

Inspection of New Level Academy

Wyke Gardens, London W7 2BB

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 April 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, behave well here. Leaders set high expectations for pupil behaviour. Pupils build strong, positive, professional relationships with staff at the school. Staff encourage pupils to try their best and develop habits that will help them to be successful. Parents and carers said that communication is a strength of the school.

Leaders have high ambitions for what pupils can achieve. When pupils join the school, teachers are quick to assess what pupils have learned previously. The school offers a range of core subject courses that all pupils study as well as vocational subjects to suit pupils' talents and interests.

Careers education in the school is a strength. Staff work with pupils to explore a range of different career options linked to the qualifications pupils are completing. Pupils receive regular one-to-one careers advice and guidance to help them select their next step in education, employment or training. This includes the option to complete further qualifications in the school's sixth-form provision.

Pupils receive weekly lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE). However, the curriculum for PSHE does not take pupils prior knowledge sufficiently into account. Leaders have not ensured that all pupils receive age-appropriate statutory relationships and sex education.

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

Pupils join the school at different times during the year. Staff work quickly to assess pupils' prior learning and identify any gaps in their knowledge. They use this information to pinpoint pupils' starting points in the curriculum. Leaders take account of pupils' career aspirations and wider interests when selecting vocational courses for them to study. Pupils leave the school with functional skills and vocational BTEC qualifications.

Since their previous inspection, leaders have worked to re-design the curriculum for both core subjects and vocational courses. The curriculum is sequenced to build pupils' learning in manageable portions over time. Pupils revisit important concepts regularly to help them to remember these in their long-term memory. Literacy, numeracy and key life skills are built into all curriculum areas. For example, in physical education (PE), teachers reinforce pupils' learning in mathematics when calculating team scores.

Staff have received recent training to develop their delivery of learning in the classroom. As a result, pupils learn and remember more than in the past. Teachers use effective questioning in the classroom to check what pupils know and remember. They plan learning that helps them to identify pupils' misconceptions and knowledge gaps. These are then swiftly addressed. Teachers are confident in the subjects they teach. Typically, they use assessment well to report on pupils' progress.

Pupils who join the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well to access the curriculum alongside their peers and gain useful qualifications. Leaders, teachers and support staff know the needs of these pupils well.

Pupils have limited access to a wide range of reading material, including novels and whole texts. Few pupils read for pleasure. In English lessons, pupils study non-fiction articles and extracts from texts. The curriculum focuses on developing pupils' English language knowledge and reading comprehension skills. Leaders are in the process of developing a new English curriculum to encourage a love of reading and expose pupils to a wider range of fiction and non-fiction, including plays and poetry. However, the current curriculum limits pupils' exposure to a broad range of literature and wider cultural themes and ideas.

Teachers encourage pupils to develop healthy habits for their future lives. Pupils visit a range of workplaces and complete work experience to broaden their horizons. In PSHE, pupils are taught about healthy eating, maintaining mental health and the benefits of being physically active. They also learn how to stay safe, including online. Pupils attend workshops exploring the risks of drug taking and misuse. The school organises educational visits to art exhibitions, museums and local places of worship. This introduces pupils to cultures and religions other than their own.

The PSHE curriculum has not been as carefully sequenced as other subjects. However, pupils' prior learning in PSHE is not clearly assessed and considered when lessons are planned. As a result, pupils do not build sufficiently on what they already know. Relationships and sex education (RSE) has not routinely been taught for over a year. Some RSE learning takes place through one-to-one supportive conversations between staff and pupils. However, leaders do not check and record what themes have been discussed. This means that coverage of key themes, such as consent and sexual harassment, is not secure.

Typically, expectations for pupil behaviour are clear, including the sanctions for more serious misbehaviour. When pupils fall short of the school's expectations, staff support them to reflect on their behaviour. They rejoin lessons at the earliest opportunity. Leaders' current approach to reducing in-class distractions by limiting pupils' access to mobile phones during the school day does not reflect their behaviour policy. Leaders are not recording sanctions appropriately when pupils do not comply with this rule.

Improving pupil attendance is treated as a priority by leaders. On joining the school, pupils often have had gaps in education or previously poor attendance rates. Staff work effectively with pupils and their families to improve attendance over time. However, leaders do not routinely record the attendance of pupils in line with their statutory duties. This limits leaders' ability to identify patterns and trends in pupil attendance over time.

In the last year, leaders have made significant improvements to the quality of education at the school. They have provided effective professional development to teachers and support staff. These strengths demonstrate leaders' capacity to improve further.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel well supported by leaders to manage their workload. Parents are highly supportive of what school leaders and staff do for their children.

The school has formed strong, supportive working relations with local organisations, including the local authority and neighbouring schools. However, the proprietor, wider school trust and school leaders have not ensured that the school meets all of its statutory obligations and all the independent school standards.

The school 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)

- Leaders do not place enough emphasis on the importance of reading. Pupils do not read a broad enough range of fiction and non-fiction texts. This hinders their love of reading and wider cultural understanding. Leaders must ensure that pupils have the opportunity to read widely and often from a broad range of literature.
- The provision for pupils' personal development lacks systematic planning. The PSHE curriculum does not take into account what pupils already know. As a result, learning does not build on what they already know in an age-appropriate manner. This includes relationships and sex education. Leaders should ensure that the programme of learning for PSHE, including relationships and sex education, takes into account pupils age and prior understanding.
- Leaders do not maintain clear records relating to pupil attendance and the use of sanctions, such as suspensions. This limits leaders' capacity to analyse this information to identify patterns and trends in attendance and behaviour over time. Leaders must ensure they maintain an accurate attendance register and records of sanctions that are in line with relevant statutory requirements.
- Leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met consistently. They lack knowledge of some statutory requirements and do not ensure their responsibilities are fulfilled. Leaders should ensure they demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

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 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	142832
DfE registration number	307/6003
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	10299233
Type of school	Other Independent School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Number of pupils in the sixth form	2
Proprietor	London Rangers Football Charity
Chair	Terrance Springer
Headteacher	Sonya Dacoury-Tabley
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,500
Telephone number	020 8838 3529
Website	www.newlevel.brent.sch.uk
Email address	info@newlevel.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 to 12 May 2022

Information about this school

- New Level Academy is a small independent school and alternative provision for pupils in the London Borough of Ealing. The school moved to its new premises at Evershed Sports Ground, Wyke Gardens, London W7 2BB in January 2024.
- The school currently provides permanent and temporary alternative provision for up to 50 pupils aged 11 to 19. Pupils typically have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils are placed by their schools and are admitted on a dual registration arrangement.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school's new head of school took up position in September 2023.
- All pupils study core subjects in English, mathematics and science and complete functional skills qualifications in these subjects. Some pupils also study GCSE courses. Students in the sixth form study courses leading to level 1 and 2 qualifications.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of 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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the head of school, the proprietor and a member of the board of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and PE. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans and visited a sample of lessons. They spoke to teachers, looked at a sample of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- The inspector also looked at the curriculum for PSHE. They visited lessons in PSHE and science.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspector met with members of staff and considered the responses to the staff online survey. The inspector also spoke to parents of pupils in the school and considered the responses to the Ofsted online parent survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Annabel Davies, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2A(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor-
 - 2A(1)(b) ensures that every registered pupil who is provided with secondary education at the school is provided with relationships and sex education, except in so far as the pupil is excused as mentioned in sub-paragraph (2),
 - 2A(1)(d) in making arrangements for the purposes of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c), has regard to any guidance under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 that applies in relation to the provision of education by maintained schools,

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].

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;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024