

Insights Independent School

3–5 Alexandria Road, West Ealing, London W13 0NP

Inspection dates

3–5 November 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 pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Outstanding
Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The school is exceptionally well led and managed by the Principal and the senior team. Their vision of supporting pupils with special educational needs to become independent adults is shared by the whole school community.
- Pupils of all ages and learning needs make outstanding progress, because of outstanding teaching.
- The curriculum has been designed carefully and is very effectively personalised to pupils' needs. Both academic and personal development is rigorously tracked.
- Highly effective outreach teaching for those pupils who find the school environment daunting helps to settle them and integrate them into school.
- Leaders continuously drive improvement. Their checking of the school's work is accurate and rigorous. This leads to effective monitoring of the quality of teaching and the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Sixth form pupils make excellent progress. They benefit from the encouragement they are given to successfully continue their education in various institutions after they leave the school. The curriculum is well designed to help them to make the right vocational and academic choices.
- Pupils make rapid progress from exceptionally low prior levels of attainment by comparison with what is typical for their age.
- The staff are highly skilled in analysing behaviour and are able to swiftly de-escalate potential problems. As a result, pupils' behaviour, which had often been an issue in their previous schools, improves rapidly. They behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and know how to keep safe from any bullying and extremism. They are very knowledgeable about e-safety.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively. Most pupils are aware of fundamental British values and talk with pleasure about their visit to the Houses of Parliament.
- The wide range of therapeutic services address very effectively pupils' social interaction and communication difficulties.
- The local authorities who place their pupils in the school say that they are very satisfied, and highly praise the school's work for keeping pupils in education.
- Parents are very appreciative of the school's work. They say that they admire the way staff treat their children with respect and sort out difficulties with great care and patience.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 as amended 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further the professional development of newly qualified teachers and those staff who are working towards qualified teacher status, by providing more opportunities for them to share in experiencing the high-quality teaching found across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The leadership and management, under the very experienced and committed Principal, is outstanding. She works very closely with the senior staff who wholeheartedly share her ambition for excellence. The whole school staff works very well together, ably supported by the senior leaders.
- The leaders monitor teaching robustly and systematically and, as a result, teaching is outstanding. The school supports its newly qualified teachers well. Some teaching assistants, with encouragement from senior leaders, have gained qualifications in English and mathematics at GCSE level, and are working towards qualifying as teachers.
- The school's leaders rigorously monitor the performance of teachers, ensuring that any progression through the pay scales is based on merit. Leaders are ambitious and are keen to improve teaching even further so that even more is outstanding.
- The curriculum is personalised to pupils' needs. A wide range of therapies to suit the requirements of individual pupils are used to support behaviour and thereby learning. The school has introduced an imaginative and innovative curriculum, providing pupils with opportunities such as fishing and wakeboarding to engage them in their learning.
- To motivate those who struggle or refuse to attend the main school, the Principal has started 'off-site' teaching in the close-by library, and community and youth centres. By gradually introducing these pupils to the school, they are helped to overcome past negative experiences.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and very relevant to the needs of pupils. Most pupils take GCSE examinations and also have opportunities to select from a range of vocational courses.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effectively promoted through assemblies and extracurricular activities, and through subjects such as religious education, English, physical education and art. In an assembly, pupils showed very good understanding of British values when they talked about landmarks in London and famous people such as the Queen. Pupils commented that they learn to 'get on with other people' when they go on outings.
- The school has very robust assessment procedures. Leaders track pupils' progress termly and set targets which are challenging by comparison with national norms. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils' learning. They meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss pupils' progress and provide appropriate additional support where needed.
- The welfare and safety of pupils is a strength of the school. All policies and procedures are effectively implemented and updated regularly. Parents are well informed about the policies, which are all on the school's website and also available in hard copy on request.
- Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and meet statutory requirements. All required checks are carried out for the suitability of staff who work with children and are recorded on the single central register. The designated lead for safeguarding and all other staff have had appropriate training.
- Parents are well informed about their children's progress through the end-of-year reports, where National Curriculum levels at the start of the year to the end of the year are recorded, indicating the progress they have made. Parents also get good information on their children's behaviour and attendance.
- Parents are highly appreciative of the school's work. As one parent stated, 'challenging job, amazing tolerance, and strong bond with children, improvements impressive, listening and responsive school'. No questionnaires were returned, but parents telephoned the inspector to state their appreciation.
- The staff questionnaire shows that the staff enjoy working at the school. They say that senior leaders are supportive, and because of this they have improved their teaching skills.
- The local authorities who allocate the pupils are highly appreciative of the work of the school. They say that they send their most difficult pupils, who are usually excluded from mainstream schools. The school works hard and motivates pupils to carry on with their education even after they leave this school.
- Middle managers who have responsibility for subject specialisms know the school well. They monitor the quality of teaching with senior leaders, extending and improving their own curriculum areas. For example, the curriculum area covered by English has been extended to include drama and the performing arts.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The Principal is the proprietor of the school and she has the sole responsibility for governance of the school.
 - She has appointed an advisory board that has members from different professions, and which also

includes two parents. The Chair of the Board and one parent member spoke to the inspector on the phone and were looking forward to the prospect of getting training on how to support and challenge the school.

