

Leaways School

Albany House, 18 Theydon Road
Clapton
London
E5 9NA

Inspection dates

2–3 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for children and learners	Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection 29–29 November 2012 Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and the staff are passionate about supporting pupils with special educational needs to become independent adults.
- Outstanding teaching in all subjects motivates pupils to engage effectively in their learning and make outstanding progress from their exceptionally low starting points.
- The curriculum is highly individualised to meet all pupils' needs. The high focus on English, mathematics and science prepares pupils effectively in the basic skills.
- The school's governance is outstanding. The company's officers provide strong support. They are a visible presence in the school and monitor teaching, learning and assessment.
- The school ensures that all the policies and procedures for pupils' welfare and safety are fully implemented and that pupils are safe.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school.
- Relationships across the school are outstanding and pupils get on well with their peers and staff.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know how to keep safe on the internet. They know that they can go to a member of staff if any bullying happens.
- Staff take swift action to support pupils who occasionally get emotionally upset and find it hard to behave appropriately in lessons.
- Pupils would like to have music lessons and use the wide range of musical instruments available in the music rooms.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) regulations 2010, as amended ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the curriculum to include the teaching of music to meet the interests and aptitudes of pupils. This will also enable the school to use the wide range of musical instruments available in the music rooms.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The leadership and management of the experienced and committed headteacher are outstanding. He works very closely with staff, and they share his ambition for excellence.
- Senior and middle leaders, along with the company's officers, monitor teaching, learning and assessment rigorously to ensure it remains outstanding, and pupils continue to make accelerated progress.
- The leaders were concerned about some pupils with complex needs not making rapid progress. They assessed and identified that some pupils were on the autistic spectrum. To meet their needs, the classroom environment was changed and new resources were bought. This has met pupils' needs effectively, and they were observed making outstanding progress in the lesson.
- The curriculum is closely matched to pupils' needs. Most pupils take examinations in GCSEs and functional skills. There is also an excellent provision for pupils to choose vocational courses from various colleges.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take part in sporting events such as kayaking, ice-skating, and swimming in the nearby resorts and gymnasiums. This motivates them to attend the school more regularly and get engaged in education.
- The school staff help those pupils who find it difficult to come to school by going to their homes or taking them to libraries or museums to teach. This way, pupils are slowly introduced back to school.
- The school's assessment procedures are robust. Pupils' progress is assessed when they join the school and then is tracked termly. The leaders set targets that are more challenging than the national norms because they know that some pupils have not been in school for many years and need to make accelerated progress. Most pupils make rapid progress and quickly catch up with learning they have missed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly promoted through assemblies, religious education and all other subjects. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about fundamental British values through visits to places such as the Houses of Parliament and through visitors who come to school to talk about their work, such as a Member of Parliament, police and fire officers, and bank employees.
- The welfare, safety and security of pupils are a priority. All policies and procedures are effectively implemented and updated to meet requirements. Policies are on the school's website to keep parents well informed. The quality of this provision is the strength of the school.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are rigorous and meet statutory requirements. The designated officers for safeguarding, and all other staff, have had appropriate training.
- Parents and carers, and the local authorities that refer their pupils to the school, receive termly reports about pupils' progress, both academically and in their personal development. In these reports, National Curriculum levels are recorded from the start of the year to the end of the year so that they can measure progress.
- The referring authorities are given annual audited accounts in respect of the money they pay towards fees for each of their pupils.
- Staff are held to account for pupils' achievement. Pay progression is clearly linked to the impact that teachers have on their classes. There are excellent professional development arrangements for all staff to improve their teaching skills.
- Staff are unanimous in saying that they are very happy in the school because they are extremely well supported by the senior management team.
- There were no responses from the parents' questionnaire, but the inspector spoke to three parents on the telephone. They all stated that they couldn't praise the school enough for bringing their children back into education and keeping them safe from negative outside influences.
- Pupils are very happy in the school. However, they would like to learn music, as they stated, 'we have lots of keyboards, guitars and drums in our music rooms. We would like to use these and have music lessons'.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers guidance, which prepares them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met for leadership and management of the school's work, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.

