

Inspection of King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford

Broomfield Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 3SX

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected King Edward VI Grammar, Chelmsford under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged King Edward VI Grammar, Chelmsford to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy. The school remains outstanding.

What is it like to attend this school?

King Edward VI Grammar School is an exceptional place for pupils to learn. Pupils thrive in the school. They are challenged by staff to be the best they can be, both academically and as kind, respectful members of the community. Pupils and their parents support the school's vision and positive values.

Pupils feel safe and are well cared for by staff. Pupils of all ages care about each other. Strong support systems help pupils if they are worried. Pupils respect each other's differences and celebrate the school's diverse community. Hurtful views or attitudes are not tolerated by anyone, at any time. Bullying rarely happens. If it does, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.

Around the school, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils know that they are at school to work hard. They enjoy school life and the rich variety of clubs, societies and experiences. From the combined cadet force to sports and chess clubs, there is something for everyone to do that interests or challenges them.

Many pupils continue their studies at the school's sixth form. It is a warm and welcoming community. Students have highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are excellent role models for younger pupils.

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

Leaders have created an environment where respect and tolerance are as highly regarded as academic excellence. Working closely with trustees, they have acted decisively to tackle historic concerns about inappropriate behaviour and derogatory views head on and with integrity. They listened to concerns and acted quickly. Consequently, the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum and safeguarding systems are even stronger now. There is a firm and well-embedded culture of tolerance and care. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, feel safe and well looked after.

Across the school, including in the sixth form, leaders ensure that all pupils access a high-quality curriculum. Pupils study a broad range of subjects, including different languages such as Latin and Mandarin. Curriculum plans are highly ambitious. In all subjects, important knowledge is carefully identified and arranged so it is taught in a logical order. Consequently, pupils grasp difficult concepts quickly and apply their knowledge in different contexts. In religious education, for example, Year 7 pupils use their knowledge of the 'seven dimensions of religion' to compare and contrast different religious traditions confidently.

Teachers support pupils effectively and encourage them to read widely around their subjects. Pupils use and understand a variety of sophisticated vocabulary when discussing and debating topics in class. They work exceptionally hard and enjoy their learning.

Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They are exceptionally enthusiastic about their subjects. Routine in-class checks assess quickly what knowledge pupils already have, so teachers know what they need to do to support pupils' learning. Teachers use learning activities skilfully to deepen and develop pupils' knowledge further. High expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are systematically promoted. Activities often take pupils' learning beyond what is expected for their age. As a result, pupils of all backgrounds, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified accurately in detailed support plans. Teachers use this information to make very effective adaptations to their lessons or to provide other appropriate support. Pupils with SEND are cared for both academically and emotionally. As a result, they achieve at least as well as other pupils.

All pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. Careers lessons begin early in Year 7 and continue through to sixth form. Pupils learn about the variety of careers and further study opportunities available to them. Many students in the sixth form move on to highly regarded workplaces or universities.

The high-quality PSHE curriculum is thoughtfully planned and delivered. It supports pupils' personal and character development exceptionally well. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, make a strong contribution to enhancing school life. Older students act as role models and mentors for younger pupils. The house system and the variety of clubs encourage pupils to socialise together and learn from each other. Pupils embrace their diversity and are mutually respectful of individual differences across the school.

Leaders acknowledge the anxieties some pupils may face in a high-performing, selective school. Consequently, highly effective curriculum and personal support is in place to help pupils if they are worried, or if they feel that they are falling behind. Staff are extremely caring about pupils' well-being.

Parents, pupils and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents say that leaders care about their children and do the best for them. Staff say that leaders support them to continue to improve their practice and are mindful of their workload.

Leaders and trustees know the school's strengths and weaknesses remarkably well. They have not rested on their laurels. Leaders' plans for the future are clear and support the school to be the best it can be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of how to keep pupils safe. They ensure that all staff are well trained to spot if a pupil is at risk of harm, including from

harmful sexual behaviours. Procedures to report concerns are clear and well used. Additional anonymous reporting systems support pupils to speak out about any situation that makes them feel unsafe. Prompt action is taken in the light of concerns.

Safeguarding records are detailed. They help leaders to spot patterns or concerns. Leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that pupils get the help they need.

Staff teach pupils how to keep safe both in the community and online.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	136642
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10199311
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1117
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	371
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mary Turner
Headteacher	Tom Carter
Website	www.kegs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This was the school's first inspection since it became an academy in February 2012.
- The predecessor school, King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford, was judged to be outstanding when it was previously inspected in November 2006.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in school leadership, including a new headteacher and a different chair of trustees.
- The school selects by ability through the 11+ examination.
- The school admits boys only between Years 7 and 11. Boys and girls are admitted into the sixth form.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, modern foreign languages and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the school's single central record. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding procedures and processes. They talked to trustees, leaders and other staff about safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors met with a large range of pupils across both days of inspection. They met pupils in both mixed- and single-gender groups to explore the wider curriculum and whether leaders are taking effective action to ensure pupils feel safe.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's PSHE provision and the range of activities the school uses to promote tolerance and respect.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors considered the 318 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 293 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 64 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 380 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kay Leach	Ofsted Inspector
David Piercy	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Hood	Ofsted Inspector
Tessa Holledge	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Kueh	Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2021