

The Bridge Integrated Learning Space

c/o The Bridge School, 251 Hungerford Road, London N7 9LD

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Outstanding leadership is improving and transforming pupils' lives. All staff share the head of school's strong moral purpose for each pupil to be valued and helped to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Excellent governance ensures that the quality of education at the school is of the highest standard.
- The carefully designed curriculum is a major strength of the school. Pupils benefit from the wide range of courses on offer that ensure their needs are met extremely well.
- Pupils make substantial progress in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. They achieve or exceed their aspirational targets across their areas of learning.
- The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is exceptional. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.
- Partnership with parents is extremely strong. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their child's achievements since attending the school.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff work together to ensure that pupils' welfare and safety pervade all aspects of the school's work.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Excellent relationships help pupils to overcome previous challenges and build their self-belief.
- Sixth-form provision is outstanding. Students benefit from the same high level of individualised care as younger pupils at the school.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is highly effective. Staff work very effectively to plan interesting activities that motivate pupils to learn exceptionally well. Pupils achieve extremely well because of the excellent care and support they receive.
- Some initiatives of teaching, learning and assessment are new. These approaches have not had sufficient time to impact on all pupils' attitudes to learning and outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to embed the new initiatives of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils have extensive opportunities to maintain positive attitudes to learning and make substantial progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The head of school, executive headteacher, governors and staff are very ambitious and have high expectations for the school and its pupils to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils receive an outstanding level of education. The school's mission 'to improve children and young people's lives through innovative teaching and integrated approaches' drives all aspects of its work.
- The stimulating curriculum ensures that each pupil's needs are met. A strong emphasis is placed on ensuring that pupils acquire the necessary speaking, listening and writing skills to enable them to communicate effectively.
- The flexible curriculum focuses sharply on developing pupils' life skills. A strong emphasis is placed on promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils are encouraged to celebrate each other's achievements. Many enjoy the use of music to help them to learn. The school prepares pupils well for their experiences of everyday living in modern Britain. For example, pupils visit local shops and parks regularly, which helps to develop their independence skills.
- Effective arrangements are in place for the performance management of staff. Teachers value their training and receive encouragement to do research in areas such as special educational needs. Leaders ensure that the well-being of staff is promoted to support their effective work. They have been particularly successful in developing their own staff so that they achieve promotion both within the school and elsewhere.
- Excellent support from the academy trust executive headteacher has strengthened the leadership of the school. Strong partnership with other schools in the trust, including access to a teaching school, contributes to the professional development of all staff.
- Leaders understand their school well because of their rigorous and discerning monitoring and evaluation. Both the school's self-evaluation and development plan reflect this, giving an accurate picture of the school. Consequently, everyone is very clear about the steps required to improve the school further.
- Pupils benefit from extra funding received by the school. The sport premium gives pupils access to sporting activities. For instance, pupils enjoy learning to swim. The Year 7 catch-up grant helps pupils to achieve in line with other Year 7 pupils due to the funding of extra resources. Special educational needs funding and the pupil premium grant benefit eligible pupils by enabling close links with specialist services and external agencies. These pupils achieve well because their individual needs are well catered for.
- Engagement with parents is exemplary. The school views parents as part of the team in enabling all pupils to achieve their best. Parents are happy about their child's achievements and receive excellent support at home, when needed. A group of parents agreed that this is 'an excellent school, with excellent staff and providing an excellent service. This is the best school for our children.'

