share a common purpose to make sure that all pupils are ready for their next steps, including the world of work. One-to-one careers advice and guidance, college visits and guest speakers form a key part of leaders' work to make this vision a reality.

Leaders have planned subjects so that pupils build their knowledge and skills in a logical order over time. For example, in Year 4 mathematics, pupils learn about place value in a four-digit number. This builds on their knowledge of place value taught in

previous year groups. Teachers check that pupils recall prior learning. If they identify gaps in pupils' knowledge, they adjust their planning and address what pupils are finding difficult.

Leaders assess all pupils carefully before they join the school. They gather information from the local authority, previous schools, parents and carers and the pupils themselves. They also seek support and advice from external agencies, such as speech and language therapists. This means that leaders and staff are well informed about pupils' needs and how best to support them overcome any barriers to learning.

Many pupils arrive at the school struggling to read fluently. Leaders quickly find out the reasons for this, including whether pupils' phonics knowledge is secure. They make sure that pupils receive well-targeted phonics teaching, and that this focuses sharply on the sounds they need to know and learn. Pupils learn phonics every day. They read books that match the sounds they know so that they can practise reading with fluency and accuracy. This work continues into the secondary phase when necessary.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour. Staff know each pupil as an individual. They are skilled in supporting them to manage their emotions. Staff follow the behaviour policy consistently. As a result, disruption to learning is rare. Pupils are motivated by the rewards they receive in class and in assemblies.

All pupils participate in enrichment activities and clubs. Leaders organise these activities carefully so that no pupil misses out. Enrichment activities are also linked to the academic curriculum. This is because leaders want pupils to build on their learning outside the classroom. Pupils also do activities they would otherwise not usually do, such as horse-riding and climbing. They also recommend, set up and run all the clubs across both phases of the school. Examples of these include Spanish, robotics and Lego clubs. Pupils like the way this gives them an opportunity to take on responsibility and help others.

Leaders, supported by the trust, have made significant changes to the school in a short period of time. They have broadened the subjects that pupils study and improved the way all subjects are planned. Pupils now learn a curriculum that prepares them successfully for the next stages of their education. Leaders manage changes carefully and consider the impact of any decisions on staff. Staff said that their workload is manageable and that leaders are supportive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know that the pupils in their school are potentially more vulnerable due to their needs. As such, they work very closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils receive all the support they require. They also ensure that all statutory pre-employment vetting checks are carried out when recruiting new staff.

Staff receive frequent safeguarding training as well as regular refreshers, for example through staff briefings. Staff know the context of their school and the risks that pupils face. They are alert to signs of abuse and know how to report these. Pupils are also taught about personal safety and online safety, as well as healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have introduced a new curriculum across both the primary and secondary phases of the school. Staff have received training and are delivering the new curriculum. While pupils learn well overall, there remain inconsistencies in how well the curriculum in a small number of the foundation subjects is delivered. This means that, at times, pupils are not progressing through the curriculum for these subjects as leaders intend. Leaders should continue their plans to train staff. They should make sure that, in all subjects, the revised curriculum is taught in a way that enables pupils to learn and remember the intended knowledge and skills.

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	143275
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	10241057
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	69
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Philippa King
Headteacher	Thomas Neave
Website	ekopathways.ekotrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 and 31 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school was previously known as Eleanor Smith school. It joined Eko Trust in November 2016.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, care and health plan.
- The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2022.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with the chair and members of the trust, as well as senior leaders from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, reviewed samples of pupils' work and met with pupils to discuss their learning. Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read and spoke to pupils about reading. They also considered pupils' learning in art, geography and history.
- Through discussions with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how pupils are safeguarded. Inspectors also looked at records related to safeguarding, including records of pre-employment checks on staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff about safeguarding, behaviour and their workload. Inspectors also considered the responses from pupils, staff and parents to Ofsted's surveys, including Parent View.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gary Phillips

His Majesty's Inspector

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