

KWS Educational Services

23–25 & 51 Brunel Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 9TJ

Inspection dates

3–5 July 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

- Leaders and trustees have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' work. Pupils are supported effectively in class. As a result, they make good progress.
- Pupils are provided with plenty of opportunities to advance their reading, writing and mathematical skills across all subjects.
- Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and well cared for. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective.
- The effectiveness of governors has improved. They are now efficiently monitoring the work of the school.
- Behaviour management is effective. Staff are consistent in applying the code of conduct. As a result, behaviour is good.
- Highly effective personalised support has a profound impact on pupils' attainment. Staff's personalised approach to each pupil's personal development and welfare forms a central part of their focus.
- Adults model expertly the school's values of tolerance and respect for one another.
- Leaders and trustees offer a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils. The curriculum makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. While improvement plans are focused on the right priorities, some success criteria are not precise enough.
- Staff provide most pupils with useful careers advice and support. Not all pupils have access to an independent careers adviser.
- At times, teachers do not give pupils enough time to consolidate their understanding before they progress to the next topic or give them enough time to think about their work before they step in and help them.
- Opportunities to develop reasoning skills in mathematics are limited.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - developing pupils' resilience as learners by providing them with the opportunity to think about their work before staff intervene
 - ensuring that pupils have a good understanding of a topic before moving on to the next stage of learning.
- Improve outcomes in mathematics by providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their reasoning skills.
- Provide access to independent careers advisers.
- Improve leadership by ensuring that all development plans have precise criteria with which to measure success.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the standard of education since the previous inspection. The quality of care and personal development that pupils receive is outstanding. Leaders have ensured that the school continues to meet all the independent school standards (ISS).
- Leadership of the school has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders and trustees now demonstrate strong leadership. They have a deep commitment to the care and well-being of each pupil – an ethos shared by all members of staff.
- Staff have high expectations of all pupils. Staff are skilful at re-engaging pupils in their learning and helping them to believe they can succeed. As a result, pupils make good progress. One parent commented that since their child had joined KWS, 'I have confidence in professionals and my child has a future.'
- Leaders, including staff with responsibility for a subject, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Development plans are focused on the right priorities. However, success criteria are not precise enough, making it difficult for leaders to evaluate accurately the impact of their actions on school improvement.
- Leaders have taken appropriate steps to improve the quality of teaching. Leaders use their findings to provide individualised training for staff to improve their practice. As a result, teaching is now more consistent across subjects and leads to good outcomes for pupils.
- Staff assess each pupil's academic ability on arrival using a range of methods. This information is used to identify pupils' strengths and gaps in their learning. Subject leaders use this information well to monitor pupils' progress and plan targeted interventions to address gaps in their knowledge and skills.
- Leaders work in close partnership with the local authorities that place pupils in the school. These authorities value the school's ability to meet the complex needs of many of the pupils.
- Leaders have rightly chosen to prioritise English and mathematics as key curriculum subjects. These subjects are taught both discretely and across other subjects, such as science and history. Pupils get access to the full range of subjects and topics are focused on their interests, such as the impact of humans on the environment. The curriculum is enhanced by educational visits and other experiences.
- Parents and carers are kept up to date on their child's progress through weekly phone calls, termly reports and education, health and care plan reviews.

Governance

- The proprietors have acted to strengthen governance since the previous inspection. A board of trustees oversees the work of the school.
- Trustees have relevant skills and experience to fulfil their roles. They are making effective use of their expertise by systematically reviewing all aspects of the provision. They have

ensured that safeguarding is effective.

