



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Material Change Inspection Report

Centre Academy East Anglia

June 2023

School's details

School	Centre Academy East Anglia			
DfE number	935/6058			
Address	Centre Academy East Anglia Church Road Brettenham Ipswich Suffolk IP7 7QR			
Telephone number	0144 973 6404			
Email address	admin-ea@centreacademy.co.uk			
Principal	Mrs Lisa Gilbert			
Proprietor and Chair of Governors	Mr Rohan Murphy			
Age Range	7 to 19			
Number of pupils on roll	68			
	Juniors	11	Seniors	47
	Post-16 Education	10		
Date of inspection	7 June 2023			

1. Introduction

Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Centre Academy East Anglia is an independent, co-educational day special school. Established in 2010 near Ipswich in Suffolk, the school is owned by the proprietor and supported by an advisory board of governors, which includes the principal. All pupils require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom 63 have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. No pupil speaks English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection was a progress monitoring inspection in March 2022.

Purpose of the inspection

- 1.2 This was an announced material change inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to assess the school's proposal to increase capacity from 65 to 75 pupils. The school has advised that it has repurposed former boarding accommodation to become classrooms. The school has ceased to make provision for boarding or for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs).

Regulations which were the focus of the inspection	Team judgements
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 12 (fire safety)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision)	Met
Part 3, paragraph 16 (risk assessment)	Met
Part 4, paragraphs 18–21 (suitability of staff, supply staff and the proprietor)	Met
Part 5, paragraphs 23–29 (premises and accommodation)	Met
Part 6, paragraph 32 (provision of information)	Met
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	Met

2. Inspection findings

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7]

Safeguarding policy

- 2.1 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.2 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

Safeguarding implementation

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 The safeguarding policy is effectively implemented at all levels in each section of the school and promotes the welfare of pupils effectively, in particular with regard to their particular needs. The policy includes details of Prevent duty guidance and is further supported by suitable policies covering the staff code of conduct, safe recruitment, whistleblowing and e-safety. These are understood and implemented appropriately by staff. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL), oversees the deputy DSLs and ensures that safeguarding matters are reported, recorded, collated and monitored effectively and that appropriate actions are taken. The DSL has an effective relationship with local agencies and makes appropriate referrals. The DSL and other members of the safeguarding team have sufficient capacity to ensure effective safeguarding implementation regarding the proposed increase in the number of pupils. The safeguarding arrangements are reviewed annually by the advisory governors on behalf of the proprietor, who has been suitably trained. The governors have appropriate knowledge, liaise closely with the DSL and maintain effective oversight.
- 2.5 Pupils can express concerns, are listened to and receive appropriate support, including early help, and there is due regard for their mental health. This is confirmed by records of safeguarding. Pupils confirmed they feel safe at school. Staff understand child-on-child abuse, including issues such as sexual harassment and sexual violence, and the particular vulnerability of pupils with SEND. They take appropriate action when incidents occur. Staff training in safeguarding, including for all members of the safeguarding team, is comprehensive including appropriate attention to handling allegations and online safety. The use of technology by pupils is suitably controlled. Where allegations are made the school responds appropriately making prompt referral to external agencies, including the Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency where incidents make this necessary.
- 2.6 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11]

- 2.7 The school meets the standard.
- 2.8 Health and safety requirements are met, effectively overseen and monitored by the proprietor and senior leaders. This is confirmed by records of appropriate checks being undertaken. Suitable training regarding health and safety is in place for staff. Pupils feel that the school is a safe environment.
- 2.9 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – fire safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 12]

- 2.10 The school meets the standard.

- 2.11 The fire risk policy is implemented effectively, including for the repurposed premises related to the proposed material change. Recommended actions from the most recent fire risk assessment have been appropriately prioritised and carried out in a timely manner. The repurposed premises have received a suitable fire risk assessment. Staff receive appropriate fire safety training and demonstrate effective awareness of risks, prevention and procedures in a fire emergency. Regular fire drills are held, and pupils are confident regarding evacuation procedures.
- 2.12 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14]

- 2.13 The school meets the standard.
- 2.14 Suitable guidance and procedures are implemented to ensure pupils are supervised effectively throughout the school day and on out-of-school visits and residential trips.
- 2.15 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils – risk assessment [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 16]

- 2.16 The school meets the standard.
- 2.17 There is an appropriate risk assessment policy. Records indicate that risk assessment is systematic and pays attention to key areas of risk and pupils' welfare, such as supervision, safety in the laboratory and design technology classroom, and on school trips. Staff receive relevant training and completed risk assessments are checked, monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness. Appropriate attention is given to additional risks which might be associated with pupils' SEND.
- 2.18 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors [ISSR Part 4, paragraphs 18–21]

- 2.19 The school meets the standards.
- 2.20 The school makes appropriate checks to ensure the suitability of staff and the proprietor, and a register is kept as required. Recent appointments of staff in relation to the proposed increase in pupil numbers have been conducted with due regard for all required checks in a timely manner.
- 2.21 The school is likely to continue to meet the standards if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Premises and accommodation – toilet, washing and changing facilities, medical facilities, maintenance, acoustics, lighting, water supply and outdoor space [ISSR Part 5, paragraphs 23–29]

- 2.22 The school meets the standards.
- 2.23 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. All premises and accommodation are suitable regarding the proposed increase in pupil numbers and are likely to enable effective teaching in specialist areas, as they do currently. This includes areas such as the science laboratory, design technology and music classrooms, and the dining facility which is used by two separate sittings of pupils.

2.24 The school is likely to continue to meet the standards if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32]

2.25 The school meets the standard.

2.26 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.

2.27 The school is likely to continue to meet the standard if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]

2.28 The school meets the standard.

2.29 The proprietor ensures that senior leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are met consistently, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils. The proprietor and senior leaders have prepared comprehensively regarding the proposed material change and the school is likely to continue to meet the requirements if pupil numbers are increased as proposed.

3. Recommendation with regard to material change inspection

Recommendation

- 3.1 It is recommended that that the material change request be approved. The school's existing provision and arrangements for safeguarding are likely to continue to meet the standards checked if the material change is implemented.

4. Summary of evidence

- 4.1 The inspector held discussions with the principal, senior leaders and other members of staff and met with the proprietor and an advisory governor. He visited different areas of the school and talked with groups of pupils. He scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.

Inspectors

Mr Andrew Farren

Reporting inspector