

# Inspection of a good school: The Queen Elizabeth Academy

Witherley Road, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 1LZ

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 June 2022

## Outcome

The Queen Elizabeth Academy continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and know that leaders and staff have the highest expectations for them. 'We can and we will' is heard and seen frequently in the school. Pupils work hard to understand what they are learning. They value the support teachers give them.

The school is inclusive and welcoming. Pupils feel safe and listened to. There are good relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils. Pupils are polite in lessons and around school. They listen well to each other and their teachers. They are respectful of each other's views and are exceptionally supportive. Pupils behave well. They are proud of their school and the improvements that have been made in recent years.

Many pupils attend after-school clubs, enjoying a broad range of opportunities from sports to robotics. Pupils also experience planned activities in each year to support their understanding of careers. All pupils in Year 10 will visit a university this year.

Pupils know who to talk to if they are worried about bullying. There are good systems in place to deal with bullying. Pupils feel safe in school.

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

The principal, since his appointment in 2020, has thoroughly reviewed the work of the school and driven an ambitious programme of change. Curriculum leaders have worked closely with their teams to produce a highly aspirational curriculum. It builds on the skills and interests of the pupils. Teachers have carefully planned the steps in learning, so pupils have several chances to cover key information.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain new information well to their pupils. They frequently question pupils to check their understanding. Teachers use specialist subject words in their explanations and expect pupils to use the same terms. There are several strategies in place across the school to help pupils learn. Teachers check pupils' knowledge and understanding of previous work at the start of every lesson.

Prompt sheets help pupils to write longer answers when needed. Teachers carefully assess pupils' understanding of new learning. Pupils receive helpful feedback on how they could improve their work. Most pupils make good progress.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are usually supported well in lessons. Teachers provide them with extra resources. They may receive help with some activities from a teaching assistant. However, at times, the rapid pace and high challenge of the lessons mean that some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, struggle to keep up. They do not complete the planned activities and do not feel they are making enough progress.

Reading is a high priority. Pupils are improving their reading skills. They have frequent opportunities to read in lessons. All form classes read a book together in form time. The weakest readers have opportunities to work in small groups with specialist support. Pupils are sometimes less confident about speaking. They cannot always explain what they have learned using specialist subject words. They would like more opportunities in lessons for discussion and debate.

Leaders recognise that the previous curriculum at key stage 4 was too narrow. Only a handful of pupils studied a language to GCSE level. In the new curriculum model, they have taken urgent action to increase the uptake of languages. Next year, two thirds of pupils in Year 10 will continue to study a language.

Pupils receive regular reminders about the required standards of behaviour and 'leaving the street at the gate'. Pupils respond by behaving well in lessons and around the school.

Leaders ensure the school plays a part in developing the whole child. The character development programme is in its first year. It is helping pupils to identify the values of pride, kindness, endeavour and resilience. Pupils are keen to take on leadership roles and they run the school library.

Staff feel that their views are valued and listened to. They appreciate the training and support they receive through the trust. Leaders have consideration for staff's well-being and workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training to help them keep pupils safe. Leaders follow up concerns promptly and appropriately. The pastoral team know pupils and families well and go the extra mile to provide additional help. They make good use of external agencies.

Leaders follow rigorous safeguarding procedures when appointing new staff. There are regular checks by senior leaders in the school and the trust to make sure that all safeguarding records are well kept.

Pupils receive regular lessons, taught by a specialist team, on how to keep themselves safe. Lessons include topical issues such as sexual harassment and cyber bullying.

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

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

- Some pupils are struggling to keep up with the challenging new vocabulary and significant amount of knowledge introduced in lessons. This means they are not making the progress expected of them. Leaders should provide further training to support teachers in adapting lessons to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their oracy skills. This means that they are not able to confidently use specialist subject vocabulary when they are talking about their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities for speaking.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2017.

## **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>	139937
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227076
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	656
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Pat Beanland
<b>Principal</b>	Neil Harding
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://tqea.attrust.org.uk/">tqea.attrust.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is a member of the Academy Transformation Trust.
- The school uses part-time alternative provision at one registered provider and one unregistered 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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The lead inspector met with chair of the board of trustees, the chair of the local governing body, the interim CEO and director of institute for Academy Transformation Trust, the principal and senior leaders.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, religious education and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff working in pastoral roles. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider development and other aspects of school life.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's single central record. They scrutinised other documentation, including leaders' records of staff training.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff questionnaires.

### **Inspection team**

Deborah James, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Helen Reeves

Ofsted Inspector

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