

# The Bridge Special Education Needs School

148–150 and 167 Old Kent Road, London SE1 5TY

**Inspection date**

17 March 2023

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

*Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1)(c)*

- The previous progress monitoring inspection in November 2022 judged safeguarding arrangements as effective. This inspection found this continues to be the case.
- Leaders continue to demonstrate a sound working knowledge and understanding of the latest 'Keeping children safe in education 2022' statutory guidance. The school's suitable safeguarding policy also reflects this guidance and is available online.
- Staff receive suitable and timely refresher training. The recruitment process reflects statutory requirements. Leaders take swift and appropriate action when concerns are raised. These concerns and actions taken are documented consistently.
- These independent school standards continue to be met.

### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

*Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(b)*

- The school's first progress monitoring inspection in November 2022 found leaders to have taken decisive action since the previous standard inspection. As a result, almost all of the previously unmet standards were judged to be met. However, leaders were still not demonstrating the knowledge and skills required to meet all the independent school standards consistently. As a result, this standard remained not met.
- Leaders' second action plan lacked sufficient detail. It contained objectives that were too vague, such as proposing 'termly assessments of skills' and 'interviews with leaders'. It was unclear how such general objectives would improve leaders' knowledge and skills.
- This inspection found leaders and governors to have taken some further positive action to review policies, strengthen safeguarding, and prepare for the development of more suitable premises for pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. But there is more work to do. Leaders and governors are in the process of taking more formal responsibility for checking and holding leaders to account for each part of the standards. Governors plan to visit the school more often, and to provide more rigorous

support and challenge to leaders. Leaders acknowledge the need to communicate more clearly with the registration authority about their new premises.

- This standard is now met.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

## **The school now meets the following independent school standards**

### **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

## School details

Unique reference number	147977
DfE registration number	210/6012
Inspection number	10282284

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent school
School status	Other independent special school
Age range of pupils	14 to 25
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Edith Eneanya-Bonito
Headteacher	James Nuttall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,000 to £95,000
Telephone number	020 7703 8587
Website	<a href="http://www.thebridge-school.co.uk">www.thebridge-school.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@thebridge-school.co.uk">admin@thebridge-school.co.uk</a>
Dates of previous standard inspection	24 to 26 November 2021

## Information about this school

- The Bridge Special Education Needs School is an independent secondary special day school in the London Borough of Southwark.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans and are placed and funded by a range of local authorities. Pupils have a range of complex needs, including autism spectrum disorder. Many pupils are non-verbal.

- The school caters for pupils of compulsory school age at its main premises at 148–150 Old Kent Road, London SE1 5TY. Students aged 18 to 25 attend the premises opposite, at 167 Old Kent Road, London SE1 5TY.
- The proprietor has purchased new premises at 2A Bensham Manor Road, Croydon CR7 7AA. Once refurbishment works are completed, and following acceptance of the proposed material change by the Department for Education (DfE), leaders intend to relocate to these premises.
- The school has a sole proprietor, who delegates governance to a governing body.
- The school's previous standard inspection in November 2021 was its first full inspection. The most recent inspection was a progress monitoring inspection in November 2022.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection since its first full inspection in November 2021.
- The inspection was conducted with two days of notice.
- Following the previous progress monitoring inspection, in November 2022, leaders were asked to submit a second action plan. This was evaluated by Ofsted as not acceptable in February 2023 and was subsequently rejected by the Department for Education.
- The focus of this inspection was to check whether the school complied with particular requirements within parts 3, 6 and 8 of the independent school standards.
- The inspection did not consider the school's future proposed material change to relocate to its new premises in Croydon. At the time of this inspection, refurbishment works at the new proposed premises in Croydon had not commenced.
- The inspector considered a range of evidence relating to leadership, management and governance. He met with the headteacher throughout the inspection. The inspection also took account of a range of evidence to consider the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- There were no recent responses to consider on Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View.

## Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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