

Hackney New School

317–319 Kingsland Road, Hackney, London E8 4DL

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and governors have failed to arrest the school's decline. None of the issues raised by Ofsted during the short inspection in June 2018 have been tackled effectively.
- The school does not have an effective safeguarding culture. Record-keeping is weak, and concerns are not dealt with in a timely way. Staff have insufficient understanding of how to manage difficult behaviour.
- Frequent changes in leadership and teaching have unsettled staff and pupils. The school closed for three days at the end of June 2019 because of concerns about behaviour and safety. Staff were unable to control the situation and external intervention was needed.
- Pupils achieve inadequate outcomes. Too many lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. Incomplete and shoddy work is not challenged. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language are not being given the support or challenge they require. Most-able pupils are not being stretched.
- Attendance is too low.
- The curriculum does not provide pupils with the breadth and depth needed for their future lives. The curriculum review promised in June 2018 has not taken place. Pupils are not given opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in computing or design technology. Provision in music, one of the school's stated key curriculum areas, has declined. The school does not do enough to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils' personal development is inadequate. Not enough opportunities are given for personal, social, health and economic education. Careers guidance is inadequate. Pupils and parents have well-founded concerns about bullying. The school environment does not promote pupils' well-being.
- Governors have failed to provide effective challenge and support to school leaders. They have taken too long to bring in help when and where it is needed.
- The school is failing to fulfil its core vision of providing pupils with academic excellence, self-belief, intellectual curiosity, and responsibility towards others.

The school has the following strengths

- Emergency action and intervention by external consultants has ensured that the school is a physically safe place for pupils and for 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?

- As a matter of urgency, review the long-term arrangements for the school's governance. This should ensure that, in the interim, appropriate support remains in place to provide acceptable safety and behaviour management for staff and pupils.
- Improve leadership and management to ensure that:
 - high expectations for pupils' behaviour are applied consistently by all staff, and staff understand how to respond appropriately to incidents of verbal and physical misconduct
 - safeguarding concerns are recorded efficiently and dealt with in a timely way
 - middle leaders are held closely to account for the quality of teaching, the curriculum and assessment in their departments
 - the curriculum is reviewed to ensure that it provides pupils with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need in all areas of learning for their future lives
 - the learning environment is given a thorough overhaul, including removing all graffiti, ensuring that classrooms are orderly and in good condition, and providing stimulating displays that promote exemplary standards.
- Improve teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes by ensuring that:
 - the expectation is that time is not wasted, and that all work in lessons is completed and presented to the highest standard
 - all teachers follow the school's policy for assessing pupils' work, so that pupils know how they can improve and make good progress
 - provision for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is strong.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - securing the confidence of pupils and parents by dealing with all instances of bullying swiftly and effectively
 - providing good programmes of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and careers guidance that provide pupils with the skills and knowledge they need for their future lives
 - improving attendance so that it is at least in line with national figures
 - ensuring that pupils' behaviour is consistently good, in and out of the classroom.
- 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 management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- In June 2018, inspectors signalled that the school's effectiveness was declining. They identified key priorities for leaders and governors. Over the past year, effective steps have not been taken to improve any of these areas.
- Leadership over time has been subject to too many changes. Alongside this has been a rapid turnover of teaching staff, particularly in the past year. These changes have been unsettling for pupils, carers and parents. Leaders and governors have allowed too many aspects of the school's work to fail.
- Subject leaders are not managed effectively. They are well intentioned but have not been held to account for the consistent delivery of the curriculum. They have been given too much freedom in matters such as assessment. Systems for tracking information about pupils' achievements are not consistent. Different systems are used in different departments of the school. Leaders do not challenge or check the information provided by heads of department. They do not know if this information is accurate.
- Lack of action in tackling poor teaching, learning and assessment has led to pupils' poor progress. Leaders have not done enough to provide effective classroom support for pupils with SEND, those who speak English as an additional language or those in receipt of the pupil premium. While the new special educational needs coordinator has clear understanding of the improvements required, not enough additional classroom support is provided for these pupils. Systems for diagnosing needs are not well developed.
- Insufficient opportunities have been provided for staff development. Leaders and governors' evaluation of how additional funding is spent is not thorough enough. In some areas, it is out of date.
- The curriculum does not provide adequately for pupils' needs and interests. Computing and design technology are not taught in key stage 3. Pupils' use of information technology across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Older pupils bemoan the limited choice of curriculum options they are offered in key stage 4. They are right. Music, described as a key curriculum focus by the school's founders, has declined in the quality and quantity of provision. Pupils report that public performance opportunities have ceased.
- Leaders and governors have failed to tackle poor behaviour. Exclusion has not been used effectively to curb inappropriate conduct. The school building does not promote good learning. Many classrooms and corridors are empty or unkempt. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is poor.
- External consultants from the EKO Trust have accurately identified weaknesses in the school's work, including in leadership. They identified that systems for managing poor behaviour, including the overuse of exclusion, needed to change. A new behaviour management regime was introduced. Following serious concerns raised by staff and parents about behaviour, leaders and governors closed the school for three days to enable staff training to take place. This, and additional support provided very recently