- Trustees are fully involved in contributing to and monitoring the school development plan and provide both support and challenge. Good use is made of consultants to ensure that trustees and leaders receive an external view on how well the school is operating. As a result, trustees have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The requirements of the ISS regarding safeguarding are met, including the publication of the school's safeguarding policy. The arrangements consider the latest guidance from the Secretary of State.
- Safeguarding is given high importance. Staff know the pupils well and are very quick to spot and act if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. The designated safeguarding lead swiftly takes appropriate action when concerns are raised. The school is tenacious in following up referrals to other agencies.
- The school maintains a suitable single central record for recording safeguarding checks. All the necessary pre-employment checks are carried out prior to staff working in the school.
- The designated safeguarding lead works well with the relevant support agencies. Pupils' files are meticulously maintained and kept secure.
- Staff are well trained to be alert to any potential risks. They are fully aware of their duty to protect pupils from the dangers of radicalisation, extremism, female genital mutilation and child sexual exploitation.
- The curriculum is well planned to alert pupils to potential dangers and to support them in keeping themselves safe. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Leaders carry out regular health and safety checks related to the premises and surrounding area. Detailed risk assessments cover all aspects of school life. They are regularly reviewed and amended.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Many pupils arrive with gaps in their knowledge and skills, especially in mathematics and English. Teachers use a range of assessment information to plan lessons that are well matched to their learning needs. Most activities present pupils with a good level of challenge.
- Adults use questioning well to encourage pupils to think in greater detail about a subject and provide reasons for their answers. This deepens their understanding and enables them to develop their reasoning skills.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They expect pupils to present work neatly, concentrate on their learning without distraction and to complete the work set. Pupils are provided with good levels of support from adults who know them well and understand how to bring out the best in them.

- Relationships between pupils and adults are strong. Behaviour management is good. Adults are very quick to identify when a pupil may be off task and refocus them on their learning. Praise and encouragement are used appropriately to build pupils' confidence as learners.
- Pupils are encouraged to talk about their learning and given every opportunity to participate in discussions. For example, when discussing the features of a character in a novel, pupils considered the impact of events on shaping the character's personality. Pupils are developing the confidence to talk in front of others.
- In some subjects, pupils are not given enough opportunity to consolidate their understanding before teachers move the learning on. There are occasions when adults do not provide enough time for pupils to think about what is required of them before they offer support, missing opportunities to strengthen their resilience.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders have nurtured an ethos of tolerance and respect for one another. This is modelled by all adults in the school.
- Many pupils arrive with a negative view of school and have little confidence in their own ability. Leaders are clear that pupils' welfare is paramount if they are to achieve academically. A relentless focus on pupils' personal development underpins every aspect of school life. Pupils told the inspector that staff had helped to boost their confidence and given them the motivation to complete GCSEs.
- A culture of care, support and respect is nurtured through a well-established key-worker system. Staff are passionate about their work and genuinely care about the pupils. Pupils know they are listened to and they recognise how staff help them to manage and overcome significant barriers with trust and communicating with others. Pupils say that staff will 'go the extra mile' to help them.
- Staff work closely with individuals, their families and other organisations to ensure that the needs of their education, health and care plans are met. Pupils help to set themselves personal targets and these are reviewed regularly. Parents are kept up to date on their child's progress through weekly messages or calls from the school.
- Personal, social, health and economic lessons are tailored to meet the needs of the pupils. They learn about the issues facing them in their local community, as well as topics such as healthy living, mental health, risk taking, and the potential risks associated with the internet and social media.
- The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective as it runs throughout the school's work. Every interaction with pupils supports their social development. They are taught to respect differences and explore equal opportunities.
- Teachers choose curriculum topics that support pupils' personal development. For example, in English, a group of pupils discussed some of the key themes of racism and crime in the novel 'Buddy'.
- Pupils have access to trips and visits that widen their cultural development. For example,

pupils chose to go for afternoon tea as a reward trip.

