

# Inspection of Queen Elizabeth Studio School

Kirkby Lonsdale LA6 2HJ

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 February 2022

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

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders and governors have established a supportive and nurturing culture. Together with staff, they have high aspirations for pupils. Pupils and students are happy and proud of their school. They spoke positively about the support they receive from staff. This helps them to achieve well in a range of academic and vocational subjects.

Pupils respond positively to staff's high expectations of their behaviour. They behave sensibly. Pupils are genuinely interested in their studies and work hard in class. Students in the sixth form show high levels of maturity. They enjoy supporting pupils in key stage 4 with their work.

Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe. They reported that if bullying should happen, staff will always help to resolve issues. Pupils and students are polite and respectful of each other. They have positive relationships with staff. Many reported to inspectors that they enjoy being treated as young adults.

Pupils and students benefit from a range of extra-curricular activities which help to build their self-esteem. They profit from project work and work experience with local employers. This helps them to develop their employability skills. Many students move on to education, employment or training that is directly related to the subjects that they have studied.

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

Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils and students. They are passionate that all will succeed. Leaders ensure that pupils have a smooth transition from their previous schools into Year 10. This helps them to settle down quickly into work and feel confident. Pupils and students are able to choose from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects, including English and mathematics. They are taught across both the studio school and Queen Elizabeth School (QES), which shares the same site. This means that they have access to a broad range of specialist facilities. Senior leaders have worked closely with subject leaders to establish clear lines of responsibility for pupils' and students' progress. Pupils and students achieve well. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

In many subjects, leaders have carefully set out the knowledge that teachers will teach, and the order in which it will be taught. Pupils and students have many opportunities to revisit and apply their knowledge. However, in some subjects, leaders are less clear about the important knowledge that pupils and students will learn. This means that some teachers are not able to build on pupils' and students' prior knowledge.

Teachers have specialist subject expertise. They use their secure subject knowledge to help pupils understand key concepts. Most teachers use a range of assessment strategies well to check that pupils have learned the knowledge in the curriculum.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified quickly when they enter Year 10. Leaders share information about the needs of pupils with SEND with staff. This helps to ensure that these pupils receive appropriate support in class. Most pupils with SEND learn well as they move through the school.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. Pupils have more opportunities to read for pleasure in school than they had in the past. In many subjects, teachers focus on developing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary. However, leaders' plans to implement reading catch-up strategies for pupils who struggle to read are only recently underway. A small number of pupils have missing reading knowledge. This hinders how well they access the curriculum.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They are keen to get on with their work. This means that teachers can deliver the curriculum without disruption. Pupils and students socialise well in the dining room during breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught about the importance of relationships, including consent. Leaders give pupils opportunities to learn about equality, democracy and finance. Pupils and students receive high-quality careers advice. They spoke positively about workshops with local employers and universities. This helps them to make informed decisions about their future.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They said that leaders are considerate of their well-being. Most staff feel well supported with their workload. Governors are committed to the school and supportive of leaders. They ask leaders probing questions. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for further improvement.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a culture of vigilance in the school. Leaders and governors have improved the security of the school site. Staff are well trained. They know how to spot the signs that a pupil could be at risk of harm. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the support that they need. Pupils and students build their knowledge of topics such as online safety and drug safety in an age-appropriate way.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the most important knowledge they want pupils and students to learn. This hinders teachers from planning learning that builds on what pupils know or designing activities that extend pupils' thinking. As a result, some pupils and students cannot acquire the deep body of knowledge that leaders wish them to gain. Leaders should ensure that the knowledge they want pupils and students to acquire is clear in all subject curriculums. This will enable teachers to plan and deliver new learning that supports pupils and students to know and remember more.
- Leaders' plans to develop pupils' reading knowledge are not fully in place. This means that those pupils who find reading difficult do not access the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should continue to implement their reading strategy so that pupils catch up quickly with their reading.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143749
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212117
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy studio school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	343
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	105
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Fenner Pearson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine O'Neill (Executive Headteacher)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.qestudio.org.uk">www.qestudio.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Queen Elizabeth Studio School opened in September 2017. It is part of the Lunesdale Learning Trust. The school offers vocational pathways, supplemented by core subjects and academic subjects.
- There have been significant changes to senior leadership since the school opened in September 2017. The executive headteacher of the school was appointed in September 2021 and is also the headteacher of QES.
- Some teaching is delivered to pupils and students of the studio school by teachers from QES. Almost all pupils join the studio school at the start of key stage 4, after completing their key stage 3 education at QES. A small number join from other neighbouring schools.
- Leaders work closely with a range of local businesses and universities to provide vocational opportunities for pupils and students.

- The school uses two alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.
- 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.

## 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 spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the local advisory body and trustees of the Lunesdale Learning Trust, including the chair of the advisory body.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils and students about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and students to check how effective safeguarding is in the school. Inspectors held telephone calls with representatives from alternative providers and local employers.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, English, geography and mathematics. Inspectors met with staff, visited lessons, looked at pupils' and students' work and spoke with them about their learning.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' curriculum plans and pupils' and students' work in a range of academic and vocational subjects. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders in some of these subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to the pupil, parent and staff surveys.

## Inspection team

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