by the Community Schools Trust, has helped to stabilise matters.

- In view of the prevailing poor behaviour and ineffective safeguarding culture at the school, it is strongly recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- Governors have been too slow in challenging and supporting school leaders. Their self-evaluation is overgenerous. They were too late in recognising the severity of the school's rapid decline, or the poor quality of education offered to pupils.
- This school lacks leadership and does not have the capacity to improve under the current board. Governors do not have the support of parents or staff. Nearly all the parents who responded to Ofsted's survey said that they would not recommend the school.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.
- Records of safeguarding incidents and concerns are not organised well enough and, when needed, action is not taken in a timely way.
- Staff training in safeguarding matters is provided regularly. However, staff do not have the understanding to deal effectively with inappropriate physical behaviour from pupils when it occurs.
- Pupils are not confident that there are members of staff to whom they could talk, should they have a safeguarding worry.
- Some staff use inappropriate verbal aggression and confrontation when dealing with pupils' poor behaviour. This makes a bad situation even worse.
- Pupils and staff told inspectors that they have confidence in the EKO and Community Schools trusts' staff to deal with any such incidents, should these arise. This, and inspectors' observations of the emergency arrangement in practice, gives an assurance about on-site security from now until the end of term. It is not, however, a long-term solution to the prevailing ineffective safeguarding culture at the school.
- Local authority officers now visit the school daily to monitor and ensure that the emergency safeguarding arrangements continue to be effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Pupils have not received adequate teaching because of the rapid turnover of teachers. Schemes of work are not followed consistently, meaning that there is not enough continuity in learning.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding are not assessed properly. Teachers' questioning during lessons is not effective because it is too often interrupted by calling out and poor behaviour. Systems for recording pupils' progress are too inconsistent across the

school.

- Too many books contain incomplete work because time is wasted in lessons. Typically, presentation is scrappy and shows little pride in learning. Pupils do not know how to improve their work. Pupils told an inspector they have had to ask their teachers to look at their work because 'they never take the books in'. None of this reflects the school's policy that pupils should receive regular, timely, detailed and useful feedback.
- Classroom support for pupils with SEND and for those who speak English as an additional language is weak. Inspectors saw too many examples where these pupils were set work that was not appropriate for them. What is sometimes interpreted as their difficult and stubborn behaviour is, rather, frustration and resignation.
- Literacy and numeracy are not developed well across the curriculum. Reading is not well promoted. The key stage 3 daily reading and core skills sessions have been dropped in favour of a longer lunch break.
- Teaching and support staff who asked to speak to inspectors expressed frustration and concern about the way the school has been led and managed, particularly over the past year.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is inadequate.
- Across the school, pupils told inspectors that they feel bullied and intimidated by others. These concerns are confirmed by parents. Examples include racist bullying and name-calling. The school's behaviour logs record many incidents of racist, homophobic, sexist or other discriminatory behaviour. This is completely unacceptable.
- Around the school building, inspectors saw examples of extremist, sexualised and homophobic graffiti. This included some that was pointed out to leaders during the June 2018 inspection and which has still not been removed.
- Insufficient provision is made for teaching pupils about PSHE matters. Careers guidance is limited. The decision earlier this year to delete pastoral management roles has further weakened provision for pupils' welfare.
- In conversation, inspectors found many pupils to show good manners and the ability to take part in intelligent conversation with good humour. These pupils show remarkable resilience and patience in the face of the poor-quality education they receive. They are not getting a fair deal.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. Until recently, the inappropriate and intimidating physical behaviour of a significant minority caused some pupils and staff to feel unsafe. The emergency intervention has eased these fears, temporarily. However, too many pupils lack the self-discipline to moderate their own behaviour. These pupils show too little respect for their peers or their teachers.

