

Inspection of The King's School, Grantham

Brook Street, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG31 6RP

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 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

Ofsted has not previously inspected The King's School, Grantham as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud to attend this school. They understand and rise to the high expectations that teachers and leaders have. Pupils thrive at this school. One pupil commented: 'The opportunities we get at King's, we would not get anywhere else.'

Leaders have placed a great deal of emphasis on ensuring that pupils achieve high levels of academic success. There is also an equal focus on developing pupils as resilient, confident and well-rounded individuals.

Pupils and students in the sixth form are polite and respectful. The ethos of the school is inclusive. All pupils know that any form of discrimination, derogatory language or bullying is not acceptable. They say this is rare and teachers would deal with it instantly and effectively if it were to occur.

Students in the sixth form are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment. Many of them are successful in gaining places at the most sought-after universities and/or courses.

The overwhelming majority of parents or carers would recommend this school. One parent summed up the views of many when they said: 'The wealth of opportunity this school offers children is fantastic. There is something for everyone.'

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

Leaders have constructed a broad and ambitious curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to achieve their full academic potential at the school. Pupils get a strong academic grounding in many subjects in key stage 3. This ensures that they have the essential knowledge they need, even if they do not continue to study the subject in key stage 4. Subject leaders have identified the concepts that they want pupils to know. They have considered how the curriculum builds pupils' understanding over time. Leaders review the curriculum. For example, in history, leaders have added further content offering a balanced representation of historical points related to race. This ensures that all pupils develop a balanced understanding of both positive and negative historical points, as well as developing their understanding of different cultures.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use well-chosen resources and activities to ensure that pupils achieve well across the curriculum. On occasions, teachers do not check that all pupils have secured a depth of understanding. This leaves some pupils with gaps in their knowledge. In many subjects, teachers ensure that pupils gain subject-specific vocabulary. This is particularly the case for students in the sixth form. Leaders allow time in the curriculum so that pupils can read for pleasure. The impact of the curriculum reflects the strong results pupils achieve in national tests.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) feel well supported. However, the strategy to identify the needs of pupils lacks precision. Some needs are not well enough identified. The information provided to teachers about some pupils with SEND is not accurate enough.

Teachers have high expectations of the way in which pupils should conduct themselves. Teachers use a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. The approach is well understood by pupils. This creates a calm and orderly environment in the school. Lessons are purposeful and pupils commit to their studies. Pupils attend well and are punctual to school and their lessons. This helps maximise the time they have for learning. On occasions, leaders do not take swift action to ensure that the persistent absence of a small number of pupils is managed effectively.

The curriculum goes well beyond the academic. Pupils contribute widely to the school and local community. Examples of this include charity work and, most recently, a performance by the school choir at the local church. Pupils value the extra-curricular sports offer. They use this as an opportunity to develop their interest into a talent. Pupils enjoy competing and are proud to represent their house. Some of the elite-level coaching pupils receive is of the highest quality and allows pupils to excel. A broad range of activities such as chess club and a war-gaming club are also available during lunchtimes.

Students in the sixth form say they feel privileged to attend this school. They benefit from the expert subject knowledge of their teachers. They value their mentoring of younger pupils and being ambassadors of this school. The environment, teaching and the ethos of the school prepare students for success at the next stage.

Staff report high levels of support from leaders. They feel that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Governors play an active role in holding leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant and know exactly how to respond to a safeguarding concern. Leaders have ensured that all staff know how to record and report a concern about a pupil.

Leaders keep detailed records of concerns. These demonstrate swift and appropriate actions that help pupils keep safe. Leaders are quick to involve external agencies to protect the most vulnerable pupils.

Leaders ensure that safer recruitment checks are robust. Pupils know that there is an adult to talk to if they have a worry or a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, teachers do not check that all pupils have secured the depth of understanding that is set out in curriculum plans. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers systematically check that all pupils have secured the understanding.
- The strategy to identify and support pupils with SEND is not as precise as it could be. Teachers do not always have the information they need to provide the most effective strategies to support pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that additional needs are identified precisely and that teachers use this information to support pupils with SEND more effectively.
- The procedures and systems to challenge and support pupils who are persistently absent are not robust enough. On occasions, actions taken to improve attendance are not swift enough. Leaders should ensure that they take swift and effective action when any pupil is at risk of becoming persistently absent.

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	137166
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10229049
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1184
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	300
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Ross
Headmaster	Simon Pickett
Website	www.kings.lincs.sch.uk

Information about this school

- The King's School, Grantham converted to an academy in August 2011 and became a part of The King's School Trust. This is a single academy trust.
- The school's sixth-form curriculum is delivered as part of a partnership arrangement with one other local school. This school is Kesteven and Grantham Girls School.
- 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 does not use any alternative providers to educate pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in art, English, science, mathematics, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders of other subjects.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, professional development, the sixth form, the use of the pupil premium funding and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4, and students in the sixth form.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. He reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- An inspector met with early career teachers.
- The lead inspector met with the of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Imtiaz Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Keval Thakrar	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Pride	Ofsted Inspector
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