

King's Oak School

Eltham Palace Road, Eltham, London SE9 5LX

Inspection dates

1–2 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved considerably since the previous inspection. It is now giving its pupils a good education.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have high aspirations for the school. These are shared by staff and pupils.
- An incisive analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and the action taken, are resulting in rapid and secure improvement.
- The governing body supports and challenges school leaders highly effectively. They are determined to see that the school continues to improve.
- Staff work hard to help pupils develop into more confident and resilient young men who can make sensible decisions about their future.
- Most pupils are now attending more regularly, which is helping them to catch up with their peer group.
- Safeguarding is a high priority in the school. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in and outside school, and online.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good, and promote good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The key stage 3 curriculum gives pupils a secure start to their secondary education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons which meet the range of individual needs.
- Pupils have opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy in different subjects but this is not yet consistent enough.
- In key stage 4 and beyond, the options for pupils are relatively limited. Staff have started work in school and with colleges on improving choices.
- Teachers provide pupils with good feedback but the pupils' response is very variable and teachers are not consistent in following this up.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To continue the drive to improve the quality of education and raise standards, leaders should ensure that:
 - pupils are consistently given more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum
 - pupils respond more consistently and positively to the feedback they are given
 - senior leaders and staff continue to develop the key stage 4 curriculum and work closely with the colleges to improve the options for education, training or employment when pupils leave school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Parents, pupils and staff agree that the school has improved greatly since the previous inspection. The rate of improvement has increased in the last year since the school became part of the Imperium Federation and a new leadership team was appointed.
- The strong commitment to the welfare of each pupil and his family underpins the school's approach. The ethos focuses on enabling pupils to overcome the difficulties which have held them back, and preparing them for a successful future.
- The executive headteacher and head of school have a clear vision and action plans to enable them to build on the improvement achieved in the last year. Their priorities and high expectations are shared by the governors and the staff as a whole. The senior leadership team and governors have, with the support of the local authority, been prepared to take difficult decisions when necessary.
- Leaders regularly review teaching and use the information gained from this to plan an effective programme of staff development. This helps equip staff with the skills they need to enable their pupils to make good progress. The reviews also help to identify pupils' individual needs.
- In the past year, leaders have been reviewing the curriculum, starting with key stage 3. The decision to have class teachers teaching most subjects with input from specialist teachers, for example in art and music, is proving effective. Class teaching gives pupils moving from primary schools a sense of security. The subject teaching helps to prepare them for work in key stage 4.
- In key stage 4, leaders aim to improve the qualifications available to pupils in school. They have also identified a need to expand the options for pupils leaving from Year 11. They are working with colleges and employers to widen the opportunities for pupils transferring to post-16 education, employment or training.
- Personal, social and health education is seen as a very important part of the support for personal and social development. The good relationships enable pupils to have discussions on social and health issues which may affect them, including, for example, testicular cancer and mental health.
- Subjects such as music help pupils to gain in self-confidence and in understanding of the wider world. For example, the performances at Blackheath Halls, and at the Barbican Centre as part of a project with the London Symphony Orchestra, were exciting and enjoyable occasions which showcased pupils' skills.
- Leaders check very carefully on how additional funding is used to help pupils to catch up with their peer group. The funding is also used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can take part fully in all school activities.
- The collaboration between the school, parents and carers, and external agencies is highly effective in supporting pupils. The provision for each pupil is very well managed to ensure that it meets the requirements of pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Interventions are carefully monitored to check on their impact. The different therapies are used well to help pupils manage the issues which are barriers to learning

