

Inspection of St Katherine's School

Pill Road, Ham Green, Bristol, Somerset BS20 0HU

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school makes sure that pupils feel welcome and included. Pupils work closely with school leaders to recognise the contributions of under-represented groups in society. For example, the houses that all members of the school belong to are now named: Pankhurst, Stephenson, Turing and Yousafzai.

Pupils feel safe and are happy at school. They said that there is an adult they can talk to, and that staff listen to them. Those who need extra help with their mental health and well-being have support from specially trained staff. Bullying is rare and when it does happen, staff deal with it effectively.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that staff have. Behaviour is good and classrooms are calm and purposeful. Most pupils are keen to learn, and take pride in their work.

All pupils attend a range of clubs and activities. This helps pupils to develop new skills. For example, all Year 7 pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument with expert tuition. Students in the sixth form have leadership training. This supports their development, and helps them to run activities for younger pupils.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that promotes equality, diversity and inclusion well. The number of pupils taking triple science and a humanities subject at GCSE has increased significantly. Leaders have plans to encourage more pupils to learn languages at GCSE. This is so that more pupils study all the subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate. The number of pupils in the sixth form taking science subjects has also increased. The school promotes reading well. One pupil summed up the views of many, saying: 'I used to hate reading, but I really enjoy it now.' However, the teaching of reading and key vocabulary is not consistent enough to build fluency and confidence for all pupils, especially the weaker readers.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are well supported. Staff use assessment information well to adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. Teaching gives clear guidance to pupils on how to complete their work. This helps most pupils to start tasks promptly. Pupils structure their written work with increasing confidence, and take responsibility for their learning. Leaders and the trust provide staff with effective training.

Leaders have refined their approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Systems in place now ensure that pupils remain in lessons and do not disrupt learning. Leaders promote good attendance and punctuality. They provide effective support for pupils whose attendance needs to improve.

Leaders at all levels accurately evaluate the performance of their areas of responsibility. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Governors and trustees work well with senior leaders to check on their actions. They use this information to develop a well-thought-out strategic vision for St Katherine's.

Leaders have planned a suitable careers programme. This has been adapted to take account of gaps in pupils' knowledge created by the national lockdowns that took place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this is not yet fully embedded. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships. Pupils receive appropriate guidance when choosing their key stage 4 and key stage 5 options. As a result, few sixth-form students change course or leave the school before completing their programme of study.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is thoughtfully planned. Pupils have contributed to the development of the curriculum. In particular, they have been involved with work on sexual harassment and issues facing those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+). However, leaders recognise that PSHE could go further in ensuring that all pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils said that a minority of their peers use discriminatory language.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training to ensure that they recognise signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They know how to refer any concerns they may have. Staff are confident that leaders will act swiftly to ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders work well with other agencies. Aspects of the curriculum have been developed to minimise the risk of sexual harassment. Staff have received additional training to support pupils who are experiencing poor mental health.

Leaders ensure that appropriate background checks are carried out on all adults working in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of reading and key vocabulary is inconsistent. Consequently, some pupils' learning is slowed down. Leaders need to ensure that the teaching of reading and key vocabulary ensures that all pupils can learn the curriculum fully.
- A minority of pupils use discriminatory language. This causes upset to their peers. Leaders need to strengthen the curriculum further to ensure that it is effective in preparing all pupils for life in modern Britain.

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	142853
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10211722
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	872
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	93
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Parsons
Headteacher	Justin Humphreys
Website	www.stkaths.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 March 2018

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cathedral Schools Trust.
- The school uses three alternative provisions. These are: Urban Pursuits, Learning Partnership West and City of Bristol College.

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 this into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and trustees. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders, heads of year, teachers (including

early career teachers) and the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator. Inspectors contacted the alternative provisions used by the school.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, history, design, art and technology, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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