- Attendance remains low. Some improvements have been made since the EKO Trust started to support the school. Exclusions have decreased dramatically. The practice of pupils being excluded in the middle of the school day and sent home – itself a potential safeguarding issue – has been stopped. However, internal seclusion and after-school detention is still used too readily.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Published results for Year 11 pupils in 2018 showed a positive picture, with a much higher than average number taking subjects that contribute to the English Baccalaureate.
- Progress in pupils' work seen during this inspection was nowhere near as positive. Pupils' learning is disrupted because too much work is unfinished. Too-frequent changes in teaching staff have led to weaker outcomes. Most-able pupils are not provided with the stimulation or challenge they need to develop academically and intellectually.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding across the curriculum are inadequate because teachers do not build on pupils' prior learning. As a result, pupils are unable to sufficiently explain what they have learned. Pupils are often unaware of key vocabulary used in subjects and this leads to them having misconceptions about topics being taught.
- Pupils' development of their writing is severely limited because of insufficient opportunities to write extended pieces across different subjects. As a result, pupils' progress in writing cohesive pieces with accurate grammar and punctuation is weak.
- Pupils do not develop the basic skills they need to succeed in later life. Errors and misconceptions in spelling, punctuation and grammar are repeated because they are rarely corrected.
- Over two thirds of parents who replied to Ofsted's survey did not believe that their children are making good progress. An even greater number said they did not receive valuable information about their child's progress.
- Leaders cannot be certain about how well current pupils are doing, or where additional support is needed, because of weaknesses in the school's systems for tracking progress.

School details

Unique reference number	139595
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10110376

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	452
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Andreas Wesemann
Headteacher	Vacant
Telephone number	020 7617 7181
Website	http://www.hackneynewschool.org/
Email address	info@hackneynewschool.org
Date of previous inspection	9–10 June 2015

Information about this school

- Hackney New School is a free school, established in 2013. It is part of the Hackney New Schools Trust. The other school in the trust is Hackney New Primary School. The board of trustees acts as the governing body for both schools.
- Following two years in temporary accommodation, the school moved to its current buildings in September 2015.
- The 2018 Year 11 cohort were the first Hackney New School pupils to sit public examinations.
- The school has experienced four changes of headteacher since the last full inspection in 2015. In June 2018, a section 8 Ofsted inspection identified that the school was declining. In March 2019, the board invited the EKO trust in Newham to support the school. Subsequently, the Department for Education agreed that the EKO trust would take over responsibility for the school from 1 November 2019.
- The permanent headteacher left the school suddenly on 20 June 2019. At that point,

EKO leaders recognised that, as a primary trust, it did not have the resources available to provide the intervention needed. Consequently, leaders from the Community Schools Trust, also from Newham, agreed to work in partnership with EKO. In the absence of a permanent headteacher, Hackney New School is currently managed by a team of consultants from the EKO and Community Schools trusts.

- The school does not use any alternative provision. However, on the second day of the inspection, a small group of pupils were taken off-site in preparation for transfer to an alternative provider the following week.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out without notice. It followed complaints made to Ofsted, which raised serious concerns about behaviour, safety, and leadership and management.
- Inspectors observed pupils' work and behaviour in lessons and around the school. They held discussions with pupils, staff, leaders, governors, and with consultant staff from the supporting trusts.
- Inspectors took account of 35 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, together with 28 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire. No responses were received to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

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