

# Inspection of a good school: The Constance Bridgeman Centre

Loxford Lane, Ilford, Essex IG1 2UT

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Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending The Constance Bridgeman Centre. Most pupils have been excluded from other schools. A few are placed at the centre for a while by their mainstream school. Pupils settle well into the centre. Staff get to know each pupil's learning needs and abilities well. If pupils need to work away from the classroom, they are supported to do this. Teachers design activities carefully, so that pupils achieve well.

Leaders have opened a new site. The ongoing building work has caused some disruption for both staff and pupils. This has meant that pupils have not been able to participate in some activities, such as physical education, and have not had access to outside space. It has also limited the number of pupils who can attend the school. However, leaders provide a range of wider opportunities to extend pupils' experiences. These include trips to the theatre and a parkour event.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Any lapses in behaviour are well managed. Pupils are aware of the rules, and staff are available to help if there are instances of dysregulation. Bullying rarely occurs at the school. If it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly. Pupils are safe here.

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

Leaders have established a curriculum that focuses on what pupils need to learn for examinations. Staff want pupils to gain as many qualifications as possible to ensure that they can access their chosen pathways at work or college when they leave school.

Most subjects are well thought through and sequenced carefully, so that pupils build on what they already know, step by step. In some subjects, the order in which the work is presented is adjusted to meet pupils' needs. Teachers adapt their teaching in recognition

that some pupils start and leave mid-year. In other subjects, this is not the case. In these subjects, teaching does not build well on what pupils have already learned.

When pupils arrive at the school, their skills and knowledge are checked. Teachers generally make sure that they address any gaps in knowledge. This works well in some subjects, but in other subjects, teaching is not closely matched to the gaps identified through these checks.

Pupils enjoy subjects that focus on practical subjects or life skills, for example developing skills to work in the kitchen. However, the knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn through their life and the social skills sessions stand in isolation. The learning in these subjects is not linked to what is learned in other subjects or areas of learning.

Leaders make sure that reading is given a high priority. Staff provide individual support to help pupils develop their reading skills. While this is successful for some pupils, in other cases, the support is not sufficiently focused on precisely what pupils need to learn.

Teaching takes place in small groups. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Staff promote a positive environment, and most pupils want to learn. Most want to gain qualifications so that they can access college courses. Others are keen to enter the world of work. Leaders provide work experience opportunities and social experiences for pupils that are tailored to individual interests, for example, working in a garage or attending Police Cadets.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can access a range of qualifications in some subjects. This means that they can achieve an accredited qualification even if they are not able to access GCSEs. Leaders also provide individually planned sessions aimed at addressing pupils' individual needs. These sessions have mixed success as they are sometimes not closely linked to the pupil's previous learning.

Occasionally, in lessons, there is some low-level disruption. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take their work to other areas of the school with key staff. This helps pupils to regulate their behaviour and return to lessons as quickly as possible.

Leaders are mindful of staff workload and make sure that this is managed well. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Governors are committed to the development of the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff have safeguarding training. Staff know how to report any concerns. These concerns are diligently followed up, and referrals to other agencies are made when necessary. Leaders are aware that pupil absence may be an indicator of safeguarding concerns and work closely with the local authority to follow up on poor attendance.

Leaders ensure that statutory checks take place when employing staff. At the time of this inspection, some administrative errors had been made in the recording of these checks.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Delivery of the curriculum is inconsistent. Leaders identify gaps in pupils' learning when they arrive at the school, but in some subjects, teaching is not successfully adapted to address these gaps or to account for pupils who arrive mid-year. Individual sessions to support pupils with SEND do not consistently address their needs or any gaps in pupils' knowledge successfully. Leaders should ensure that teaching consistently builds on what pupils already know and addresses any gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Learning in life skills or social skills is not linked to the rest of the curriculum. This means that for some pupils, the curriculum is disjointed. Leaders should ensure that they think carefully about how learning is linked across all subjects, both academic and vocational, and that this thinking is shared with teachers.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102794
<b>Local authority</b>	Redbridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242182
<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tony Clayton
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.constancebridgeman.co.uk">www.constancebridgeman.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has moved into new premises since the previous inspection.
- Pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from other schools attend this school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and school staff. They also spoke to the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, food technology, and personal, social, health and economic education. 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 also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks on staff and spoke to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also discussed safeguarding with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils at breaktimes and had meetings with pupils.
- The lead inspector reviewed responses to the pupil and staff surveys and spoke to some parents and carers on the telephone.

### **Inspection team**

Penny Barratt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Teresa Neary

Ofsted Inspector

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