

The Anchor SENDfriendly Centre

Address: 303 Hither Green Lane, Lewisham, London, SE13 6TJ

Unique reference number (URN): 151204

Inspection report: 24 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils typically progress well from their starting points, gaining key knowledge and skills securely over time. Leaders ensure that gaps in important learning, such as communicating, reading, writing and mathematics, typically close quickly. As a result, pupils learn to communicate, read, write and use number with increasing accuracy and confidence.

Leaders monitor closely the extent to which pupils achieve focused and measurable individual learning outcomes. Pupils typically achieve these aims well and the school is generally quick to identify next steps in learning and development. This ensures that pupils' knowledge, skills and independence develop securely.

Pupils are suitably prepared for their next steps in learning. Students in the sixth-form provision work towards meaningful qualifications. These are designed to build on their prior knowledge and prepare them for adulthood. Pupils who study a wide range of academic subjects recall key knowledge, such as learning about notable artists, important historical events and literary themes. Pupils go on to suitable destinations.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' work to secure pupils' attendance is highly effective. Many pupils arrive with a history of disrupted or reduced school attendance, yet the vast majority now attend well. Leaders have a precise understanding of the reasons for any pupil absence, including medical needs and other barriers. They work closely with parents and carers and external professionals to reduce these obstacles. Leaders review their approaches and secure additional help where needed. As a result, pupils who previously struggled to attend school are now accessing education regularly.

Leaders have created a typically calm, respectful and supportive environment, where pupils feel safe and are supported to learn. Clear routines, consistent expectations and well-placed support help pupils to settle quickly and understand what is expected of them. Staff apply behaviour policies and approaches consistently and with sensitivity. Extensive training enables staff to use well-judged approaches to help pupils manage any difficult moments. Leaders have designed personalised plans to support all pupils. Staff use these effectively to anticipate behaviour challenges and help pupils to manage these with increasing independence. Specialist behaviour professionals work alongside staff to refine strategies where needed. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and relationships between staff and pupils are warm, trusting and highly supportive. Leaders and staff make sure that the school is a place where unkindness, discrimination or bullying are not tolerated.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a broad and carefully structured curriculum to meet the range of pupils' complex needs. They check what pupils know and can do to ensure that personalised learning aims are well matched to pupils' prior knowledge. Staff check pupils' understanding routinely. Leaders have systems in place to evaluate how well the curriculum

is being taught and learned. These are systematically used to identify strengths and make improvements to teaching in most curriculum areas. However, the school's evaluation of some subject areas is less robust and this limits the extent to which leaders can ensure that pupils' knowledge develops well in those subjects.

The school prioritises developing pupils' communication, including, for example through symbols, speech and vocabulary development. Staff have secure expertise in how to teach pupils to read, including using phonics. They use consistent, effective approaches to support pupils' developing reading knowledge. Pupils enjoy engaging with a wide range of suitable books. Mathematics and writing are supported through a clearly sequenced curriculum. Staff adapt teaching sensitively, drawing on pupils' individualised targets and their detailed knowledge of pupils' needs to make appropriate adjustments.

Teachers and support staff demonstrate secure subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum aims. Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and provide focused training, including specialist input, to strengthen staff expertise.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school is a highly inclusive place, where staff identify pupils' individual needs swiftly and accurately. Leaders gather detailed information about pupils' needs and prior experiences before they arrive at the school. They use this information to carefully plan provision that reflects pupils' individual starting points, experiences and aspirations.

Leaders use pupils' education, health and care plans and the information they gather to set clear, ambitious targets that support them to achieve well. Staff receive regular training on how to adapt teaching and the environment sensitively to meet pupils' needs. For example, pupils access personalised sensory spaces, resources, workstations or visual supports that help to reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing. These adaptations enable pupils to manage their sensory needs, participate in learning and make sustained progress through the school's curriculum.

Typically, leaders monitor pupils' progress rigorously. They use a wide range of evidence, including pupils' and parents' views, to evaluate the impact of their support. Leaders work closely with external professionals to keep pupils' progress and needs under review so that they can adjust the school's approaches, where needed, such as by recently strengthening the way in which staff support pupils' communication. This ensures that support remains well matched to pupils' needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and committed to providing a high-quality education for those who have had difficult educational experiences previously. There is a clear shared vision among leaders and staff to ensure that pupils with highly complex special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the education and care that they need to succeed.

The proprietor provides structured oversight and ensures that there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities in place. The proprietor has secure knowledge of the independent school standards and ensures that leaders have the capacity and resources to meet them

consistently. Working together with the proprietor, leaders have begun to form a governing body to strengthen oversight further, including and especially around curriculum, teaching and achievement.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for development well. Their self-evaluation is insightful, drawing on external review and the views of specialists. Leaders have identified appropriate improvement priorities. These include embedding communication strategies, assessment approaches and further development of the careers programme.

Leaders enable staff development through extensive training and support. Professional learning is evidence informed and draws suitably on advice and guidance by specialists to increase staff expertise in meeting pupils' particular needs. Staff are well supported. Leaders are approachable and attentive to workload and wellbeing.