and personal development.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is highly effective. Governors bring a wide range of experience and use their expertise very well to support school development. For example, they were fully involved in the setting up of the Imperium Federation. The impact of their work is seen in the very evident improvement in the quality of education the school provides.
- Governors are challenging and constructive in the way in which they hold leaders to account. They have made the provision of high-quality training for staff a real priority to ensure that staff have the leadership and teaching skills they need to drive improvement.
- Governors ensure that pupils' welfare and safety are a high priority. They have themselves completed training in relation to safeguarding.
- The governing body works closely with the school leaders and the local authority to monitor the impact of policy and financial decisions, for example in the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff fully understand that everyone is responsible for creating a culture of safety. They are very aware of the issues such as gang influence that pupils may face outside school. They work hard to enable pupils to learn how to take responsibility for their own safety and deal with the challenges and risks they face.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the government's latest guidance. The school website provides detailed information for staff and parents, including information on how to report any safeguarding concerns.
- Regular training on safeguarding and child protection procedures keeps staff up to date. Staff know what should raise their concerns and what to do if they are worried about any pupil's safety and well-being.
- Safeguarding records are fit for purpose. Sensitive information is kept secure. Staff who provide the various therapies, and the family support worker, work closely and effectively with senior staff to ensure that pupils and families are well supported. Liaison with other professionals and agencies, including the local authority, help keep pupils safe. The local Metropolitan Police Safer Schools Officer is a regular and welcome visitor.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the required pre-employment checks are carried out. Health and safety checks and risk assessments ensure that pupils are kept safe in school and when on visits out of school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically good and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers know their pupils very well and use a range of different approaches to help them make good progress. The daily briefing sessions are used constructively to help teachers target work effectively and to help pupils to stay on track.
- Parents appreciate the individual programmes provided for their sons. Regular contact keeps families up-to-date with progress in school. Parents said that they know that the school has improved because they now receive many more positive reports than negative. The contact helps to inform school staff of any changes which could affect progress and well-being. This means that they can adjust their planning to meet individual needs.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well so that classrooms are normally calm and orderly places in which both staff and students can work productively and learn well.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and work well with teaching assistants to plan interesting activities. These engage pupils and as a result, they make better progress and their confidence increases. In science, interesting work on renewable and non-renewable sources of energy showed how pupils' prior learning was used to deepen and expand their knowledge of climate change.
- Pupils tend to struggle to explain what they know and are often not prepared to take risks in their learning. Teachers are quick to pick up on mistakes and misconceptions, and help pupils to learn from them. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils learn and use correct subject language. This helps pupils to explain their understanding of a new concept in lessons.
- Teaching staff work closely together. Staff know the requirements of the individual EHC plans and tailor lessons to meet specific needs. They share their knowledge of their pupils and plan interesting activities. Other adults work closely with teachers to provide appropriate support which helps pupils make good progress.
- The teaching of reading is currently a major focus in the school and pupils are encouraged to read regularly. In English, pupils have opportunities to use their writing skills in different contexts as for example when creating stories to interpret works of art. In mathematics, regular practice helps pupils become reasonably confident in using basic numeracy skills. Opportunities to use English and mathematical skills, though good in science, are not consistently used enough across the curriculum.
- Teachers use skilful questioning to encourage pupils to explain their thinking, which helps them to become more independent and less reliant on support from adults. In a GCSE English lesson, the detailed analysis and questioning helped pupils to understand the deeper meaning. Occasionally though, teaching assistants are not given enough direction in how to help pupils to think for themselves.
- Teachers regularly check on and record pupils' progress in line with the school's assessment policy. They provide helpful oral and written feedback and set follow-up work. Pupils' response to the feedback is mixed: some respond well, others take relatively little notice, which slows progress. Staff are not consistent in following up on this.

- Teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world and the society in which they live. Visits to places of interest and the choice of topics all help to raise pupils' aspirations and build pupils' confidence in their ability to function successfully in the adult world.
- British values of tolerance, the rule of law and democracy are strongly promoted. Pupils have been consulted over matters such as the option subjects available, the change to the name of the school and the school uniform.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Good relationships between adults and pupils contribute strongly to this aspect of the school. Adults have consistently high expectations and pupils generally respond well. They know what the boundaries are and that they will be supported if they are going through a particularly difficult time.
- Parents are appreciative of the support provided for their children and the concern shown for the whole family. They spoke very positively of relationships with the staff and of how well the often-complicated systems and procedures are managed. 'Going above and beyond' was an expression used to describe the attitude and work of the leaders and others.
- School staff work hard to gain pupils' trust. This is particularly important because many pupils have had found it difficult to form stable relationships with adults. Pupils have also often had long periods out of education.
- Leaders and staff focus strongly on developing pupils' confidence. Staff know their pupils and their families very well and put very effective individual support in place. As a result, many pupils are able to experience success for the first time in their school career. They begin to make better academic progress, which helps prepare them for the next steps.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take part in different activities, most notably in music, art and sport. All pupils have the chance to learn a musical instrument and many had taken part in the projects with the London Symphony Orchestra. During the inspection, key stage 3 pupils were immensely proud that they had won their football tournament, returning to school with the trophy and their medals.
- Pupils receive good personal and careers guidance, including work with specialist careers advisers. This helps raise aspirations for what they can achieve. The current review of the school curriculum aims to prepare pupils even better so that they can take advantage of a wider range of opportunities when they leave school.
- In all classes pupils showed that they are capable of good concentration, whether working independently or as part of a group. Adults treat pupils with respect and are good role models, demonstrating the attitudes and behaviour they expect from pupils. They show a high degree of care and concern for pupils' well-being while, at the same time, expecting them to work hard and make good use of their time.
- Pupils generally relate well to each other and learn tolerance and respect for others. The school is an inclusive community. Discussion with pupils, as well as school

