

Inspection of The King Edmund School

Vaughan Close, Rochford, Essex SS4 1TL

Inspection dates:

6–7 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told us that they feel safe and are happy at school. Pupils and their parents and carers recognise and value the strong sense of community in the school.

Pupils are well supervised by staff and prefects at breaktimes. Pupils think that the school counsellors are a helpful source of support if they need it.

Pupils told us that bullying is uncommon. When it does happen, teachers and heads of year deal with it well so that it does not continue. Pupils think that it is a good idea that the school has in place 'anti-bullying mentors'. This approach helps pupils to report concerns immediately.

All staff want pupils to do well. Leaders' actions have made sure pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. However, the quality of education is not as good as it should be. Some leaders do not have a good enough understanding of the progress pupils make.

Leaders are committed to providing a broad range of courses that interest pupils. For example, vocational subjects such as construction or hair and beauty are popular choices for some pupils.

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

Supported by senior leaders, curriculum leaders have strengthened curriculum plans. Teachers have a better understanding of what pupils need to learn. This is most advanced in English and geography. Here, pupils learn well. Their work is of a good quality. The science curriculum is not as well developed.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. In English, geography and mathematics, they use this knowledge to encourage pupils to think deeply. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Current pupils progress well.

Teachers assess pupils' work through written assessments. This helps teachers to identify where pupils have gaps in their understanding, especially in Year 11. Some teachers do not check regularly if pupils understand what they are learning. Where this is the case, teachers do not act quickly when pupils get stuck.

Some pupils find it difficult to recall their learning and make connections between the different subjects that they learn. For example, in a Year 9 technology lesson, pupils showed good understanding of single-use plastics. However, some struggled to calculate the area of a rectangle because they could not recall this learning from Year 7 mathematics.

Pupils are encouraged to understand and use subject-specific vocabulary to explain their learning in English and geography. In other subjects, pupils are not learning the vocabulary that they need to achieve well. Leaders have taken action to develop

pupils' literacy skills. It is too soon to assess the impact of this work.

Leaders are improving the quality of education in modern languages. Learning in these subjects is better planned and taught. More pupils are choosing to study French or Spanish in key stage 4.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are provided for well. This is because leaders have adapted curriculum plans to meet these pupils' needs. Teachers and learning support assistants make effective use of 'pupil passports' to inform their planning and teaching.

Leaders ensure that most pupils attend school regularly. Pupils understand that this helps them to achieve well. Leaders understand the local context and provide effective support and challenge for pupils who need to improve their attendance.

Relationships between pupils and their teachers are good. Most pupils settle quickly to their learning. Pupils told us that in lessons taught by cover teachers or supply staff a small number of pupils do not behave as well as they should.

Student leaders are proud to represent their school. They organise the school council which has worked to make the school 'eco-friendly'. The council has introduced 'KES' water bottles and wooden cutlery in the canteen. Sixth-form students explore aspects of personal development, such as 'keeping motivated'. They welcome the many enrichment activities, such as cooking, debating and volunteering

Pupils and sixth-form students told us that they get helpful information and advice about possible careers, employment or education opportunities. They feel well supported to make decisions about the next stages of their education.

Students in the sixth form value the expertise of their subject teachers. Teachers' knowledge of their subjects helps students to learn in depth. For example, a group of A-level law students said that they enjoy their learning so much that they plan to continue studying law at university.

Most subject teachers in the sixth form have a good understanding of students' progress. However, leaders do not maintain a regular overview of students' progress.

Governors have recently started to challenge school leaders more effectively. Governors have a more accurate understanding of the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders maintain an accurate record of their checks on the suitability of adults who work in the school. Leaders take appropriate action when a pupil needs support. Leaders keep records about concerns relating to pupils' welfare in good order.

Leaders, including governors, make sure that staff receive a thorough programme of training so that they know how to keep pupils safe.

Leaders make sure that pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. For example, personal safety and well-being are taught through assemblies, religious education and personal, social, health and citizenship education.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have made improvements to curriculum plans in many subjects, there remains much work to do to ensure that pupils achieve well in all subjects. In weaker subjects, leaders need to improve the design of the curriculum and how it is taught.
- Pupils' literacy skills are not as well developed as they need to be so that they can achieve well. Pupils need regular opportunities to read in all curriculum subjects. Leaders should make sure that teachers provide pupils with opportunities to learn subject-specific terminology and the language of assessment tasks.
- In some classes, teachers do not check whether pupils understand their work. Leaders need to make sure that teachers check that pupils have the skills and knowledge that they need to progress well through the curriculum. Leaders should also ensure that methods of assessment across all year groups give teachers the information that they need to plan for what pupils need to learn next.
- In the sixth form, leaders do not have a clear enough grasp of the progress that students are making. Leaders should review and make appropriate amendments to their strategies for ensuring that they know how well students are progressing. Leaders should then ensure that students who need additional help receive it in a timely way.
- A fresh approach to how the governing body works has recently been introduced. Governors now need to better understand the effectiveness of the school's actions to improve the quality of education.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136868
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10110224
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,583
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Macdonald
Headteacher	Jonathan Osborn
Website	www.kes.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 April 2015

Information about this school

- King Edmund School opened as an academy in July 2011.
- The school makes use of the following alternative providers: BEP Academy; and Southend YMCA Community School.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We visited classes in a range of subjects. We looked in detail at English, French, geography, mathematics and science. We met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. We visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects. In addition, we spoke with pupils and teachers about the work of the school.
- We spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a representative of the local authority. We also spoke with an external consultant who works closely with

school leaders. We also held a meeting with members of the governing body.

- We reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school, improvement plans and safeguarding records. We considered the school's information on pupils' attendance and behaviour, and reviewed minutes of governing body meetings.
- We considered the 103 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 103 responses to the free-text option. There were no responses to the online surveys of staff and pupils. We did consider 63 responses to a staff survey carried out by the school. In addition, we took into account a pupil survey of about 20 per cent of the pupils in Years 7 to 10 carried out by the school.

Inspection team

Jenny Carpenter, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
John Constable	Ofsted Inspector
David Hutton	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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