- Learning support assistants at this school have valuable experience and expertise in the field of special educational needs. Parents know them as special needs professionals.
- Leaders are anything but complacent about the school's performance. They recognise that not all new initiatives and teaching approaches are fully established to drive standards even higher.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong. Governors and directors use their expertise well to scrutinise all aspects of the school's work. Governors foster an open and supportive ethos. They challenge school leaders effectively to address any potential concerns.
- Governors are extremely ambitious for pupils and their families to have opportunities that they might not have otherwise. Additional funding, including that to support disadvantaged pupils, is reviewed constantly to ensure that eligible pupils benefit.
- Governors are clear about their roles. They understand their statutory responsibilities and have undertaken the required safeguarding training to ensure that pupils are helped to keep safe. They are quick to check that new initiatives make a difference to pupils' achievements and well-being. Governors are fully supportive of school leaders and staff to drive further improvements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a safe culture where the welfare and protection of pupils are of the highest priority. The recruitment process is robust and the single central record of recruitment checks shows that all staff, including volunteers, are suitable to work with children.
- There is a strong awareness of keeping pupils safe in school. Staff training helps them to identify when a pupil might be at risk, including that associated with radicalisation and extremism. There are clear steps to follow should staff spot signs of neglect or abuse to promote pupils' welfare.
- Leaders engage very effectively with parents, carers and external agencies to promote pupils' well-being and safety. They work closely with parents, for instance to check pupils' absences and that they are safe. Prompt referrals to the relevant services provide help for those pupils who might be at risk. Written records show that leaders track planned actions that have secured pupils' safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Exceptional teaching, learning and assessment are transforming pupils' lives. Highly skilled teachers, along with special needs professionals (learning support assistants), provide high levels of care and support so that pupils achieve extremely well. Pupils also receive specialist support from therapists' work within the classroom. This enables them to make excellent gains in their personal development.

- The commitment and collaboration of staff motivate pupils to engage in well-planned and fascinating activities. These tasks are well matched to their needs and their successes are celebrated in assemblies and other events.
- Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching makes the learning of literacy and numeracy meaningful and links it to pupils' interests and needs. These, and other subjects, help to improve pupils' social interaction and communication skills. For instance, the outdoor learning space enables pupils to enjoy their physical education.
- Special needs professionals make an exceptional contribution to pupils' learning, well-being and achievements. They bring a wealth of experience because they are experts in the field of educating pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They provide effective support while encouraging pupils to develop their personal and social skills.
- Pupils are at the heart of everything the school does. Leaders and teachers keep up to date with the statutory requirements of the education of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This has resulted in the introduction of new initiatives to ensure that pupils at this school continue to receive high-quality teaching.
- All staff are highly reflective of their practice. Pupils benefit from specialist teachers who take time to understand their needs, including their family's circumstances and how they learn best. Pupils receive personal attention to learn, and teachers evaluate the smallest steps of progress. Staff use assessment information effectively to ensure that pupils make further gains in their learning.
- Teachers and special needs professionals are seeking to develop innovative approaches to facilitate even better teaching, learning and assessment for all pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Often, pupils start school with previous gaps in their education because of their special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure that the utmost attention is given to pupils' well-being.
- Staff help pupils to overcome many personal challenges in their lives. Strong relationships and individual support from skilful staff help build pupils' self-esteem and rekindle more positive attitudes to learning. Recently introduced initiatives help staff to promote pupils' attitudes to learning well. Inspectors observed pupils dealing confidently with situations which previously caused them to be anxious.
- All staff ensure that pupils' physical and emotional well-being is supported effectively. Staff make sure that pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the day. This ensures that pupils can communicate their needs, such as requiring a drink of water. Clinical psychologists, occupational and speech therapists provided by the school enhance the range of support to meet pupils' needs. They work closely with teachers to set appropriate targets and deliver programmes tailored to the individual pupil.

