

Inspection of King's Lynn Academy

Queen Mary Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE30 4QG

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Required Improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel cared for and supported because of leaders' moral imperative to do what is best for them. Every pupil is made to feel like they belong and that they can achieve.

Pupils know that staff have high aspirations for them and that provision will be carefully adapted to meet their needs. Some pupils struggle to follow the mainstream curriculum. They know that dedicated provision in school, such as 'Forward Step', will help them to overcome the difficulties they face to ensure they achieve positive outcomes.

Pupils experience lots of success. They are confident to participate in, and contribute to, activities and discussions. Pupils benefit from a safe environment where it is okay to make mistakes. Pupils know that teachers will always support them to improve, and they value teachers' feedback on their work.

Pupils are able to learn without disruption. They understand the behaviour system and know that it will be applied fairly.

Pupils treat each other with tolerance and respect. They know that they will always be listened to by adults in the school, and that suitable follow-up actions will be taken. Incidences of bullying are rare.

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

Leaders have re-developed the curriculum to ensure it meets pupils' needs well. Leaders have raised the academic aspiration of the curriculum, ensuring that the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is studied by the vast majority of key stage 4 pupils. Leaders have ensured that the key stage 3 curriculum has the breadth and depth to prepare pupils well for this. Pupils' achievement continues to improve as this re-developed curriculum becomes an established part of provision across all year groups.

Teachers check what pupils know when they arrive at school. From this, they plan sequences of learning that build pupils' knowledge over time. Teachers break down complex concepts, so pupils have the building blocks they need to be able to make sense of them. Teachers also re-visit key concepts so that pupils can make connections with previous learning. For example, in English, pupils are taught about the use of metaphor. This helps them to analyse more complex poetry. In history, teachers explain to pupils how to organise knowledge into a historical chronology. This allows pupils to make sense of what they are taught in the context of when it happened. As a result, pupils learn well.

In a small minority of subjects, leaders and teachers have not fully achieved this level of success. Some knowledge is not re-enforced to ensure pupils remember it.

Some vocabulary is not clearly understood by pupils. Leaders are aware of this and are already working to improve provision in these subjects.

Teachers make careful use of assessment to track what pupils have understood. They adapt provision to meet pupils' needs based on this. Pupils are supported to stay on track and achieve success with the curriculum, through targeted support. This can include additional support in class from the teacher, or being part of a more specialised intervention programme. As a result, pupils engage well with their learning. Leaders' expectations of behaviour are clear and understood. Teachers apply the behaviour system consistently. This results in pupils behaving in a calm and orderly way.

Some pupils struggle to read fluently. They are supported well through the teaching of reading in the English department. This helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn to read. More broadly, teachers use SEND plans which identify ways they can support pupils' needs. Some of these work well, but some do not identify the support pupils need clearly enough, as the targets lack precision.

Teachers deliver a planned programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) that builds detail as pupils get older. Pupils are well informed of current events as time is built into this curriculum to cover these. Leaders' chosen approach to underpinning PSHE with form time activities is not working as well as it should because some activities are not planned and delivered effectively enough.

Leaders provide a wide range of clubs and activities such as the LGBTQ+ group, photography, sports teams, and residential and other trips. Pupils are confident to express their feelings, tolerant of difference and well equipped for life in modern Britain. Careers education meets the requirements of the Baker Clause as pupils are given access to a wide range of post-16 options

Leaders evaluate the strengths and development areas of the school well. They lead the school effectively. The trust has played an active role in enabling school leaders to focus on the core priority of raising standards. This has included supporting leaders with human resources, finance and high-quality partnership support with external organisations, such as working with a teaching school to ensure a high-quality programme of training for early careers teachers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders carry out appropriate recruitment and vetting checks. They record these accurately on the single central record. Leaders have systems in place to ensure clear chronology and follow up to all identified safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding leaders have formed strong relationships with social workers and external organisations to ensure that families get the support they need.

The school carries out appropriate checks on pupils' welfare and actively follows up any identified concerns.

The school has an appropriate programme of training for staff. Staff are able to identify and follow up any concerns effectively. Leaders have established a culture of vigilance and safeguarding being the responsibility of everyone.

Pupils feel that there are a variety of adults who will listen if they have any concerns or worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small minority of subject areas, the curriculum is not as well planned as in other subject areas. In these subjects, implementation of the curriculum is at an earlier stage. As a result, some pupils get some inconsistency in the quality of provision in different subject areas. This means they do not secure learning consistently well. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum development in these subject areas is brought up to the same high standard as the rest of the curriculum.
- Some of the provision maps for pupils with SEND lack precision. As a result, teachers do not have precise enough strategies to be able to support these pupils as effectively as they should. Leaders need to ensure that all planning for pupils with SEND includes the necessary precision and detail for pupils' needs to be met effectively.

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	136202
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10227402
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	892
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julie Perry
Headteacher	Alan Fletcher
Website	www.kingslynnacademy.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	03 October 2018

Information about this school

- The school runs an on-site behaviour provision called 'Forward Step'.
- The school has three pupils accessing alternative provision with registered 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, physical education, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also visited some social science lessons.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator, local governors and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors explored the school's safeguarding culture through viewing safeguarding records and procedures, meeting with a range of pupils and staff, and talking to safeguarding leaders.
- Inspectors considered the 63 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 43 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the 57 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 31 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sally Garrett	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Roche	Ofsted Inspector
Shan Oswald	Ofsted Inspector

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