- The school’s proprietor ensures that they provide high-quality accommodation for the staff and pupils, and that the décor is of high quality.
- Financial resources are managed effectively and accounts are appropriately prepared for the local authorities who fund the pupils’ places.
- All the independent school standards are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Teachers engage pupils in learning exceptionally well, and if anyone has any problems, the support staff quickly attend to it. This timely intervention results in almost no disturbance in lessons.
- It was observed that, in the morning, most pupils came to school looking unhappy and showing a negative attitude. With appropriate support given by staff, within minutes they were seen in lessons, fully engaged in learning in a calm and happy environment. This is because teachers know their pupils extremely well and very patiently solve their personal issues and settle them quickly. As one pupil remarked, and others agreed, ‘even when we get angry and mad, teachers do not get cross’.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of pupils’ starting points and have high expectations. They give appropriately challenging tasks, and this enables pupils to make outstanding progress. The number of staff supporting pupils is very good and mostly pupils receive very effective one-to-one support.
- Teachers thoroughly scrutinise pupils’ work and give very good verbal and written feedback. This enables pupils to correct their mistakes.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils’ behaviour. This has been instrumental in reducing the amount of challenging and disturbing behaviour that pupils exhibit when they first join the school. As pupils spend more time in the school, their behaviour improves immeasurably, as was seen in the older pupils’ lessons, and they learn very well as a result.
- There is a strong focus on teaching mathematics, English and science and, consequently, pupils achieve very well in these subjects. In lessons, pupils respond well to the many opportunities to read their work aloud as was seen in religious education, history and literacy sessions. This helps to develop pupils’ much-needed communication skills.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan activities to suit pupils’ needs extremely well. The support staff are well trained and highly qualified; they are well deployed to support pupils. Teachers are excellent role models; they give clear instructions and explanations and praise good behaviour. They implement the school behaviour policy of both sanctions and rewards consistently and pupils know what they need to improve to have rewards and avoid ‘strikes’.
- Assessment is rigorous. Progress is tracked termly and teachers set challenging targets for further improvements.
- Relationships between staff and their pupils are strong and this enables teaching and learning to move on swiftly, using time very effectively and efficiently. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher’s effective questioning challenged a pupil to think carefully about square roots and, in so doing, deepened his understanding of the mathematical concept.
- Teaching is monitored well by the senior leaders and purposeful feedback is provided to teachers. As a result, staff know how they can develop their practice.
- All the independent school standards are met.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are confident, and most have a positive attitude to learning and are able to focus and complete their tasks. If pupils become distracted, staff are proficient in re-engaging them in their work.
- Pupils have a potential for extreme behaviour with the propensity to disrupt their own learning and that of

others, but staff are well trained to be proactive in intervening, and keep pupils calm. Mostly, pupils learn on a one-to-one basis in their own classroom or in a specialist facility, such as the sensory room. Records indicate that pupils who have been in the school longer have better attitudes to learning and take responsibility for their own behaviour.

- The welfare of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety and know how to keep safe on the internet. They say that there is no bullying and know who they can talk to if they have any concerns.
- The school uses high-quality careers guidance to help pupils make choices. Pupils are given a good grounding in basic subjects. This, together with outstanding enrichment activities and coupled with work experience, gives pupils very good understanding of the careers they want to pursue. As a result, almost all pupils are well prepared for further education or training.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Outstanding relationships are built when pupils go on residential trips abroad and day trips within the country. They learn to cooperate, gain confidence and find out about different cultures. Pupils from a variety of different cultures, religions and ethnic backgrounds work effectively together.
- Pupils get a very good understanding of British fundamental values of democracy. They visit places of interest, such as the Houses of Parliament, and discuss the role of the monarchy. They recognise many landmarks in London. Pupils celebrate festivals such as Diwali, Guy Fawkes Day, Black History Month and Christmas, and learn about their own and others' cultures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school has high expectations for behaviour and, as a result, pupils know what is expected of them and they respond positively. Staff allow pupils to be independent and when, on occasions, they need help to behave sensibly, prompt support is readily available.
- Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to the adults. They receive excellent support if they have any personal problems, such as bereavement or any other social trauma.
- Pupils' attendance is improving because the school has developed many strategies to reduce absence. Many staff go to pupils' homes to bring them to school. The range of curriculum enrichment activities, after-school clubs and visits to places of interest motivate pupils to want to come to school.
- The school is very proactive in ensuring that pupils do not indulge in any extremist activities. The staff check pupils' laptops and tablets after they have used the internet to ensure that no sites that propagate extremism have been visited.
- All the independent standards are met.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils have very low levels of attainment when they join the school and, in a very short space of time, they make outstanding progress in their academic studies and personal development.
- Staff have very highly effective relationships with parents and, as a result, they quickly get to know their pupils' strengths and weaknesses. They use this information to assess pupils and devise personalised programmes of study. The work matches their needs, and their successes give them considerable confidence.
- Outstanding individualised planning in literacy and numeracy and support in lessons from the staff helps younger pupils to make rapid progress in their reading, writing and number work. In one lesson, pupils were reading the story of Diwali aloud fluently, keeping good expression, and were able to answer questions, which showed the depth of their understanding.
- The school enters some pupils early for GCSE in some subjects and feels that pupils' results improve when they retake the examination, having gained in confidence in the meantime. Many make outstanding progress and successfully return to mainstream education in their preferred colleges.
- The school's analysis of pupils' academic progress and the impact of therapeutic interventions shows that over 88% of pupils make good or better progress academically and almost all make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Assessment information shows that pupils in all age groups achieve well above their starting points. All pupils are entered for a wide range of externally accredited courses and qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, BTEC and Functional skills, City and Guilds and National Vocational Qualification awards.

