

Aylands School

Keswick Drive, Enfield EN3 6NY

Inspection dates

8–9 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate. Senior leaders have an inaccurate view of the school's effectiveness. They have failed to make the necessary improvements in order to maintain standards.
- The quality of governance is weak. Governors do not hold leaders to account strongly enough or check that their evaluations are accurate. Some staff have raised concerns about the school's leadership with the governing body and the staff team is now divided. Governors have been slow to implement the recommendations from an independent review into the allegations.
- Safeguarding is ineffective. Leaders and governors have not ensured that all procedures for keeping pupils safe are implemented effectively. Arrangements for monitoring who enters and leaves the school are unsafe and haphazard. Leaders are unclear about their responsibilities regarding the single central record and pre-employment checks. They have not provided appropriate training in some restraint holds used on pupils.
- The quality of teaching across the school is too variable. Teachers do not establish accurate starting points in order to plan learning activities at the correct level. Some pupils are not challenged to do their best because teachers' expectations are too low.
- Not all pupils make good progress. The impact of the additional support provided to disadvantaged pupils is not effectively monitored to ensure that it is making a difference. Work seen in pupils' books suggests that progress in some subjects and classes is better than in others. High levels of staff absence have caused disruption to pupils' learning and the standards some pupils achieve are not as high as they should be.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are inadequate. Some pupils spend too much time out of lessons or are frequently excluded. The welfare and personal development of pupils are compromised by staff smoking on site and the lack of monitoring of the front entrance and main gate.

The school has the following strengths

- Staff apply the behaviour policy, including systems for rewards and sanctions, in a consistent manner.
- Arrangements for supporting more vulnerable pupils and those who are looked after are well managed by designated staff.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and capacity of leadership and governance by:
 - strengthening how governors hold senior leaders to account for fulfilling all of their duties and responsibilities
 - creating a culture of respect, stability and tolerance, and improving relationships by ensuring that agreed policies are implemented in a fair, transparent and consistent manner for all staff
 - taking account of all the available evidence when evaluating the effectiveness of the school and ensuring that sufficient information is provided to governors to allow them to test the accuracy of leaders' evaluations in a robust manner
 - ensuring that accurate starting points are established when pupils join the school to allow the progress of all individuals, groups and cohorts to be accurately measured and evaluated.
- Leaders and governors should ensure that pupils are safeguarded effectively by:
 - agreeing safe procedures for monitoring how pupils and visitors enter and leave the school and ensuring that these procedures are implemented effectively and consistently by all staff
 - making sure that all adults understand that the school is a non-smoking area
 - adding all the required pre-employment checks on staff to the single central record so that leaders can identify when checks are missing or overdue
 - providing appropriate training in restraint holds to staff and ensuring that records of restraint are sufficiently detailed to allow the use and frequency of different types of restraint to be evaluated.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to allow pupils to make at least good progress from their different starting points by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use accurate assessment information to plan learning activities that take account of individual starting points and promote positive attitudes towards learning
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to improve their written and verbal communication skills
 - improving and sustaining the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school by ensuring that all staff, including those employed on a temporary contract, aspire to the same high standards
 - ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make good or better progress through effective

use of the pupil premium funding.

- Improve the quality of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - preventing unauthorised adults from gaining entry to the school
 - ensuring that pupils are unable to leave the school without permission
 - insisting that adults do not smoke on school premises
 - reducing the amount of learning time lost when pupils leave lessons because of poor behaviour
 - reducing the frequency and use of temporary and permanent exclusions by identifying when pupils need additional support to be successful.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- The effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate because leaders and governors have not recognised the decline in the school's effectiveness. Consequently, they have been overly generous in their evaluations. Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to drive improvement because, even when alerted to serious concerns, they considered the school to still be outstanding. The senior leadership team does not have the support of all staff and has taken too long to address the concerns that have been raised. This has reduced its capacity to lead the school effectively.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching but do not consider whether teaching strategies are leading to good learning outcomes. They ensure that appropriate spiritual, moral, social and cultural values are reinforced whenever possible. However, their efforts to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain are being undermined by high levels of staff absence, a limited curriculum offer and the ongoing staffing disputes and allegations. Staff absences are high and have had a negative impact on the attitudes and behaviour of some pupils.
- There are appropriate systems for managing staff performance. However, the instability in staffing has had a negative impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school. Leaders are still struggling to address this.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectations regarding pupils' outcomes. A new system for tracking attainment in all subjects was introduced this year. This provides leaders with helpful information but takes no account of how much progress pupils make from their starting points when they join the school. No information about pupils' prior attainment or potential is gathered. Leaders are therefore unable to judge whether pupils' progress is good enough or identify whether pupils are falling further behind.
- Leaders are not monitoring how well different groups of pupils are doing over time, including disadvantaged pupils, children who are looked after or those from ethnic minority groups. There is no clear strategy for spending additional funds such as the pupil premium funding. This means that leaders and governors do not know whether additional interventions are making a difference or whether there are any issues relating to the equality of provision that they need to address.
- Systems for recording incidents when pupils are restrained by adults lack sufficient detail. This prevents leaders from evaluating whether the restraint has been applied appropriately. Leaders have not provided the correct training to allow staff to safely carry out restraints that place pupils on the floor.
- Leaders have not ensured that an appropriate breadth and balance of subjects, courses and enrichment activities are offered to pupils in key stage 4. For example, there are few opportunities for pupils to study work-related courses that will help them to find employment or study vocational courses at a higher level when they leave.

