

Inspection of The Constance Bridgeman Centre

Loxford Lane, Ilford, Essex IG1 2UT

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to attend this school and they feel safe. They know that they can talk to someone if they have any problems. Pupils behave well in lessons most of the time, but there are times when lessons are interrupted. This is because the school's behaviour policy is not implemented with sufficient consistency, and school leaders do not have high enough expectations of behaviour. Pupils say that bullying is not a problem at the school and that if it did happen it would be sorted out quickly.

Teachers and support staff are friendly and welcoming to pupils. Nevertheless, a lot of pupils do not attend school often enough to keep up with their education and to get ready for examinations. When pupils do attend, some teaching is not as effective as it should be. This is because leaders and teachers are still putting together some parts of the curriculum.

The school has not kept a close eye on their own safeguarding systems and processes. This means that the pupils who attend the school are vulnerable to risk and may not be safe.

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

The school has been working to improve the curriculum since the last inspection. However, progress has been too slow. School leaders, including governors, have not moved things forward with enough urgency. However, there are some green shoots. Some subjects are now much better organised, with clear thinking and plans which are being implemented well.

The school has gone through a turbulent time over the last year. The building work that was required when it moved to its current location, has only recently been completed. Also, for a variety of reasons, there has been a high turnover of staff. This has had a significantly negative impact on the school's capacity to bring about the changes it had planned. Leaders at all levels know this and have welcomed external support from the local authority to address some of these challenges. This external support is in the initial stages, and it is too early to measure its impact on the school's work.

Pupils are learning to read with confidence and fluency. This is because there is a support programme in place, which is being delivered in an effective way. However, because the English curriculum is not securely in place, pupils do not develop their wider literacy skills. This limits their ability to access the rest of the curriculum as well as they need to.

Pupils are gaining knowledge and skills in mathematics. The curriculum in this subject is well thought through and set out in a systematic and logical way. The impact of this curriculum is strong for one group, who have had consistent teaching this year. Most pupils, however, have had several different teachers and have not been well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school has put in place a curriculum for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). This curriculum lays out some of the important content that pupils in Years 10 and 11 should learn and remember. However, some units of this curriculum are not well matched to the age of the pupils. Some important opportunities are missed to teach content that will help pupils to keep safe and be prepared for the future. For example, in Year 10, pupils are not taught any relationships and sex education. In Year 11, there is insufficient coverage of topics, such as healthy and respectful relationships, and those that might be toxic.

Pupils' behaviour is not managed well. The school has a clear vision for behaviour, which uses positive approaches such as conflict resolution. However, they have not had the capacity to implement this effectively. At present, staff are responding to issues and are not able to take more positive steps toward teaching pupils to behave well.

The school has ensured that all pupils have access to impartial careers and employment advice and guidance. Pupils are helped to apply for a range of appropriate local colleges. Almost all pupils who are leaving Year 11 this year have a confirmed place for next September. There have been no work placements this year.

There has been too little emphasis on the school's work to protect pupils. This has led to some significant weaknesses.

Despite the challenges facing the school, most staff are happy to work here. They say that leaders consider their well-being, and that workload is manageable. However, they feel unsupported in the management of behaviour. This is preventing them from doing their job as well as they would like to.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The systems to vet new staff are weak and need urgent attention. At the time of the inspection, there were gaps in the information that schools must keep on record about the staff they employ and those in governance roles. Some of these issues were highlighted at the last inspection, and they continue to be unresolved.

All of the pupils are extremely vulnerable and need the highest level of monitoring to ensure that no safeguarding concerns are missed. While school staff show a high degree of care, they are unclear of how they should report concerns. They do not make written records of their observations and concerns in a systematic way. There are no protocols in place to enable them to do so. This means that leaders are not able to gather, analyse and join up information or manage safeguarding risks with enough precision.

Staff who work at the school have only a basic minimum of training in safeguarding. Leaders, including governors, have not ensured that they have the level of training

and supervision that they need to carry out their roles effectively. Some staff have an understanding of the contextual risks that pupils at the school face, which they had gained through experience. However, there is no routine training to ensure that all staff know why pupils at this school may be additionally vulnerable.

The oversight of safeguarding is not secure. Leaders at all levels have not been checking safeguarding systems. They are not aware of all of the statutory duties that are placed on them. They have not ensured that safeguarding policies, systems and processes are kept under continuous review to ensure compliance with their statutory duties.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not meet the statutory requirements for the teaching of RSHE. Pupils in Year 10 do not receive this essential education. In Year 11, the curriculum covers content that is not well matched to the age and maturity of the pupils. This means that, in some respects, pupils are not well prepared for adult life. Leaders should ensure that all pupils receive age-appropriate RSHE in line with statutory guidance.
- Staff members, including leaders, do not have the time to carry out their roles effectively, including their safeguarding duties. Governors have not had enough oversight of leaders' work. Leadership at all levels should be strengthened to ensure that pupils receive a high-quality education and have effective safeguarding arrangements to support them and protect them from harm.
- Staff have not received a robust enough level of training in key safeguarding themes for the context in which they work and the pupils they work with. They are not clear on how to report concerns that pupils may be at risk of harm. The school should ensure that all staff have regular training so that they can be vigilant and alert to any signs of pupils that may be at risk.
- Leaders do not keep and oversee systematic records of the concerns that are raised by staff. This reduces their ability to join up this information and take effective action to keep pupils safe. The school should establish rigorous systems for reporting, recording and analysing all safeguarding concerns, however small they may be.
- The procedures for the safe recruitment of staff are not secure and do not meet statutory requirements. Leaders must ensure that they consistently comply with all pre-employment vetting legislation.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	102794
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10323336
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	14 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Martin Sachs
Headteacher	Tony Clayton
Website	http://www.constancebridgeman.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 February and 1 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Pupils who attend this school have either been excluded from other schools or are at risk of exclusion.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also spoke to the chair of the governing body and other governors.
- Inspectors spoke to representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: biology, music, and food and nutrition. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's confidential survey for staff. There were no responses the surveys for parents or pupils.

Inspection team

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Annabel Davies

His Majesty's Inspector

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