

Inspection of Kingsbury Academy

Kingsbury Road, Coundon, Coventry, West Midlands CV6 1PJ

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Kingsbury Academy is welcoming and friendly. Staff work hard to make sure that pupils are safe and happy. Leaders have begun to work with parents and professionals to identify how pupils learn best. They use this information to develop individual plans for pupils so that teachers can support them well.

Leaders have begun to develop the curriculum. They have made sure that all pupils have the opportunity to swim, and to spend time learning in the forest school and the school allotment. However, they have not yet made sure that all areas of the curriculum are planned well. This limits the progress that pupils make.

Leaders ensure that all pupils have the chance to take part in extra-curricular activities. Pupils have participated in sports such as archery, orienteering, curling and multi skills. Many pupils enjoyed taking part in a recent dance festival. Year 6 pupils recently enjoyed a residential visit. For some pupils, this is the first time they have stayed away from home. Pupils are encouraged to support charity events, such as Red Nose Day, and to mark important religious festivals and events such as Children's Mental Health Week. On World Book Day, some pupils read to pupils in different classes. These activities help pupils to develop their independence.

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

The headteacher joined the school in January 2021. She has high aspirations for all pupils. She has identified areas that do not support pupils' learning well enough and has quickly addressed these most important priorities. Leaders have established robust safeguarding procedures and ensured that all pupils receive the therapeutic support they need. The work on curriculum development is not as advanced. There is still more to do in making sure that there is a well-structured curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.

Leaders know that communication is vital to pupils' learning. Their aim is 'to give every child a voice'. They have worked with professionals to make sure that the school community uses every opportunity to encourage pupils to communicate. Clear structures and routines support this in some classes. 'Now' and 'next' cards support pupils' understanding of when activities change and 'choices' cards support pupils' decision-making. Where these routines and structures are not used well, pupils find it more difficult to focus on their learning and their behaviour tends to deteriorate as a result.

Leaders have introduced pupil-centred planning to identify pupils' learning, communication, social and behaviour needs. These result in useful documents. However, these are not used consistently well by all staff. This means that sometimes pupils are not supported well enough in their next steps in learning.

Leaders have begun to identify the other important things that pupils need to know. In some subjects, this helps pupils to learn well. For example, in a lesson on learning numbers from one to five, adults supported pupils to count and to recognise and write numbers using a range of appropriate resources and strategies. In other subjects, where the curriculum is not as clear, teachers do not always choose the most effective strategies to support learning. In these cases, pupils learn less well.

Leaders' ambition is that 'every child is a reader'. The school starts teaching phonics from the beginning of the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Some pupils are not yet ready to learn a formal phonics programme at this point, so they learn a pre-phonics scheme that supports their ability to recognise and use sounds. Pupils in all classes learn phonics until they are fluent readers. However, teaching of phonics is not consistent. Expectations for some pupils are not high enough. Some pupils re-read the same book many times, despite being able to read it fluently. This limits their opportunity to practise decoding and blending sounds using other appropriate books.

Pupils' personal development is prioritised by leaders. They have started to work on ensuring that it is part of all areas of the curriculum, but this is not yet delivered consistently in all classes. Pupils' independence is promoted from the early years. Pupils begin to learn the routines and behaviours that will support their learning in the future. Pupils in the EYFS are introduced to the total communication system the school uses, and parents are supported to use the same strategies at home. Leaders have not ensured that all adults in the early years implement these systems well. This is stopping some pupils from settling in to learning as well as they could.

Governors have a realistic understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They can see the impact that leaders are making. Leaders have introduced new policies and practices to address the weakness they have identified, but they do not check that these are being implemented effectively. This means that they do not always identify the most important next steps to improve pupils' learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Since her appointment, the headteacher has implemented clear and robust systems for safeguarding. All staff are trained to recognise the signs that pupils may need help. Safeguarding leaders are well qualified and receive regular update training. Staff understand the additional risks for pupils at their school, especially for those who cannot communicate well or who are pre-verbal. Communication boards support pupils to express their worries and concerns. Leaders are relentless in pursuing the right help for their pupils from other agencies. Leaders have recognised that some families do not meet the threshold for early help from external agencies. They have appointed a well-qualified pastoral leader to provide the necessary support in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Structures and routines to support pupils' behaviour are not used consistently well. This means that pupils sometimes experience difficulties managing their own behaviour and emotions. Leaders should ensure that all staff use consistent structures and routines to support pupils' learning.
- The curriculum is not clearly sequenced in all subjects or pathways. This means teachers do not always know what to teach and when. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is well sequenced and that important knowledge is identified.
- Leaders have introduced pupil-centred planning to support implementation of the curriculum. This information is of variable quality and is not being used consistently well. This means that teachers do not always make the right pedagogical choices based on the needs of pupils in their class. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use the information they have about pupils to support pupils' learning effectively.
- Leaders do not check effectively that the new policies and practices that they have introduced are being implemented effectively. This means that leaders have an overgenerous view of some aspects of the school's work. Leaders should ensure that they check the implementation of their policies and practices and use these to inform their next steps.

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	139911
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10212251
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governors	John Darch
Headteacher	Andrea Davis
Website	www.kingsbury.thrive.ac
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a special school for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions, speech, language and communication needs, profound and multiple learning difficulties, and severe learning difficulties.
- The school joined Thrive Education Partnership in April 2020.
- The current Headteacher joined the school in January 2021.
- All pupils at the school have education, health and care plans.

Information about this inspection

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

This is 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.

- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including curriculum and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors held discussions with teachers and representatives of governors and the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, communication, mathematics, and personal, social and health and education. For each of these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection. Inspectors took into account the responses to the pupils' and staff's surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Claire Price, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Owen	Ofsted Inspector
Alun Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector

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