- School leaders have commissioned an independent school improvement partner who is not accountable to the local authority. Local authority officers were therefore unaware of any concerns until recently. They have offered appropriate support to allow an independent review of the staff allegations to be completed. The local authority has also identified that the school is causing concern due to its financial status, and a support plan is in place. Local authority officers are also providing support for staff personnel matters and the monitoring of pupils' attendance.
- Leaders should not seek to employ newly qualified teachers until standards at the school have improved.

Governance of the school

- Governors have been too accepting of what they have been told by senior leaders and have therefore formed an overly optimistic view of the school's effectiveness. Governors have not challenged leaders to make improvements quickly enough. They do not check that any actions taken by leaders are making a difference and raising standards.
- Governors have agreed to senior leaders' requests for school closures and granted their requests for holidays and absences in term time, which have caused allegations of unfairness to be made by some staff. For example, the governing body agreed to the school closing three days earlier than planned at the end of the autumn term. This was because the headteacher considered it to have been a long, hard term and the safest course of action. Governors are unclear how the lost time will be made up to ensure that pupils have been educated for the required number of days this year.
- The governing body has not ensured that the independent review into the staff allegations has been completed and any recommendations acted upon, quickly enough. The review findings were shared with governors at the end of January but had still to be shared with leaders and staff at the time of this inspection. This has allowed staff discontent to fester.
- The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding, the physical education and sport funding and the Year 7 catch-up funding are being spent, but do not know whether the additional funds are making a difference to the outcomes of eligible pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
 - On arrival, inspectors were able to walk into the school and talk to pupils without being challenged or their identity checked. Arrangements for monitoring who enters and leaves the school are weak and do not ensure that pupils are kept safe. Leaders have not taken effective action to address this, despite concerns raised by staff.
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- Leaders and governors are unable to demonstrate an understanding of all their

responsibilities regarding safeguarding practices. The single central record of staff pre-employment checks has not been updated to include all of the required information. Leaders are therefore unable to identify when checks have still to be completed. No checks are made on staff who may have worked abroad and leaders were unable to explain how they should do this.

