

Inspection of Kesgrave High School

Main Road, Kesgrave, Ipswich, Suffolk IP5 2PB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

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 receive a good education at this popular school at the heart of its community. Leaders advocate a culture of high expectations which pupils strive to meet. There is a culture of high aspirations for all.

Pupils and students are well cared for by staff, who know them well. There is a capable pastoral team who work collaboratively to ensure pupils are well supported. The house system and the outside zoning supports pupils to mix with wider groups of peers. Older pupils and students relish the opportunities to support younger pupils.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils and staff understand the school's expectations. Pupils show pride in their school. Pupils respond well to the reward system linked to the '3Bs' of 'be positive, be respectful, be your best'.

Most pupils say they enjoy attending school. Pupils speak of positive relationships with staff, who they trust to keep them safe and care for them. Pupils are confident that bullying, if it occurs, will be dealt with effectively.

Students in the sixth form are offered a personalised curriculum. Students receive support to help them prepare for their next steps.

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

Over the past three years, governors have made many changes to strengthen senior and middle leadership. Leaders have made changes to strengthen the curriculum and are driving further improvements. These improvements are already having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Leaders at all levels drive initiatives to improve the school further. However, some of the systems used to analyse the impact of these improvements are at an early stage.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They plan learning to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding, delivering this in a logical manner. Teachers undertake educational research; as a result, teachers know what strategies to use to help pupils learn best. Opportunities for local learning are part of the curriculum offer. For example, pupils study Sutton Hoo in history lessons.

Pupils build a detailed knowledge of the subjects they study. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and sequence learning well. They help pupils to recall and apply essential ideas in a subject. Pupils study a broad range of subjects. However, the uptake of pupils studying modern foreign languages in key stage 4 is particularly low. Consequently, many pupils do not achieve the English baccalaureate. Leaders have made changes to the curriculum at key stage 3, providing a wider choice of languages. They are encouraged to learn many languages by making links between them.

Many pupils choose to stay on at school and join the sixth form. The key stage 5

curriculum offer is broad, having been designed around the needs, interests and ambitions of the students. Students benefit from this curriculum offer. Students value the personal mentoring they receive. This helps them prepare for the next stage of education or employment.

Leaders have identified gaps in learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They have adapted the curriculum to address these areas, which include reading. Leaders undertake forensic analysis of the weaknesses in reading at key stage 3. A focused support programme helps pupils gain the skills and knowledge needed to be confident, fluent readers. Pupils who need support with their reading at key stage 4 do not receive similarly precise support. Some continue to struggle with reading.

Leaders have put in place a clear system of rewards and sanctions which both pupils and staff say is effective. Poor behaviour is quickly addressed and disruption to learning is rare. Pupils attend well and are punctual to lessons. They produce work they are proud of. Pupils learn how to respect and celebrate difference. Pupils spend social times with their own year groups and linked staff. This further develops the relationship between pupils and pastoral staff. Pupils say that name-calling, including derogatory language, is rare. They feel a strong sense of community.

The programme for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) covers topics such as emotional well-being, careers, personal safety, diversity and prejudice. Sixth formers receive high-quality careers advice. They get support to make university applications. They also learn about local employers, such as the nearby BT Research Laboratories.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well known by leaders and learning support assistants. Staff have access to detailed plans outlining how best to support pupils in lessons. Records of the extra support they receive show the impact of provision. Leaders have identified the needs of disadvantaged pupils and made appropriate plans to help them catch up and make progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn how to keep safe, including online. They feel safe in school. They trust staff to help them if they need it. Leaders know their pupils well. They put appropriate provisions in place to support pupils' mental health and well-being.

Staff are well trained and vigilant. Leaders take timely and appropriate actions, including referrals to external agencies where necessary. While logs are detailed, decision-making is not always recorded in as much detail.

Record-keeping of employment checks needs to be more precise. Leaders have plans in place to address this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in key stage 4 do not have age-appropriate reading skills. These pupils are struggling to access the curriculum and, therefore, have gaps in their learning. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils receive high-quality reading support, so they can develop the knowledge and skills needed to make progress.
- Systems for tracking and analysing some aspects of the school's performance are underdeveloped and lack sufficient detail. This means that leaders do not have all the information needed to drive improvements for the benefit of all pupils. Leaders should further develop the systems for tracking and analysing the school's performance so they can quickly identify and address weaknesses.

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	136969
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10242248
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	1,884
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	353
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stella Mackenzie
Headteacher	Julia Upton
Website	http://www.kesgrave.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post in September 2020.
- The school joined East Anglian Schools Trust in September 2019.
- The school uses eight providers of alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- The academy 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 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 to senior staff with responsibility for the curriculum, behaviour and attendance, personal development, inclusion, safeguarding and the sixth form.
- Inspectors spoke to members of the governing body and senior staff from the trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, English, maths, history, geography and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, 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. Other subjects, including PSHE, were considered as part of this inspection.
- To inspect personal development, behaviour and attitudes, and safeguarding, inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and teachers across the school, considered pupils', parents' and staff's responses to Ofsted's surveys and spoke to leaders. Records of pre-employment checks and safeguarding documents were also reviewed.
- Inspectors visited the sixth-form provision.
- Inspectors observed tutor time and break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans.

Inspection team

Sarah Fowler, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Ayling	Ofsted Inspector
Rob James	Ofsted Inspector
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