- The school provides very well for pupils supported by the pupil premium. The school does not receive any additional funding for these pupils, but has managed to raise funds to buy resources and employ additional adults to accelerate their reading and writing skills.
- All the independent school standards are met for the achievement of pupils.

Sixth form provision

is outstanding

- The leadership and management of the sixth form is outstanding. The leader has high expectations and works hard to provide an individualised curriculum that meets pupils' needs and interests. Most pupils make outstanding progress and leave the school after they are 16 years old to join mainstream colleges. This is the reason that the sixth form is very small.
- Pupils receive a rich educational experience, which include opportunities for work experience, taster courses at colleges and enrichment activities such as fishing. This engages pupils in hands-on practical experiences that they enjoy. Consequently, some pupils have been successful in gaining apprenticeship in the fishing industry, which was their desired career choice.
- The school has excellent provision for pupils who are currently in the final year and are taking City and Guilds courses in hair and beauty therapy. The school provides pupils with a well-equipped salon with all facilities where they study. Some others are doing City and Guilds courses in music technology. The school has been successful in establishing a music recording room for them. One of these pupils is also taking A levels in physics and mathematics. The school successfully provides a mixture of both academic and vocational routes to suit pupils' career choices.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and are making outstanding progress from their starting points. Parents and pupils are very happy with the facilities, the teaching and the pupils' progress. Every pupil leaves the school with some sort of accreditation.
- An outstanding range of extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' learning extremely well. Pupils talked very fondly about their visits to Paris, Barcelona and Rome. These opportunities contribute extremely well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are safe in school and they can identify many risks from, for example, extremism or cyberbullying. The school receives regular reports regarding their progress, behaviour and attendance from the colleges they attend.

School details

Unique reference number	135493
Inspection number	10006315
DfE registration number	307/6339

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	Non-denominational day special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	7
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Barbara Quartey
Chair	Barbara Quartey
Headteacher	Barbara Quartey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£49,015 high-need pupils £41,534 middle-need pupils £38,425 low-need pupils
Telephone number	020 8840 9099
Website	www.insightsesc.co.uk
Email address	BarbaraQuartey@InsightsEsc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 May 2012

Information about this school

- Insights is a special day school which provides education for pupils aged 7 to 18 years.
- All pupils have statements of special educational needs. These generally relate to behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, although a significant minority of pupils have autism or a specific learning difficulty.
- The school opened in 2008 and was last inspected in May 2012 under s162a of the Education Act. The school's proprietor, Insights ESC Limited, operates just this one school.
- Currently there are 51 pupils on roll, including seven in the sixth form. There are four female and 47 male pupils. The school is registered to have a maximum number of 100 pupils.
- Just over 60% of pupils are White British and others represent small numbers from Black Caribbean, Black African, and mixed Black and Pakistani heritages. Around half of all pupils are classed as being from a disadvantaged background.
- Pupils are placed by 12 different local authorities who pay their fees.
- The school's accommodation is based on two sites. Primary school pupils are housed in the main building, together with older pupils using it for art sessions. The second site has the whole of the upper floor of a two-storey building, the ground floor of which is used by a community group. This site is a ten-minute walk away, and is used for lessons for older pupils and for providing workshops for post-16 pupils. The accommodation is spacious for the number of pupils, and is in a very good decorative order.
- The school's aims are: 'for pupils to become effective communicators, to develop the necessary social

skills to lead fulfilling, independent lives and to build confident and positive attitudes towards their learning'. Its ethos is 'to promote the values of acceptance, tolerance and mutual respect'.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector visited all classrooms to observe teaching and learning (observed six lessons and two additional lessons during a learning walk, mostly accompanied by the Principal). The inspector looked at pupils' work, teachers' planning and information about pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior and middle leaders, other staff, one local authority representative and pupils.
- School policies and other documentation were examined, including safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, assessment records and the curriculum. The inspector attended an assembly and observed behaviour when pupils arrived in the morning, at break and during lunchtimes.
- Records of pupils' attendance were reviewed.
- A conversation took place with a local authority designated officer concerning a safety issue. All the documentation concerning this issue was also examined.
- Telephone conversations were held with the Chairman of the Insight Advisory Board and three local authority representatives who wished to talk to the inspector personally.
- The views expressed in 22 staff questionnaires were considered.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire. The inspector spoke to three parents on the telephone who wished to communicate directly, and also read the one comment made on the Ofsted website.

Inspection team

Kanwaljit Singh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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