

Inspection of Oak House School

61 South Park Drive, Ilford, Essex IG3 9AB

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 October 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's classroom is a bright and welcoming environment. Pupils feel relaxed and comfortable here. Pupils are well supported in developing their independence, for example in accessing resources for their classroom activities. This helps prepare them for life after school.

Adults provide pupils with the support that they need to manage their emotions and to adapt their behaviour. They do this in a kind and considerate way.

There are comfortable spaces, both inside and outside the classroom, for pupils to take time to reflect on what they are learning or to read from the wide range of books on offer. Adults spend time talking to pupils about what they are learning and about how they are feeling. This helps to develop pupils' social and emotional skills. Pupils achieve well at school, including in their literacy and numeracy.

Pupils are kept safe at school. They know what to do and who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils get on well with each other. If there are any friendship problems, then adults help to make sure that they are sorted out quickly.

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

The school ensures that there is an ambitious curriculum in place that meets pupils' needs. Pupils' needs are assessed straight away when they join the school. This information is used well so that the curriculum is adapted to meet individual needs and to help staff understand any gaps that pupils have in their knowledge.

Pupils have complex needs. The curriculum rightly focuses on the most important things that the pupils should learn. The school has prioritised English and mathematics, but pupils learn a range of subjects, including personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). In most subjects, the curriculum content is clear about what pupils should be able to do. However, sometimes it is less precise about the specific knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This means that sometimes adults are not clear which specific bits of key knowledge should be taught and built on over time.

Pupils learn to improve their reading fluency, building on their phonics knowledge so that they have the skills needed to decode unfamiliar words. Pupils learn new vocabulary in lessons and the school provides a wide range of high-quality books in the classroom for pupils to read from. In mathematics, pupils practise their multiplication tables on a regular basis. This helps them to build up their speed and accuracy when working with numbers.

Adults are well trained and understand how to meet pupils' needs. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and positive. Over the time that pupils attend

school, their attendance improves. One reason for this improvement is the help pupils receive from staff to manage their mental health.

Staff work together in a consistent way. They communicate regularly and share important information about pupils' safety and well-being. In lessons if pupils need support to manage their behaviour or emotions, adults provide it in a respectful and reassuring way. After any incident of poor behaviour, pupils reflect on what has happened with a trusted adult. This helps them to learn helpful strategies and adapt their behaviour. Over time, pupils' behaviour, concentration and resilience improve.

Through the PSHE curriculum, pupils are taught important knowledge and skills that will help them in their future lives, including e-safety, healthy lifestyles and relationships. They also learn about what makes people and families different to one another. They are taught the importance of treating other people with respect and tolerance. Adults build in trips to support the curriculum, for example, when pupils learn about the rule of law, they visit a local crown court. Pupils meet a judge and discuss how the court operates.

Leaders make sure that pupils can develop their own personal interests, such as music, sign language, chess, sport and leisure. There are also many trips out into the local area. The school makes use of the local park with its all-weather sports surfaces and large open spaces. Pupils are regularly active and enjoy traditional sports such as basketball and football as well as other fun activities such as frisbee, roller skating and archery. These activities help pupils to develop their social skills and to understand the physical and mental health benefits of exercise.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They say that the proprietor supports their well-being and makes sure that they have a good work-life balance. The proprietor supports the headteacher in developing the educational strategy for the school and ensures that the headteacher has the resources and time to do this. The school is a busy environment, but staff feel they have the training and support required to fulfil their roles well.

Leaders have ensured that the school meets the independent school standards. They maintain the premises to a high standard and ensure that all the required policies are in place. Their accessibility plan complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few subjects, the subject content that the school wants pupils to know and remember is not precisely identified. This means that pupils do not build up the

strong body of subject knowledge that they should. The school should refine its curriculum thinking in these subjects, clearly identifying the component pieces of knowledge and skills that should be taught and assessed.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	143406
DfE registration number	317/6005
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10286447
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Saheena Saeed
Chair	Saheena Saeed
Headteacher	Fatima Patel
Annual fees (day pupils)	£19,000
Telephone number	020 8599 9675
Website	None
Email address	fatima@careoffice.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 to 28 March 2019

Information about this school

- Oak House School is a small independent school in Redbridge.
- The school's last standard inspection was in March 2019 when it was judged to be good. All the independent school standards were judged to have been met.
- The school uses no alternative providers.
- There are currently no students in the sixth form.
- Pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Some pupils have an education, health and care plan. All pupils have social, emotional and mental health difficulties as their primary area of need.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the proprietor and the headteacher. The inspector also met with a range of school staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in English and PSHE. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector carried out a range of activities, including a tour of the school, to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- The inspector evaluated responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff, alongside responses to Ofsted Parent View.

- The inspector only inspected the education provision at this school.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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