

# Inspection of The Queen Katherine School

Appleby Road, Kendal, Cumbria LA9 6PJ

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Inspection dates: 30 and 31 March 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	Requires improvement

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

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are happy and proud to belong to this school. They appreciate the wide range of subjects that they can study. They also enjoy the varied opportunities that the wider curriculum provides for them to develop personally and socially. Staff know pupils well. Pupils are supported effectively to meet the high expectations that adults have of their achievement and behaviour. Pupils and students in the sixth form achieve well across a range of subjects. This is because leaders have focused on the development of each pupil as an individual.

This is a welcoming school. Everyone is included. Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. They trust the adults who work with them. Leaders work with the whole school community to make sure that bullying is dealt with effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils and students are keen to contribute to their school and community. For example, students in the sixth form support younger pupils with reading. A large majority of pupils in all key stages take part in a wide range of clubs and activities. These include regular trips and competitions. Every pupil is given the opportunity to take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Year 9. These activities help pupils to explore their interests and build their social skills.

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

Leaders, including governors and trustees, want all pupils to succeed. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have deliberately strengthened the offer for pupils to study humanities and modern foreign languages. This means that the proportion of pupils who study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is rising steadily year on year. Pupils achieve well.

Leaders have been given the time and support to carefully design the curriculum for their subject. In most subjects, leaders have identified the key knowledge that pupils should learn. This knowledge is ordered logically so that pupils across key stages 3 and 4 and students in the sixth form can build on their learning over time.

In most subjects, including in the sixth form, teachers present subject matter clearly and ensure that curriculum content is delivered well. Teachers have strong subject knowledge.

Leaders of SEND make sure that subject teachers have the information that they need to identify and meet pupils' needs. In most lessons, pupils with SEND are well supported by teachers and staff to access the curriculum in lessons. As a result, they are well prepared for their next steps in learning and further education.

Teachers check how well pupils have learned new knowledge. They give timely feedback to pupils. In most subjects, teachers use leaders' assessment systems well to address pupils' misconceptions and to fill any gaps in pupils' learning. Subject leaders also use assessment information well to inform teaching and to adapt the curriculum, where necessary, in their subjects at all key stages.

Leaders prioritise reading across the curriculum. They focus on improving pupils' vocabulary and their ability to read fluently and for enjoyment. This is particularly the case in key stage 3. There is a focus on ensuring that those pupils who find reading more difficult are supported to catch up with their peers. However, a small number of pupils continue to struggle with reading by the end of key stage 3. This is because they do not receive enough help, in a timely manner, to build their reading knowledge.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, benefit from a carefully planned programme to promote their personal development. For example, they learn about fundamental British values, healthy relationships, online safety and different religious faiths. Pupils can vote and be elected as part of their school council. Pupils understand and celebrate the differences between themselves and others. The LGBTQ+ drop-in place is described by pupils as a safe space to be themselves. Pupils are given the opportunity to develop as individuals as well as gain a social, moral and cultural understanding of the world.

In the sixth form, students engage in work experience, either in person or virtually. This means that, even during the pandemic, students continue to develop their work-related skills and understanding. Leaders ensure there is strong provision for careers education, information advice and guidance in all year groups. As a result, most pupils successfully enter education, employment, or training when they leave the school.

Most pupils have positive attitudes to their education. In lessons, and during social times, pupils' behaviour is calm and respectful. Pupils said that there are still some instances of poor behaviour. However, these are dealt with effectively to minimise any disruption to learning.

Governors and trustees are committed to the school. They have a clear insight into what is required to move the school further forward. Staff are appreciative of leaders' actions to address their workload and well-being challenges.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The leaders responsible for safeguarding are proactive in identifying pupils who need early help or may be at risk of harm. They know pupils' individual circumstances and work effectively with families to ensure that they receive the support they need. This includes working with external agencies where appropriate.

The curriculum, including that in the sixth form, is designed to raise awareness of safeguarding risks, including those related to online safety, sexual harassment and mental health. Staff are well trained and understand how to report safeguarding concerns. Leaders are continually developing policies and practices to ensure that they effectively manage risks and concerns to protect pupils.

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

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

- For a small minority of pupils who struggle to read, interventions during key stage 3 do not ensure that they catch up quickly enough. This means that some pupils lack the fluency and confidence that they need to enjoy reading and get the most out of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that they provide timely and effective support for those pupils who find reading difficult so that they can read with accuracy and access the full curriculum.

## **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>	136526
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212284
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 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>	950
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Forshaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jon Hayes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.qks.org.uk">www.qks.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 and 23 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, several new trustees have been appointed to the trust board.
- The school is part of The Queen Katherine multi-academy trust.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider.
- 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 has 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 met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of staff. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair, representatives of the trust board and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, geography and art and design. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to pupils at social times.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to leaders' self-evaluation, external quality assurance documents, and attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors checked on the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils, and governors and trustees to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding in school. An inspector checked the arrangements for those pupils who attend alternative provision.

## Inspection team

Amanda Downing, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Wood	Ofsted Inspector
Sharon Asquith	Ofsted Inspector
David Woolley	Ofsted Inspector

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