

Inspection of Kensworth Church of England Academy

Common Road, Kensworth, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 3RH

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Kensworth is a small school with a big heart. Pupils are happy. They love coming to school to learn and play with their friends. Pupils feel safe. They think of their school as one big family. Many parents agree. A typical parent comment stated, 'There is a wonderful sense of community.'

Pupils work hard in lessons. Their teachers expect them to listen and try their best. Pupils enjoy sharing their work with the school dog, Luna. They are proud to wear Luna's stickers in recognition of special achievements.

Pupils said that bullying is rare. If it does happen, then adults will sort out any problems. Pupils know there is always someone to talk to at school. They use their 'helping hands' to identify an adult who will listen to them. Pupils said that talking to Luna always makes them feel calm and settled.

Pupils understand and value each other's differences. Pupils said that is important to accept one another, and that differences can make everyone feel special.

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

Leaders have a clear and shared understanding for what they want pupils to know by the time they leave. They have planned an ambitious curriculum that covers all subjects expected. Leaders have ensured that their plans match the needs of pupils where classes include mixed-age groupings.

Leaders identify the order in which staff should teach this knowledge to pupils. This ensures that pupils build their learning on what they already know. Pupils can talk about what they are learning. However, this is not the case in all subjects, such as geography. Pupils' understanding is less secure in a few subjects. This is because leaders have not clearly identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn.

In most subjects, leaders know how well pupils are progressing. Leaders check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Leaders have only recently introduced new assessment approaches, and so their checks are not as effective across all subjects. In these cases, leaders do not know what pupils have remembered over time.

Children learn phonics as soon as they start school. Staff follow the school's phonics programme closely. They make sure that pupils regularly practise new sounds. The books pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they know. This means that pupils become successful readers. Adults are quick to spot where pupils need extra help. They provide extra help so that pupils keep up with their peers. Leaders promote pupils' love of reading through regular reading of stories, and choosing more books from the school library.

All pupils learn the same curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Leaders help teachers to adapt their plans to meet the wide-ranging needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils learn and achieve well.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. For example, pupils enjoy making suggestions about how they can improve the school. Pupils serve as school councillors, or they lead and organise lunchtime clubs. Through the Christian ethos, they discuss what it means to be courageous and kind. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The trust is working closely with the new local governing board to develop governors' roles. There is still more work to be done to ensure that governors fully understand the impact of the school's curriculum. Governors and leaders ensure that the workload of staff is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, governors and staff have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They are alert for any signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Leaders provide staff with regular training. Staff understand how to report their concerns. Leaders swiftly follow up any concerns. They work with a range of external services to provide vulnerable pupils with the support they need.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through their personal, social and health education learning. They understand how to stay safe when online. Pupils know how to report any concerns they may have for their own safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum is not sufficiently considered to provide teachers with the precise information they need to plan their lessons. This means that in these subjects, the pupils are less secure in the things that they need to learn. Leaders should continue with their work to review their planned curriculum to ensure that essential knowledge is clearly chosen in all subjects.
- Leaders recognise that, in some foundation subjects, the system of assessment is still being developed and embedded. This means that leaders are not able to identify exactly what pupils have remembered over the long term. Leaders should ensure that they review their assessment approaches, so that they understand what pupils have learned over time across all subjects.
- Not all governors know how well the planned curriculum is being implemented. This means that they are not able to hold leaders fully to account for the quality

of education. Governors should develop their knowledge of the school so that they provide leaders with even more appropriate challenge and support.

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	144458
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10212074
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Bailey
Headteacher	Steph O'Neill
Website	www.kensworthacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust. It joined in August 2017.
- Since becoming an academy, the school has not received a section 48 inspection. The school requires this inspection as a denominational Church of England faith school.
- The headteacher was appointed to the full-time substantive post in September 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors looked closely at reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. This included speaking with subject leaders, reviewing curriculum documents, visiting lessons, reviewing examples of pupils' work and speaking with some pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, who is also the special needs coordinator; representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer; and members of the local board of governance, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documentation, including documents that related to safeguarding and school planning, evaluation documents, governor minutes and reviews of the school's work that had been carried out by the trust.
- Inspectors considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 21 free texts. Inspectors also spoke to parents as they collected pupils from the school.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of staff, including non-teaching staff. They also considered the responses from 13 school staff to Ofsted's survey.
- Inspectors considered 38 responses from the pupil survey. They also spoke to pupils about their work and experiences while at school.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Stevens

Ofsted Inspector

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