records, showed that issues around bullying, homophobia and racism are dealt with quickly and sensitively. Pupils understand the risks around the use of social media.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is well-organised and orderly, and pupils behave well in lessons. Breaktimes are well-supervised and staff use these informal occasions to get to know their pupils better and help them develop social skills.
- The school's individual approach to working with pupils helps them to identify what might trigger difficulties. The use of different therapies is very successful in helping pupils to manage their emotions. If a pupil is having a difficult day, his behaviour is not allowed to disrupt the education of others.
- Attendance has improved considerably, even though it is still below average. Leaders work very closely with families and external agencies to improve attendance. Immediate follow-up and commitment to long-term support has helped to convince most pupils and their families that it is worth coming to school.
- Leaders ensure that the behavior policy is consistently applied, so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them and the consequences of both good and poor behaviour. The emphasis is strongly on promoting positive attitudes. The success of this is seen in the overall improvement in pupils' behaviour and the considerable fall in the number of fixed-term exclusions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils typically join the school with starting points that are below, and frequently well below, those of most pupils of their age. They also tend to have gaps in their education, which makes it more difficult for them to achieve as well as their peer group.
- Current pupils, particularly those who attend most regularly, make good progress overall and start to catch up. Progress in using and applying basic literacy and numeracy skills is generally supported in other subjects, as, for example, in science, but this is not consistent across all subjects and classes.
- In key stage 4, pupils have opportunities to take recognised qualifications, such as functional skills in English, mathematics and science, and GCSE courses where they show an aptitude. Most pupils achieve at least the entry level on the different courses. They also achieve vocational qualifications in the arts, digital photography and sport.
- The range of activities and experiences encourage pupils to become as independent and resilient as possible and able to make their own decisions. All pupils leaving school in 2018 obtained a suitable placement. Similar outcomes are expected in 2019.
- Pupils' EHC plans are reviewed systematically and amended as necessary to ensure that they meet pupils' individual needs. A very high proportion of pupils are entitled to support from funding for disadvantaged pupils. They make similar progress to other pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	100204
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10088867

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yvonne Geddis
Executive Headteacher	Meic Griffiths
Telephone number	020 88508081
Website	www.kingsoakschool.co.uk
Email address	mgriffiths@kingsoak.greenwich.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 January 2017

Information about this school

- King's Oak is a community special school, formerly known as Moatbridge School. It became part of the Imperium Federation with Waterside Primary School in January 2018. The headteacher of Waterside School became the executive headteacher of the federation and a head of school was appointed for King's Oak. The federation has one governing body.
- The school caters for boys aged 11 to 16 who have been diagnosed with social, emotional and mental health conditions. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with the largest single group being of White British origin. The school currently has no pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons in all classes. All observations were undertaken jointly with members of the leadership team.
- Meetings were held with governors, school leaders and staff, and two officers of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
- The inspectors spoke to a group of parents and considered the school's evidence of consultation with parents. No parents completed Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.
- The inspectors met and talked to pupils both formally and informally. They looked at their work and the school's records of their progress.
- The inspectors took into account 19 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents provided by the school, including those available on its website.

Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Teresa Neary

Ofsted Inspector

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