

Inspection of King Edward VII Academy

Gaywood Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 2QB

Inspection dates: 24–25 June 2021

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

Previous inspection grade Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

King Edward VII Academy (KES) has become a much better place to learn.

Behaviour is much improved since the previous inspection. Leaders have clear expectations that all staff and pupils follow. At breaktimes, the atmosphere is friendly and ordered. In lessons, there is a settled and productive atmosphere. Far fewer pupils are sent out of lessons or excluded from school.

Pupils have positive relationships with staff and with each other. There is little bullying. If it happens, leaders deal with it quickly. Pupils learn to respect those with different backgrounds or attitudes to themselves. Pupils say they feel included and safe.

Pupils leave KES ready for what comes next. They go on to positive destinations. This is because leaders give them helpful advice about their next steps. Leaders ensure that pupils develop links with employers in the local area.

Teachers help pupils to understand how to be healthy, both physically and mentally. Pupils have many opportunities to serve as leaders or citizens, such as at charity events. Sixth-form pupils have opportunities to support the wider life of the school.

While leaders have improved the planning and delivery of the curriculum in many subjects, some of this work is new and not fully implemented. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in all subjects.

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

Leaders have created a clear plan for every subject in all year groups, including the sixth form. These plans identify what pupils should learn. Leaders make sure this builds on what pupils have learned before. This means that when pupils study new content they are able to use what they know already to help them move on. Pupils' knowledge and understanding successfully develops over time.

Leaders have provided training for subject leaders on how to develop, implement and check the impact of carefully considered curriculum plans. However, some subject leaders are new and have not received the training to know how to do this effectively. While in part, the pandemic has slowed this development work, in some subjects, for example English, leaders do not check precisely how well pupils are achieving. In these cases, pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

Pupils do not develop a love of reading. There is a significant proportion of pupils who do not read widely. While leaders have ambitious plans for the reading curriculum, they have not put them in place successfully. Some pupils do not feel that staff encourage them to enjoy reading. As a result, some pupils are not

confident readers. In some lessons, there are pupils who do not understand the challenging texts they study.

The weakest readers in all year groups are skilfully supported by well-trained staff. Staff teach struggling readers how to read unfamiliar words by giving them strategies they can use. For example, these pupils learn how to break down words into sounds. Staff help pupils develop their understanding and vocabulary, and then check on how well they are doing this.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to be successful. As a result, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds keep up with their peers. This is also true of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils with SEND receive carefully considered support. This includes those pupils with SEND in the sixth form. Leaders accurately identify pupils' specific needs and ensure that they train staff to help these pupils. This ensures that teachers successfully adapt learning for specific needs. Consequently, pupils with SEND are confident. They understand what they are learning and, subsequently, achieve well

The 'Academy Council' governors have helped leaders to improve the school. Where necessary, they have challenged leaders effectively. Governors monitor the quality of education, and this has continued throughout the pandemic. The trust has remained supportive and committed during the school's upcoming transition to a new trust.

Leaders support staff with their well-being. Governors check on this. While some staff responses to the Ofsted questionnaire said that leaders did not always consider their workload, most staff feel supported by leaders.

Leaders have taken effective action to improve behaviour. Exclusions have reduced and poor behaviour is being managed effectively. As a result, pupils, including vulnerable pupils, feel safer.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make appropriate checks on staff before they start working at KES.

Leaders keep detailed and organised records of incidents and make prompt referrals when required. Leaders understand the potential local risks, and they make pupils aware of what they are and how to keep safe. The curriculum content includes opportunities to support pupils to stay safe while online and when using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders are new and have not received training to fulfil their role. Consequently, they are not precisely checking the quality of education in the subjects they lead. This has resulted in pupils not achieving as well as they should in some subjects. Leaders need to ensure that all subject leaders know how to be effective in their leadership role so that leaders fulfil their responsibility to check that pupils achieve well in all subjects throughout the school.
- There are a significant number of pupils who are not confident readers. Too many pupils do not read more widely. Some pupils do not understand what they are reading. Leaders should do more to create and promote a love of reading throughout the school, so that pupils are enthused and encouraged to read extensively and frequently.

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	141177
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10184570
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1085
Appropriate authority	Academy Council
Chair	Emma Culley
Principal	Sarah Hartshorn
Website	www.kesacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, two assistant headteachers have joined the school. Two members of staff have been promoted to the senior leadership team.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspectors met with the principal, other leaders, pupils, staff, representatives of those responsible for governance, and representatives of Eastern Multi-Academy Trust (the trust). Inspectors also observed familiar adults hearing pupils read,

visited lessons, looked at pupils' books, and observed the behaviour of pupils both inside and outside of lessons. Inspectors looked at 49 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 27 parents' free-text comments. The inspection also considered 75 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.

- Inspectors focused in more detail on English, mathematics, science, history, geography, physical education and art.

Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Adrian Lyons	Her Majesty's Inspector
Maureen Su	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fiona Webb	Her Majesty's Inspector

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