

Inspection of a good school: Kingsmoor Academy

Ployters Road, Harlow, Essex CM18 7PS

Inspection dates:

13–14 February 2020

Outcome

Kingsmoor Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel proud to attend Kingsmoor Academy and they enjoy learning. Staff have high expectations. The school's mission for every child to be 'equipped with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to be the best they can be' is a reality for all pupils.

Pupils have excellent relationships with adults. They show kindness and respect towards others. In lessons, pupils work hard and are enthusiastic about their learning. On the playground, pupils play happily together. Pupils say that if anyone is ever unkind, adults sort it out quickly.

Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their experiences. They participate in a range of sports, enjoy art and music, and attend clubs. They go on lots of trips, including residential visits, and this enriches their learning.

The curriculum helps pupils understand the importance of tolerance and equality. Pupils can become school councillors, eco-warriors, house captains and e-safety ambassadors. These responsibilities help build character and develop confidence.

Pupils feel safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Pupils understand the importance of their physical and mental well-being.

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

The curriculum at Kingsmoor Academy is carefully planned. Leaders have thought hard about the knowledge they want pupils to learn. In the history topic about the Tudors, pupils' learning is well organised, and teachers' planning builds effectively on what pupils already know.

Teachers ask questions to check that pupils have understood what they are trying to learn. Teachers correct pupils swiftly when misunderstandings arise. This helps build pupils' understanding securely over time.

Resources are used in an exciting way, for example in the school's museum. This brings the subject to life. Leaders have put in place new plans for teaching some subjects. Leaders have not yet fully trained teachers how to put these in place. As a result, some pupils do not learn as much as they could.

Leaders are in the process of changing their approach to the teaching of mathematics, but this work has not yet been completed. Pupils' understanding and abilities to solve problems are improving. Teachers promote calculation skills well, including times tables. Teachers regularly revisit basic concepts so pupils understand them well. Nevertheless, some older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders make sure that reading is well planned for younger pupils. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics. Pupils take home books that match the sounds they learn in class. Teachers place a strong emphasis on increasing pupils' vocabulary. By the time pupils leave the school, they read very well and are ready for the challenges of secondary school. The teaching of reading lies at the heart of the curriculum and helps pupils learn well across all subjects.

Leaders have a keen understanding of the challenges faced by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that these pupils can fully access what they are trying to learn. Pupils with SEND are very well supported in their learning by well-trained staff. Staff give pupils plenty of time to practise and remember what they have learned.

Leaders have given careful consideration to pupils' personal, social and emotional development. All pupils learn about democracy, equality and responsibility. This equips them well for life in the modern world. Pupils told me how their teachers show them how to take responsibility for themselves and others. For example, pupils told me that they planted saplings in the forest area as part of a project to improve their environment. The eco-warriors organise the recycling twice a week.

Children get off to a great start in early years. Staff and children form caring relationships and children feel safe at school. Staff have thoughtfully resourced the indoor and outdoor areas, so they are stimulating for the children's development. Staff work well together, and make sure that the curriculum meets children's needs. Staff develop children's vocabulary from the day they start. For example, the children in Nursery had fun making bread for the animals in the story of 'The Little Red Hen', while talking together about how the dough felt squishy and soft.

Teachers thoroughly enjoy working at Kingsmoor Academy. Leaders do all they can to help staff maintain a healthy work-life balance. Parents appreciate the importance leaders give to pupils' welfare and how much time and effort goes into supporting families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide regular training for staff so that everyone understands their safeguarding responsibilities. If adults are concerned about a pupil, they report this quickly and effectively. Leaders respond promptly to the information they receive. Leaders keep detailed and well-organised records. Leaders make referrals to external agencies when necessary.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They learn about the risks they face when using the internet, and how to manage these. Pupils know that they should report anything that concerns them to an adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have drawn up comprehensive plans to improve the sequencing of knowledge and skills across the wider curriculum. In many subjects, this work is already having a positive impact on learning. In some subjects, new schemes have not been fully implemented. This means that pupils do not always reach teachers' high expectations. Leaders should ensure that this work is completed.
- In mathematics, there are gaps in some older pupils' understanding. This is because teaching in the school was not as effective in the past as it is now. This is preventing some pupils from making as much progress as they could. Teachers are working hard to address this. Leaders should complete the implementation of their new approach to mathematics, so that pupils fully understand important concepts. This will enable more pupils to achieve as well as they should.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Kingsmoor Academy to be good on 15–16 June 2016.

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 are the school and you are 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	138996
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10121502
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of board of trustees	Bernard Dickenson
Principal	Lesley Brennan
Website	www.kingsmooracademy.attrust.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 June 2016

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school and it is in the process of expanding.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average.
- The school is sponsored by the Academy Transformation Trust.

Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, I held discussions with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, the SENCo, curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff.
- I met the chair and the vice-chair of the governing body.

- I spoke on the telephone with the trust's chief executive officer and I met with the trust's regional education director for primary schools.
- I carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. I spoke to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, scrutinised work in pupils' books and met with teachers and pupils to discuss the quality of education.
- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, I spoke to the designated safeguarding leaders, members of staff, parents and pupils. I checked the single central record and a sample of safeguarding records.
- I observed playtime and lunchtime and spoke to pupils about their school experiences. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- I gathered the views of parents on the playground before school. I also analysed the 16 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including parents' free-text comments.
- I considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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