Leaders work closely with parents and carers, providing them with regular information and seeking their views about how well the provision is meeting their children's needs. They adapt approaches quickly, when strategies are not having the intended impact.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils are supported to develop communication, independence, community participation and healthy living strategies, ensuring they are well prepared for adulthood. The school's careers programme is well designed. Pupils learn about a range of careers, pathways and qualifications. For example, they have visits from employers and further education providers. Pupils receive impartial advice and guidance. However, leaders do not systematically track the support and experiences that pupils have had. As a result, the school cannot be assured that pupils have had all of the guidance needed for them to be as prepared as possible for their next steps in education, employment and training.

Leaders have designed a coherent and ambitious personal development programme that prepares pupils well for participation in school, the community and later life. Staff teach a carefully sequenced programme of personal, social and health education, including relationships and sex education. Pupils revisit and deepen essential knowledge about relationships, personal safety and social behaviours. This develops pupils' understanding of concepts, such as personal space, boundaries and privacy. Leaders help pupils to develop social skills through structured routines, shared activities and regular community visits. These include, for instance, visiting the library, shopping for ingredients or ordering a drink in a local café. Staff use pupils' personalised plans to ensure that pupils receive additional support to help them understand key concepts well.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively. Assemblies and celebration days and weeks help pupils to reflect on their beliefs and those of others. Experiences such as drumming workshops and visits to art galleries and museums are used to broaden pupils' cultural awareness. Fundamental British values are embedded throughout the curriculum. Pupils learn about how to demonstrate respect and tolerance for different types of people.

Leaders provide a range of opportunities that enable pupils to develop their interests and talents. Pupils take part in activities, such as music therapy, visits to a local park, cooking

and a range of enrichment clubs. Leaders make reasonable adjustments so that all pupils can take part.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Students in the post-16 provision have a range of complex needs. Many have had some disrupted experiences in education before joining the school. Leaders have designed a coherent and ambitious curriculum that is adapted carefully to meet students' starting points and needs. Programmes of study build well on students' prior learning and experiences and support them to work towards achieving suitable qualifications. This is alongside a focus on communication, independence and life skills. Staff check students' knowledge and adapt teaching. Students benefit from consistent routines and personalised support that help them to make progress from their starting points.

Students develop knowledge and skills needed for adulthood. They practise independence in meaningful contexts, such as travelling to school, managing personal care routines or engaging with local shops and cafés. Leaders ensure that students receive the targeted support they need from professionals and develop their knowledge of how to access services, such as healthcare, for themselves.

Careers education is well planned. Students learn about a range of jobs, pathways and qualifications. They receive individual advice and guidance. Encounters with employers and education providers broaden students' understanding of future possibilities. Wider experiences, including trips to the local landmarks, community visits and fundraising activities, further strengthen students' confidence, communication and readiness for their next steps in education, training or employment.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils settle quickly in this nurturing school. They benefit from calm, predictable routines and a patient, consistent approach from staff, when they need extra help. Staff build trusting relationships with pupils and work closely with families to understand pupils' needs. As a result, pupils feel safe and valued. This is of particular importance given that many of the school's pupils have been to a number of schools before arriving at this one, and in many cases have experienced challenges, including with attendance. Here, leaders work closely with families to ensure that pupils attend well, which they typically do.

Pupils behave with kindness and respect towards others. Staff model positive behaviour and use gentle, well-judged prompts to help pupils to manage their emotions. This helps to ensure that pupils can focus on learning the intended curriculum. Pupils are well supported to form healthy friendships and learn how to recognise prejudice, discrimination and bullying. When they have any concerns, staff act quickly and effectively. This helps pupils to feel confident that adults will keep them safe.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to enjoy both personal and academic success. Overall, they check pupils' progress carefully and adapt provision so that barriers to learning and wellbeing are reduced. Pupils typically build knowledge securely from their starting points

and develop the knowledge and skills that they need for their next steps. Leaders place particular emphasis on helping pupils, including students in the sixth form, to prepare for adulthood.

Pupils experience a broad curriculum that extends beyond the academic. From the moment they arrive at the school, staff encourage pupils to develop independence and confidence. For example, younger pupils choose and prepare their own breakfast daily, while students in the sixth form learn to plan safe, independent travel. Pupils are encouraged to share their aspirations and their views about how their special educational needs and/or disabilities should be supported by professionals.

Next steps

- Leaders should more closely analyse the extent to which pupils have learned all subjects in the curriculum, so that they can more precisely identify learning aims for pupils and further improve their achievement.
 - Leaders should more robustly track the careers education, information, advice and guidance pupils have had and use it to ensure that more pupils and students in post-16 engage in comprehensive careers provision, including work experience.
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About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This is an independent school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities between the ages of 4 and 25 years old. All of the pupils have an education, health and care plan. Many pupils have communication difficulties or a diagnosis of autism.

The school uses no alternative provision.

The school is based at 303 Hither Green Lane, Lewisham, London SE13 6TJ.

The school opened on 20 November 2024. This was the school's first standard inspection.

The name of the proprietor is Christalla Aggeli.

The fees currently charged are £55,000 to £75,000.

The school's email address is: admin@thetascentre.co.uk

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the proprietor, the chief operating officer, the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, a range of teaching and non-teaching staff, to 2 local authority representatives and to pupils and their parents and carers during the inspection.

Headteacher: Toyin Keshiro

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided

Standards met

All standards have been met.

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:

Rebecca Iles-Smith, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Gary Pocock, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 24 March 2026

Total pupils

45

School capacity

45

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

45

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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