- Staff communicate clearly and effectively with pupils. They encourage pupils to show their emotions and needs through various methods, including the use of Makaton, symbols or picture cards. Staff wait for the appropriate time for pupils' responses according to their individual needs.
- Pupils learn how to make safe and healthy lifestyle choices which are actively encouraged by all staff. Pupils have opportunities to be active and make nutritious food choices. Pupils learn to identify and minimise the potential risks through road safety training while travelling outside school. Workshops for parents promote e-safety well.
- Bullying is extremely rare. A major focus of the school is to proactively teach appropriate social interaction and communication skills. This diffuses any potential incidents of bullying. The school's records show that no incidents of bullying in this or the previous academic year took place.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Many pupils make remarkable progress in managing their behaviour because each pupil receives high-quality support from staff.
- Teachers and special needs professionals track pupils' behaviour rigorously throughout the day. Leaders and teachers use a 'traffic light' process for recording and implementing new approaches to improve pupils' behaviour. This enables staff to judge the effectiveness of behaviour management strategies.
- Staff know pupils very well. This enables them to apply effective strategies for reducing potential disruptions to learning. Pupils conduct themselves well as they move around school. They display a good deal of self-discipline because of the excellent care they receive.
- Attendance is improving and is close to the national expectations of mainstream schools. Pupils and their families enjoy the benefits of this school so pupils attend school regularly. A few pupils are persistently absent due to health needs and staff ensure that they are quickly back on track with their learning when they return.
- The alternative provision is highly effective at supporting pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare. There is regular communication between the school and the provider. Leaders monitor pupils' behaviour, attendance and progress rigorously to ensure that pupils make great gains in their personal development as well as their academic studies.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils join the school with considerably low age-related attainment due to their complex needs and possible gaps in their education. Leaders accurately establish pupils' levels of skill and aptitude when they arrive at the school. This enables them to set aspirational targets in collaboration with the parent and the pupil.
- There is no published data for this school because teaching group sizes are very small. For these reasons, information about achievement needs to be interpreted with caution, because analyses of trends or comparisons with national results are

misleading. This inspection took into consideration the outcomes of all pupils currently at the school.

- All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities and make substantial progress. Pupils, including those who need to catch up, develop excellent English and mathematics skills across the curriculum. Pupils receive high-quality support to achieve their targets so that they are well prepared to move onto the next stage of their education. Pupils' targets are updated constantly as they reach for higher levels in their learning.
- The effective use of pupil premium funding enables eligible pupils to make good or better progress across a range of subjects. Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, make exceptional progress in developing their communication skills and physical abilities.
- Pupils' outcomes in personal, social, health and economic education are consistently good. A major focus of the curriculum is preparing pupils for adult life, which enables them to have positive experiences about the world they live in. For instance, pupils used their social skills and understanding of money to make a successful visit to the local supermarket. There they chose their item to purchase and used the correct money for payment at the check-out.
- A very small number of pupils attend the alternative provision. These pupils make consistently strong progress across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- There are currently a very small number of students on roll in the sixth form. Courses are tailored to each student's individual needs, including the development of functional skills and work-related learning to match the needs of each student. A wide range of activities are on offer, improving students' social skills and their learning of English and mathematics.
- Sixth-form courses reflect the same high expectations that leaders and teachers have for the rest of the school. Students and their families receive excellent guidance and support so that they can make sensible and realistic choices about their futures.
- Students' progression to further destinations is planned sensitively. Leaders and teachers work effectively with different organisations to ensure that all pupils' education, health and care needs are carefully considered and well supported.
- This report excludes information on the progress and behaviour of sixth-form students to protect the privacy of those individuals.

School details

Unique reference number	141605
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10036361

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	5
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Howard Taylor
Head of school	Ed Ashcroft
Executive headteacher	Penny Barratt
Telephone number	020 7799 5050
Website	www.thebridgelondon-ils.co.uk
Email address	admin@thebridge.islington.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- All pupils at The Bridge Integrated Learning Space have complex learning difficulties and autism.

- The school has a residential provision that was not part of this inspection. Currently there are no residential pupils.
- This is the school's first inspection since opening in January 2015 as a member of a multi-academy trust, The Bridge London Trust.
- All pupils and sixth-form students on roll have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional pupil premium funding is well above average.
- A very small number of pupils attend one alternative provider, The Bridge School, which was not part of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a wide range of evidence during the inspection, including observations of teaching and learning. All observations were undertaken jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation related to the school's work, including its self-evaluation report, development plan and governors' minutes. Information about pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour was also considered. Inspectors scrutinised records related to safeguarding and toured the school site.
- Inspectors met with members of the trust, governors, senior leaders, teachers and special needs professionals. Inspectors held discussions with therapists and observed multi-agency meetings held with external agencies and representatives from the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils during lessons and examined their achievements and behaviour in a range of situations, including during a visit to the local park and supermarket.
- Inspectors held discussions with parents to hear their views of the school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, so inspectors considered the findings from a recent survey undertaken by school leaders.
- Inspectors considered 11 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Rosemarie McCarthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Joy Barter	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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