- Pupils take an active part in their community and raise funds for local and national charities. Year 11 pupils are encouraged to widen their horizons by applying for places on schemes such as the national citizenship programme. Three pupils have currently been accepted on this scheme and will undertake several challenges, working with pupils from across the country.
- Pupils receive suitable advice from staff on career options and future opportunities. Staff have high aspirations for pupils as they have access to university prospectuses as well as those from local colleges. Staff support pupils with applications for training, education and employment. Some local authorities provide independent careers advice for their pupils. However, not all pupils receive advice from a qualified adviser. Careers preparation does not start early enough for pupils who join the school before Year 11.
- Work experience and community projects support pupils' independence and prepare them well for adult life.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is positive. This is because staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, provide good role models and apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Most pupils arrive with a history of poor behaviour. Staff understand their needs and have the appropriate skills for dealing with poor behaviour. They are effective at supporting pupils to manage their own behaviour.
- Pupils acknowledge the impact the school has had on helping them to improve their behaviour. As one pupil commented, 'I used to argue to get out of work in my previous school. It's not accepted here.'
- The number of incidents of unacceptable behaviour decrease as the pupils progress through the school. Pupils acknowledge the impact the school has on helping them to improve their behaviour. They can explain how their behaviour has improved and the positive impact this has had on learning.
- Most pupils enter the school with a history of low attendance. High importance is placed on attendance, so leaders are tenacious in following up absences. As a result, the attendance of almost all pupils, especially those with very low attendance, quickly improves and is sustained.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, especially in mathematics and English. Teachers use assessment well to identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils make rapid progress in writing. For example, pupils who arrived at the school not being able to write sentences accurately have quickly progressed to writing at length. Pupils are more confident writers. They use a wide range of vocabulary and punctuation.
- Pupils read a wide range of books in lessons and for pleasure. Pupils who have been in the school for some time show a good understanding of novels and are able to discuss

the plot and characters in depth.

- In mathematics, pupils can tackle a range of calculations and they use subject-specific vocabulary correctly. As a result, they are developing mathematical fluency and can carry out the four basic calculations and present data accurately. Pupils do have some opportunities to solve mathematical problems. However, these are too infrequent and not varied enough for pupils to develop their reasoning skills fully, and so apply their knowledge in a wide variety of contexts.
- Because of individualised support, pupils requiring additional help make substantial gains in their reading, spelling and mathematics. Pupils are encouraged to read in all subjects. Pupils progress to be confident enough to read in front of their classmates.
- Pupils study appropriate qualifications, including GCSEs, functional skills and entry-level certificates. In 2018, pupils who left in Year 11 all achieved at least one qualification at level 1 and most of them went on to training placements or further education. The current Year 11 pupils have achieved a number of level 1 and level 2 qualifications and are awaiting GCSE results in mathematics and English. All have secured a college placement.

School details

Unique reference number	136122
DfE registration number	822/6015
Inspection number	10093915

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Karl Weaver
Chair	Magdalena Nichols
Headteacher	Sarah Nichols-Weaver
Annual fees (day pupils)	£21,450
Telephone number	01234 358638
Website	www.kwseducation.co.uk
Email address	sarah.nichols-weaver@kwseducational.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–28 September 2017

Information about this school

- KWS Educational Services is an independent day school.
- The school's last standard inspection was in September 2017, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be requires improvement. All independent school standards were met.
- Pupils are both referred and funded by their local authority or attend from other local schools on a part-time basis.
- The school caters for boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 18 years who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils have education,

health and care plans.

- Most pupils arrive with histories of poor attendance and having experienced disruption to their education. Many present challenging behaviour and have been excluded from their previous schools.
- Pupils have a range of complex social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Teaching is mainly in small groups, led by teachers who are supported by teaching assistants. All pupils have a key worker.
- The school does not use agency staff.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons to observe learning in English, mathematics, science, personal, social and health education and cookery.
- The inspector scrutinised the work of pupils currently in the school. She looked at displays of pupils' work, examination results, progress information and records of attendance.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, the leads for English, mathematics and personal, social and health education. The inspector also met with a parent. She held telephone conversations with the chair of the trustees and a representative from a local authority.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards. She scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspector held informal conversations with pupils and staff to gain their views of the effectiveness of the school.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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