

Inspection of Connaught School for Girls

Dyers Hall Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4AE

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Alex Silk. This school is part of the Connaught School for Girls single-academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Elizabeth Jackson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are welcomed as individuals in this small school community. They are safe here and appreciate the help that they receive from staff. Pupils are encouraged to look out for others within and beyond the school, for example, through fundraising activities and their annual 'conservation duty'. Pupils eagerly take on various roles of responsibility, such as prefects and peer mentors. They describe their mentoring work as 'having younger sisters that we look after'.

Leaders have a clear vision for the success of the school. They want the very best for pupils and take effective steps to realise their expectations. The curriculum supports pupils to study a wide range of subjects and their achievement across these is generally strong. Pupils are ambitious for their education. In most instances, they behave well in lessons and produce work of high quality.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy these new opportunities and many take part in a club, such as mindfulness, board games and archery. Pupils particularly appreciate the therapeutic and mentoring opportunities available, including the chance to walk Monty the school dog. An increasing range of educational visits enhances the taught curriculum, such as a recent history trip to Ypres.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum for all pupils is based on the ambition of what is expected nationally. In most subjects, the curriculum is logically sequenced to build pupils' knowledge gradually. In English, for example, pupils' literary analysis of different Shakespeare texts becomes increasingly more complex and sophisticated over time.

Teachers have good subject knowledge, and, in most instances, they present information clearly. Teaching makes effective use of activities to recall previous learning. Assessment is used in lessons and at a whole school level to check how well pupils are learning. However, checks on learning within some lessons is not sufficiently precise. In these instances, pupils' errors or misconceptions are not challenged or corrected in a timely way. For example, some pupils have not secured the basic mathematical concepts they need to progress through the curriculum. Teaching is therefore not suitably adapted to focus on the most important ideas that different pupils need to secure.

Pupils read regularly and widely. The school has systems in place to check pupils' reading fluency and comprehension, identifying pupils who require further help. However, some pupils identified as needing help do not receive suitably structured support to become increasingly fluent readers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported by a dedicated team. There is a structured approach to identifying and meeting their needs. The school regularly reviews the learning of pupils with SEND and provides training for staff. However, at times, learning for pupils with SEND is not matched closely enough to their needs.

There are clear and fair expectations of behaviour. Any behaviour incidents are closely followed up by leaders. On occasion, staff do not consistently enforce leaders' high expectations of behaviour. Pupils' high attendance is a strength of the school. The attendance of pupils who are disadvantaged is particularly high.

The school provides pupils with timely careers advice and guidance. It ensures that pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and teaches pupils the importance of respecting the equality and diversity of others. However, some other aspects of the personal, social, health and economic curriculum are not designed or taught in a coherent, sequenced way. Pupils' gaps in their knowledge, for example about life in modern Britain, are not routinely addressed.

Staff enjoy working at the school and are well supported by leaders. Leaders ensure that staff workload is exceptionally well considered. Parents have mixed views about the school. However, leaders are doing the right things to understand, tackle and address these issues. There is strong support from parents, pupils and staff for the new headteacher and his senior team and the work they are doing. Those responsible for governance are highly effective. They have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas for development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, activities are not closely adapted to the needs of pupils, including those with SEND. As a result, some pupils do not get sufficient support and opportunity to deepen their knowledge over time. The school should ensure that lesson activities are closely matched to the needs of pupils.
- At times, the school does not routinely check what pupils understand or whether learning is secure. This means that gaps can emerge in some pupils' knowledge. The school should embed consistent practices to ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding are checked before moving on to new learning.
- Some pupils who struggle with reading do not receive sufficient support to practise and develop their reading skills. As a result, a small number of pupils are held back from becoming accurate and fluent readers. The school should ensure that it implements its plans to deliver an effective reading support programme.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	139293
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10345953
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	599
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elizabeth Jackson
Headteacher	Alex Silk
Website	www.connaught-school.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school refers to the board of trustees as 'the governing body' and to the chair of trustees as 'the chair of governors'.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The current headteacher took up post in January 2024.
- The school is located on two sites: the main site and an annexe. The annexe houses science laboratories and facilities for physical education.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors met with members of the board of trustees, known by the school as governors, and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, art, history and mathematics. They met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils and looked at samples of their work.
- The curriculum in other subjects was considered as part of the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff through both discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Hannah Glossop, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Miz Mann	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Lebrecht	Ofsted Inspector
Luke Stubbles	His Majesty's Inspector

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