■ The governance of the school:

- The company has the sole responsibility for governance of the school. The company's officers are highly committed to providing outstanding opportunities for pupils who have been reluctant to come to school. They believe passionately that all pupils, irrespective of their circumstances, are entitled to the best possible education.
- The officers have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They regularly check and ensure that pupils get the best possible care, are kept safe and that high standards of teaching help them to make the best possible progress. They are committed to maintaining the highest standards in all aspects of the school's work.
- The premises are very spacious, light and bright, with attractive displays of pupils' work. The officers provide regular financial support for pupils when they visit places of educational interest. Currently, they are planning to take pupils on a day trip to Paris, to extend their learning of different cultures.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Staff have high expectations of pupils' learning. Most of the pupils in the school are those who do not like coming to school, and many have been out of the education system for a number of years. Staff have been successful in engaging them in education.
- Staff know their pupils very well and have a thorough understanding of their needs and aptitudes. They give appropriately challenging tasks and activities and this helps pupils to make outstanding progress as was seen in one mathematics lesson where pupils were learning long multiplication using a grid method. They worked out the sums correctly and demonstrated it to others on the board.
- The school provides a strong focus on the teaching of English, mathematics and science. Pupils make outstanding progress in these lessons, because teachers are very skilled in asking probing questions that make pupils think deeply. In one English lesson, pupils were developing the skills of argument through comparing whether they were in favour of having a cat or a dog.
- Teachers regularly measure pupils' progress in reading and writing through the use of standardised tests. They use these assessments rigorously to provide excellent additional support such as teaching of phonics to improve pupils' reading and spelling skills.
- Pupils enjoy science lessons when teachers give them opportunities, for example, to test for alkalinity in the soil. Pupils use the appropriate resources safely.
- Lesson planning that matches the needs of individual pupils is a particular strength of the teaching. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and they continuously assess their pupils' learning during the lessons. They are adept in modifying activities to suit pupils' abilities. The number of pupils in each class is small and there are always additional staff present to support them. This results in all pupils getting excellent support and making outstanding progress.
- Assessment is rigorous. Pupils' progress is tracked termly and staff set challenging targets for further improvements. Teachers mark pupils' work well and give both verbal and written feedback. Pupils correct their mistakes and this helps them to fill gaps in their learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding. Pupils trust their teachers, knowing that, if need arises, they will be well supported with their learning and behaviour. This creates a calm atmosphere for learning, and lessons move on smoothly with little disruption.
- Staff are proactive in supporting any emotional difficulties, as was seen in one lesson where the staff calmly removed a pupil from the class while others continued with their work.
- Teaching in the newly established classroom for autistic pupils is outstanding and very effectively meets their needs.
- Rigorous monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment by leaders provides excellent support to staff on how they can improve their practice.
- All the independent school standards for teaching, learning and assessment are met.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Procedures and policies for the welfare of pupils are robust and are implemented highly effectively. As a result, pupils feel

safe and secure.

- Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are rigorous and meet statutory requirements. All staff, including the designated lead officers for safeguarding, have received training. Key staff are suitably trained in first aid and fire safety.
- Parents are very satisfied that their children are safe in school. Pupils feel that they are safe and are confident that they can keep safe from any type of bullying.
- Staff are highly trained in keeping pupils safe from radicalisation. Pupils are given many opportunities to debate issues before accepting any views. This was seen in an English lesson where pupils were discussing the pros and cons of having pets.
- The school provides high quality careers guidance to help pupils to make choices for future education or training. They get a good grounding in basic skills and, coupled with work experience and mixed academic and vocational pathways, pupils are well prepared to decide for themselves the routes that they want to take. The school has provided jobs to two older students within the school and is helping them to gain further academic qualifications.
- The leaders, along with the company's officers, regularly monitor and update all policies and procedures and ensure that all the independent standards for personal development, welfare and safety are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Almost all pupils enter the school with very low attainment and highly complex needs. Most pupils quickly settle down because of the excellent established routines of the school. Their behavioural and other emotional needs are very effectively managed with care and consideration by the skilled staff. The school opens earlier than the normal time and provides breakfast to pupils free of charge. This supports attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils quickly learn what is acceptable and what is not and are given many opportunities to socialise with others, for example at breakfast and lunchtimes, when pupils chat sociably and play amicably.
- Behaviour in lessons is outstanding, as work given is appropriately challenging and more-able pupils do not get any time to get bored. Those who learn slowly are not frustrated through being given work that is too challenging. If any behaviour problems arise, staff are proactive, quickly intervene and give the required support.
- Staff are well trained to deal with situations which may arise. The register indicates that the school uses exclusions appropriately for those who need to understand the boundaries for unacceptable behaviour.
- Staff, parents and pupils rightly feel that behaviour is outstanding across the school.
- Attendance of most pupils is good, but a very small minority still do not attend the school regularly, despite the staff actively working with families to improve attendance. The school monitors attendance rigorously and if pupils do not come to school for more than two days, the staff go to their homes to find out the reason and sometimes help the families to bring their children to school.
- Leaders ensure that all the independent school standards for this aspect of the school's work are met.

