



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

Centre Academy East Anglia

May 2021

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School's Details

School	Centre Academy East Anglia			
DfE number	935/6058			
Address	Centre Academy East Anglia Church Rd, Brettenham Ipswich IP7 7QR			
Telephone number	01449 736404			
Email address	admin@centreacademy.net			
Headteacher	Mrs Kim Salthouse			
Proprietor	Mr Michael Murphy and Mrs Margaret Murphy			
Age range	4 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	62			
	Day pupils	57	Boarders	5
	EYFS	0	Juniors	7
	Seniors	42	Sixth Form	13
Inspection dates	12 to 14 May 2021			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 Centre Academy East Anglia is a co-educational day and boarding school for pupils with special educational needs (SEND) aged between 4 and 19 years. Currently there are no pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school's boarding provision is inspected separately by Ofsted.
- 1.2 Established in 2010, the school is owned by the proprietors, supported by an advisory board of governors consisting of the principal, who is also the chief executive officer, the headteacher and the head of Centre Academy, London.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection, the school has refurbished the boarding houses and the dining room. New gates, driveway and pathways have been put in place.
- 1.4 During the period March to August 2020, the school was open for some children of key workers on the 8 June and for further pupils from 15 June 2020. No boarders remained on site.
- 1.5 During this period of closure, the school provided remote learning materials for pupils at home.
- 1.6 In the interests of infection control during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, inspection evidence was gathered partly remotely and partly on-site to reduce contact within the school setting.
- 1.7 In line with the direction given by the Department for Education (DfE) at the time, no evaluation has been made of the nature or effectiveness of any provision made during the period March to August 2020, including its impact on pupils' learning, achievement or personal development. Any concerns relating to pupils' welfare during this period which directly relate to measures implemented by the school have been considered.
- 1.8 During the lockdown period of January to March 2021, pupils who did not attend on site received remote learning provision at home.
- 1.9 In 2020 and 2021 public examinations were not held. For pupils who would have been expected to take these examinations, centre-assessed grades were awarded.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.10 The school seeks to provide excellence in education for pupils with special educational needs, with an emphasis on supporting and advising parents in understanding their child's specific needs. It aims to equip pupils with key skills in literacy and numeracy within a broad and balanced curriculum that is adapted to meet individual learning needs and to enable them to develop confidence, self-esteem and social skills underpinned by Christian values.

About the pupils

- 1.11 The majority of pupils live within a ten-mile radius of the school. They come from a diverse range of families. Data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is spread widely from below to above the national average. All of the pupils admitted to the school have special educational needs including dyslexia, developmental coordination disorder, attention deficit disorder, Asperger's syndrome, autism and related specific learning difficulties. Fifty-seven pupils have education and health care (EHC) plans. One pupil has English as an additional language (EAL) and receives additional support in this regard. More able pupils are identified using school assessments and are provided with extension work within lessons. Talented pupils in sport, creative arts and other areas receive additional coaching.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

COVID-19: Inspection judgements do not cover the period March to August 2020 inclusive.

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the junior school, the school's own framework for assessment enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 Pupils take GCSE examinations and study for the American Diploma in their final year at the school. The small numbers involved prevent reliable comparison with national averages, but inspection evidence confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the junior school and relationships and sex education in the senior school, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Good behaviour is promoted, bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained as required and a disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 However, staff are unclear with regard to current statutory safeguarding guidance. The school does not monitor the impact of their training effectively in order to ensure that staff understand and implement consistently the regulatory requirements. The whistleblowing policy is not clear with regard to actions that should be taken if staff have any concerns. Information from individual safeguarding, behaviour, bullying and pastoral records is kept separately and is insufficiently collated. This means that welfare considerations for individual pupils may be overlooked and not acted upon, and the school's ability to identify patterns of concerns is restricted. There is access to the boarding accommodation by other pupils, and staff who are not members of the boarding team. Pupils can also access freely areas where non-boarding staff are accommodated. This risk was not identified or managed by the school as part of a strategic approach to risk assessment.
- 2.11 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal**

punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but that those in paragraphs 7 and 16 are not met.

Action point 1

- the school must put in place and monitor the effectiveness of a programme of training which enables proprietors, leaders and staff to understand and implement consistently the requirements of current statutory safeguarding guidance, including whistleblowing [paragraph 7(a) and 7(b); EYFS 3.6.]

Action point 2

- the school must ensure that adults who are not members of the boarding team and day pupils are unable to access the boarding accommodation, and that pupils are not able to access areas where non-boarding staff are accommodated [paragraph 7(a) and 7(b).]

Action point 3

- the school must collate information from individual safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, educational and pastoral care records effectively, so that welfare considerations for individual pupils are identified consistently and acted upon, and the school is able to identify patterns of concern [paragraph 7(a) and 7(b); EYFS 3.4 and 3.7.]

Action point 4

- the school must ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place and implemented across all areas of the school [paragraph 16; EYFS 3.64.]

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.12 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and a register is kept as required.
- 2.13 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school [paragraphs 17–21] are met.

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.14 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.16 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for

parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.17 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.18 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.19 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.20 Those responsible for the leadership of the school also have a governance responsibility. There is a lack of differentiation between their role as governors and their operational roles as leaders of the school. Safeguarding and risk assessment training lacks rigour so that governance, leadership and the staff are unclear what the statutory requirements are and how to implement them effectively. There is insufficient proprietorial monitoring and challenge to the school leadership. As a result, the standards are not met, and the well-being of the pupils is not promoted consistently.

2.21 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 5

- **the proprietors must clarify the school's governance structure and procedures, ensuring that the proprietors and those responsible for governance have the knowledge and skills required to fulfil their roles [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c).]**

Action point 6

- **the school must ensure effective systems for monitoring the implementation of the school's policies and procedures, ensuring that appropriate safeguarding training is implemented, and action taken to address any weaknesses identified without delay [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c).]**

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the principal, who has governance responsibility as the chief executive officer, and the head of the sister school in London, who has governance responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors visited the learning support and educational resource areas. The responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Patricia Preedy

Reporting inspector

Mr Rob Thornton

Compliance team inspector (Headmaster, ISA school)