

Inspection of Queen Elizabeth School

Kirkby Lonsdale, Lancashire LA6 2HJ

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, students in the sixth form and staff are proud to be a part of Queen Elizabeth School. The school motto of 'scholarship and care' is lived out through the high level of education and pastoral support that pupils and students receive.

Leaders and governors have high expectations for pupils' and students' achievement. Pupils and students benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum. They enjoy learning and achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those pupils who are disadvantaged.

Pupils and students feel safe and happy at school. They know who to talk to if they feel upset or worried. Pupils said that bullying is rare but that when it is reported, staff deal with it swiftly and effectively.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are respectful to each other and staff. Pupils' attitudes to learning are noteworthy. Pupils and students approach their work enthusiastically. Pupils behave well in classrooms and around school.

Students in the sixth form play an active role in the school community. For example, they readily assume leadership roles and run clubs for younger pupils. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the wide variety of clubs available to them, such as the 'Pride Group' and the steel pan band club. Pupils and students enjoy the two well-resourced library facilities at the school.

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

Pupils and students, including those with SEND, study an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. They are taught by passionate teachers who have a high level of subject-specific expertise. Leaders have worked hard to ensure that the curriculum is organised logically so that pupils and students can build their knowledge well over time.

Teachers use assessment strategies well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, in a small number of subjects, some teachers do not ensure that pupils' misconceptions are addressed quickly. This means that some pupils and students are not secure in their knowledge before they move on to new learning. These pupils and students do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils and students behave impeccably in lessons and around school. Lessons are not interrupted. Pupils are curious and want to learn.

Leaders prioritise the early identification of pupils with SEND. Leaders share strategies and relevant information with staff so that the needs of pupils with SEND are met. Pupils with SEND spoke positively about the support that they receive from staff.

Leaders are in the infancy of developing clearer systems for identifying pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. This means that some teachers do not have an accurate understanding of pupils' reading ability. As such, some pupils who struggle with their reading do not receive the support that they need to catch up quickly with their peers. This hinders how well these pupils access the curriculum.

Leaders have introduced a comprehensive, age-appropriate personal development programme. They have provided staff with suitable training and resources so that they can deliver this programme effectively. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are encouraged to discuss a variety of topics such as online safety, finance and mental health.

Leaders have ensured that pupils, and students in the sixth form, have access to appropriate careers education, information, advice and guidance. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the support that they receive to make informed decisions about their options. Students in the sixth form are aspirational. They said that they are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training. This is because leaders have ensured that students receive appropriate, tailored guidance.

Trustees and members of the governing body support and challenge leaders effectively. They are clear about the priorities for further improving the quality of education that pupils and students receive.

Leaders take positive action to support the workload and well-being of staff. Staff appreciate the well-being group that has been introduced.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school. Leaders ensure that all staff are well trained and that they receive regular safeguarding updates.

Leaders ensure that all staff know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff are vigilant. They know how to spot the signs that a pupil may be vulnerable and need support. Staff respond quickly and effectively when they have concerns about a pupil's welfare.

Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that comprehensive and timely support is provided to pupils and their families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively to address gaps in pupils' learning. This means that some pupils and students have not secured the knowledge that they need to learn well. Leaders

should ensure that staff are equipped to identify and address pupils' misconceptions before moving on to new learning.

- Leaders are at the early stages of identifying pupils who do not read as well as they should. This hinders how well some pupils access the full curriculum offered to them. Leaders should ensure that they accurately identify the deficits in pupils' reading knowledge. This is so that teachers can support these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers.

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.

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	136357
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10226375
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,170
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	186
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Fenner Pearson
Headteacher	Cathy O'Neill
Website	www.qes.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Queen Elizabeth School converted to become an academy school in February 2011. When its predecessor school, Queen Elizabeth School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Leaders use three registered alternative providers for a 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.
- The school is part of the Lunesdale Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 and members of staff. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and trustees, including the chair of governors
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and students from Years 7 to 13 about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- 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 checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and students to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in modern foreign languages, mathematics, history, design technology, computing and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subject areas.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff, pupils and students.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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