Outcomes for children and learners

are outstanding

- Due to outstanding teaching, achievement is consistently outstanding in all classes and in all subjects. When pupils join the school, they have very low levels of attainment and behaviour. Many have not been in schools for a considerable length of time and find it hard to settle down with their learning.
- Staff have an unwavering expectation that the right match of work to the pupils' abilities will motivate them to learn. They have been successful in doing this, and as a result pupils make exceptional progress.
- Staff use National Curriculum levels in English, mathematics and science to assess pupils' learning when they join the school. They track pupils' progress rigorously every term and set challenging targets for further improvement. Most pupils make outstanding progress, as one said: 'I have made amazing progress. Two years ago when I came to this school, I was on Levels 2s in all the three subjects and now I am on Level 5s and 6s. I am likely to get Grade B in all my subjects in my GCSE examinations.'
- Individualised planning in reading, writing, mathematics and science, and excellent support from staff in small classes, enables pupils to have high expectations of their own achievement and motivates them to work hard.
- Academic assessment information indicates that all pupils achieve well above their starting points. The school expects all pupils to make at least one National Curriculum level progress in one year in all

subjects. All pupils are entered for a range of externally accredited qualifications such as GCSEs, BTEC and functional skills, getting equivalent to GCSE pass qualifications.

- The school's assessments show that pupils' results are improving, but the numbers are too small to make any meaningful comparisons.
- The school monitors behaviour and emotional and mental health rigorously, and assessments show that most pupils make outstanding progress in these areas also. The school's records show that any underachievement is mostly due to absence where pupils are still not able to attend regularly because of home circumstances.
- All the independent school standards are met for the outcomes for children and learners.

School details

Unique reference number	137808
Inspection number	10006055
DfE registration number	204/6003

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

Type of school	Special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10–17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Kedleston Schools (London) Limited
Headteacher	Richard Gadd
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,000–£50,400
Telephone number	020 8815 4030
Website	www.leawaysschool.co.uk
Email address	info@leawaysschool.co.uk
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 November 2012

Information about the school

- Leaways is a special day school which provides education for pupils aged 10–17 years. Out of the 42 pupils, only two are female. The school is registered for 75 pupils.
- All pupils have statements of special need. Nine pupils' statements have been converted into education, health and care plans. The statements relate to behaviour, social and mental health issues. A significant minority have complex needs. The school is supporting pupils with autism through classes specially designed for them.
- The school opened in January 2012 and was inspected in November 2012 under section 162 of the Education Act. The school's proprietor is Kedleston Schools (London) Limited. It runs residential homes and other schools in England. This is its only school in London.
- It admits pupils who have missed significant amounts of education through absence. Some have not been in school for many years before they joined this school.
- Just over 45% are White British; over 35% are Black British, and others are from different ethnic minorities such as Mixed British and Turkish British.
- Pupils are placed by different local authorities that pay their fees.
- The school's accommodation is on four floors and is very spacious for the number of pupils. There are quite a few empty classrooms. The school is in a very good decorative order and is well furnished.
- Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils attend local colleges for one or two days a week for vocational courses. The school uses Epping Forest College, Peacocks Gymnasium, Redbridge College, Cornell and Old Ford. Pupils learn plumbing, football, sports and construction.
- The school believes, 'that every young person is an untapped source of talent which can be used to raise confidence and self-esteem'. It aims, 'to allow every student to achieve success and to find their place in society'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice
- The inspector visited all classrooms to observe teaching, learning and assessment (observed seven lessons and made two learning walks). All lessons were observed jointly with the deputy headteacher. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and their assessment information were analysed.
- Meetings were held with: the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and leaders for assessment, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance, and special educational needs and careers advice. Meetings were also held with the middle leaders.
- The inspector also met with three company's officers: the chief executive officer, the quality assurance officer (for standards, and teaching and learning) and the safeguarding officer.
- School policies and other documentation were examined on the website and other relevant policies in the school.
- Records of pupils' attendance and behaviour were reviewed. Pupils' behaviour was observed during breaktimes and lunchtime.
- One meeting was held with members of the school council.
- The views of 16 staff that returned the questionnaire were analysed.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online Parent View Questionnaire. The Inspector spoke to three parents on the telephone, arranged by the school.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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