

# Inspection of Eastlea Community School

Pretoria Road, Canning Town, London E16 4NP

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Leaders have prioritised keeping pupils safe above all else. They take decisions in the interests of pupils. They act on any concerns quickly, working with external agencies as required. Pupils have access to a range of pastoral support should they need it, including counselling.

Eastlea is an inclusive school. Pupils come from a range of different backgrounds; many join during the school year. Leaders' and staff's approach helps pupils to get on well with each other. For example, some pupils are anti-bullying ambassadors, while others are on the school council. Pupils also learn about different faiths and the concept of social justice. Incidents of discrimination are rare, but when they do occur leaders deal with them effectively.

Overall, pupils and teachers say that behaviour has much improved. Most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and want to do well.

Leaders have high ambition for the school. Some of this can clearly be seen, for example in pupils' good behaviour, pupils' attendance and the range of different clubs, visits and experiences made available to pupils. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not helping pupils to learn as well as they should. This includes, for example, how well pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are being supported.

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

Since the school joined the trust officially in January 2021, leaders have faced many challenges, including sorting out safeguarding arrangements and improving behaviour. This has taken time but has been successful. However, some middle leaders are new and have not had time to embed recent improvements to their curriculums. In some subjects, pupils have not built up the deep body of subject knowledge that they should have.

Pupils study a broad curriculum, including drama, in Years 7 to 9. Leaders have also introduced subjects such as further mathematics at key stage 4. The proportion of pupils who are studying the English Baccalaureate is well above the national average. This reflects leaders' aspirations to ensure that the curriculum is ambitious.

In some subjects, it is not clear what leaders want pupils to know and remember. There is also variability in how well teachers check on whether pupils have understood what they have been taught. Sometimes, misconceptions go unnoticed. As a result, teaching does not consistently help pupils to close gaps in their knowledge. In other subjects, for example art and geography, pupils use technical language well and use their knowledge and skills to produce high-quality work.

Leadership for pupils with SEND has very recently been strengthened, but some aspects of the provision are not meeting pupils' needs well, including for pupils who

attend the resourced provision. Sometimes, pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans are not used well to help set out an ambitious curriculum. Sometimes, the information shared with staff, for example about pupils' academic targets, is not as helpful as it could be. As a result, some teachers do not adapt their teaching as well as they should to meet pupils' needs.

Many pupils at the school speak English as an additional language. They are helped through one-to-one sessions and in-lesson support. Leaders also have strategies in place to promote reading, for example in tutor time. They also recently launched the new school library. However, some of their work to identify and help pupils who need to learn to read is not well developed. There is a lack of staff expertise in being able to teach pupils to read. Consequently, some pupils are not supported as effectively as they could be to become fluent readers.

Most teachers deal with low-level disruption effectively. Leaders use a range of effective ways to support pupils with their behaviour, including, where appropriate, arranging for pupils to attend alternative provision. Leaders' use of suspensions and internal exclusions is decreasing significantly over time.

Leaders ensure that pupils take part in different community initiatives, such as supporting the work of the local food bank and the school's own food bank. Pupils also have opportunities to attend events and workshops to represent their school. Careers education is well established. Pupils have opportunities to interact with employers and to learn about apprenticeships. Leaders support pupils effectively in planning for life after school.

A sense of community is evident at Eastlea. The majority of teachers are on board with the changes being made to take the school forward, including how leaders manage the well-being of staff. The trust gives effective support to the school, including ongoing work with curriculum development.

Leaders are doing the right things to keep pupils safe. A few members of the school community, including a small minority of staff, parents and carers, have lost trust in how well leaders are managing the school, including keeping pupils safe. Leaders take all concerns and views seriously. They have worked cooperatively with the local authority to follow up on issues appropriately, including, for example, in having robust external reviews of safeguarding. They continue to look for ways to make sure that everyone is confident in their management of the school, including safeguarding arrangements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a deep understanding of the risks that pupils may face, including those that arise in the school and around the local area. They take these risks seriously and work well with a range of external groups to support pupils, for example in relation to drugs and alcohol misuse. When a concern is reported, leaders are quick

to follow it up. Staff are trained in safeguarding and know how to report concerns. There is a range of expertise in the school to support pupils with their mental health and well-being.

Pupils are taught how to look after themselves, including through the tutor programme, learning about online safety and unhealthy relationships, for example. Most pupils report that they feel safe when at school. They know whom they can go to if they need any support, for example a member of the pastoral team.

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

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

- In some subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking has not identified clearly what they want pupils to know and remember. There are also inconsistencies within and across different subjects in relation to how well the curriculum is delivered. As a result, pupils do not build up a strong body of subject-specific knowledge and skills in some subjects. Leaders should support curriculum leaders in finalising their curriculum thinking and provide further training for teachers to remove these inconsistencies.
- In some subjects, including in the resourced provision, the curriculum for pupils with SEND is not ambitious enough. What pupils learn and the targets set for them are, in some instances, not well connected to pupils' EHC plans. Consequently, some teaching does not meet pupils' needs, and they do not access the curriculum well. Leaders should ensure that pupils with SEND experience a curriculum which is ambitious and purposeful across all subjects. They should ensure that staff have the training and information that they need to help them adapt their teaching more effectively.
- Leaders' identification and support for pupils who need to learn to read are at an early stage of development. This means that some pupils are not quickly securing the phonic knowledge that they need to be able to read fluently. Leaders must ensure that they identify pupils who cannot read fluently. They should ensure that there is a strategy in place to develop staff's expertise to both teach and support pupils in becoming confident and fluent readers.

## **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>	148224
<b>Local authority</b>	Newham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269189
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	895
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Leslie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Morgan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://eastlea.newham.sch.uk/">https://eastlea.newham.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school opened in January 2021.
- Eastlea Community School converted to become an academy school in January 2021. When its predecessor school, Eastlea Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall, and safeguarding arrangements were not effective.
- The school is part of the Newham Community Learning Trust. The trust is providing additional support to the school, for example through the work of the executive leader for secondary and in current governance arrangements.
- The school includes a small additional resourced provision for up to 14 pupils. This caters mainly for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- Leaders currently use three registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement 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. The 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 senior staff. The lead inspector met with leaders representing the trust and local governing body. He also held a separate meeting with the chief executive officer.
- The lead inspector held telephone meetings with several local authority leaders to discuss the safeguarding arrangements at the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English (including reading), mathematics, art, modern foreign languages and geography. During each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. Inspectors also reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects across the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a wide range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, examples of how vulnerable pupils are supported, and attendance and behaviour information. Inspectors also considered the views of parents, staff and pupils, and other submissions shared with inspectors, to help evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Richard Poddington	Ofsted Inspector
David Lloyd	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Conway	His Majesty's Inspector

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