- Leaders had not enforced a no-smoking ban, and provided staff with a covered area in which to smoke outside the staff room. This could be observed by pupils. This was addressed during the inspection.
- Other safeguarding arrangements are appropriately managed. Safeguarding and child protection policies reflect the latest statutory guidance and staff have received training in keeping children safe. Leaders have ensured that pupils who are at risk or more vulnerable get the support that they need. They keep careful records and work closely with other professionals to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Not enough teaching is consistently good and some pupils are not making good or sustained progress. In some subjects, work in books was found to be missing or discontinued for long periods of time. This was often due to staff absence and the resulting changes in teacher.
- Teachers benefit from good resources and specialist learning spaces. However, some pupils become disengaged from their learning because activities do not build on their interests or enthusiasms. Some teachers do not plan learning activities to identify gaps in pupils' understanding or provoke their interest. Pupils are sometimes given low-level tasks to complete and are not challenged to excel. They become distracted and learning is interrupted when they need to leave the lesson to calm down.
- Teachers are not provided with helpful assessment information that includes starting points, prior attainment information or any indication of what pupils are capable of achieving. Pupils' progress is sometimes less than good because teachers' expectations are too low.
- Teaching assistants spend too much time addressing poor behaviour. They escort pupils when they leave the classroom to keep them safe. This limits how much support other pupils get with their learning and further slows the progress they make.
- Teachers support and promote good reading skills and pupils are provided with opportunities to make good progress in their reading and use of challenging texts. However, opportunities to improve their written and speaking skills are less common. Few examples of extended writing were seen in books or in displays of work around the school. Literacy and good communication are not consistently reinforced in all lessons to allow pupils to improve these skills.
- When teachers have not been frequently absent and have developed positive relationships with pupils, the quality of teaching and learning is more consistent and pupils make better progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- The welfare of pupils is threatened by adults being able to enter the school and talk to pupils without staff being aware. Pupils are able to leave the school site without permission because the school site is left unsecured.
- Not all staff model the behaviours they would wish pupils to emulate. For example, staff are permitted to smoke on site in a designated area which pupils could observe. This conflicts with what pupils are taught about smoking endangering their health and well-being.
- Pupils are provided with helpful information about potential risks as part of their personal, social and health education and effective pastoral support. They express few concerns about bullying. School records demonstrate that bullying incidents, including racist, homophobic and online bullying, are followed up and dealt with appropriately whenever they occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils build positive relationships with staff they trust because they appreciate the care they receive from them. However, some pupils struggle to cope when unexpected changes in staffing occur.
- The number of exclusions remains high and shows little sign of improvement. Rising numbers of pupils have been permanently excluded since the last inspection.
- The school's behaviour policy is fully understood by staff and pupils and applied consistently in most cases. Everyone understands the consequences of poor behaviour and pupils appreciate the rewards system that allows them to earn extra privileges.
- Break- and lunchtimes are used well to reinforce good social skills. Pupils sit down to eat healthy food with staff and participate in a range of social and sporting activities. Consequently, pupils generally behave well and benefit from these sessions.
- The number of incidents when staff have to physically intervene or restrain pupils has reduced this year compared with last year.
- The majority of pupils attend regularly. Any persistent absence is effectively monitored and addressed by leaders and the local authority educational welfare service.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Many pupils arrive at the school with gaps in their learning. There is little available information to show how well these gaps have been closed by the time that they leave. This is because accurate starting points and targets that take account of age-related expectations are not established when pupils join the school.
- Work in books suggests that gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy skills remain. Some

pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects to help them to catch up.

- Leaders do not check that disadvantaged pupils, those from minority groups or those who are most able, are performing better than or less well than their peers. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make variable progress across all subjects and key stages.
- Some pupils do not attain highly enough at the end of key stages 2 and 4 because teaching and learning have not been of a consistent standard over time. A few pupils in Year 11 last year failed to complete their courses and left without taking their examinations. These pupils were not well prepared for the next stages of their education, training or employment.
- Inspectors could identify few differences in the performance of different groups, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able. Pupils who attend regularly and benefit from consistently good teaching make better progress and do well.
- Some pupils make better progress in meeting their personal development targets, as demonstrated in individual case files. However, leaders do not measure the impact of their work in supporting pupils' social and emotional aspects of learning or know how much progress pupils make towards agreed targets.

School details

Unique reference number	102068
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10026474

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Barbara Laverack
Headteacher	Sashi Sivaloganathan
Telephone number	01992 761229
Website	www.aylands.demon.co.uk
Email address	Office@aylands.enfield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7–8 May 2015

Information about this school

- Aylands School is a special school for boys and girls with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan when they join the school.
- Many pupils join the school with low prior attainment and gaps in their learning. However, some year groups include pupils with middle- or high previous attainment.
- The proportion of pupils who are entitled to additional funding, such as the pupil premium or the Year 7 catch-up funding, is high compared with other schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic heritages is larger than in most other schools. One third of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its

website.

Information about this inspection

- This unannounced inspection was carried out following a number of complaints made to Ofsted which raised serious concerns. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether safeguarding was effective and whether the quality of leadership and management at the school were a cause for concern.
- During the inspection, inspectors visited the teaching and learning activities taking place and looked at work in pupils' books. Nearly all observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders and covered a range of subjects, groupings, key stages and teachers.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, the chief education officer for the local authority and the chair of the governing body, accompanied by one other governor.
- Inspectors held discussions with two groups of teaching and non-teaching staff. The views of a further eight staff, expressed in emails to the lead inspector during the inspection, were also considered.
- Inspectors took account of the school's parent surveys as there were no responses to the online Parent View questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection and took account of the school's pupil surveys.
- Documentation detailing the school's work was evaluated by inspectors. This included the school's most recent self-evaluation and improvement plan, pupil progress tracking information, behaviour and attendance records, case studies of individual pupils, and governing body meeting minutes. Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of safeguarding records and procedures.
- Governors shared their response to the recommendations made in the independent review into the allegations made by staff. At the time of the inspection, this had not been shared with school staff.

Inspection team

Lesley Cox, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Angela Corbett

Ofsted Inspector

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