

Inspection of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School

Abbey Place, Faversham, Kent ME13 7BQ

Inspection dates: 28 February and 1 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected seven years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish in this inclusive and vibrant school. Leaders are deeply committed to providing every pupil with the opportunity to shine. Pupils, including those in the sixth form, benefit from an extensive range of trips and enrichment experiences. Opportunities such as collaborating in scientific research with the European Space Agency or running science and technology workshops for local primary school children help to prepare pupils to be responsible citizens.

Pupils learn to influence positive change through their roles in various student leadership teams. They respectfully debate challenging topics and extend their understanding of democracy through visits to parliament and hosting hustings.

Pupils are mature, and their behaviour is exemplary. This is because leaders have established a strong culture of mutual respect. Bullying is extremely rare because staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Positive relationships between staff and pupils mean that the school is a nurturing and calm place to learn.

Leaders quickly identify any barriers to learning. This helps to ensure that all pupils can achieve their potential. This includes providing additional, thoughtful support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Expectations in lessons are high, and pupils strive to achieve their very best.

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

All pupils have access to a wide range of subjects at every stage of their academic career. In many subjects, leaders have carefully identified and ordered the knowledge that pupils need to know. This means they can secure a deep understanding and that they achieve well. For example, in modern foreign languages, pupils quickly learn the vocabulary and grammar they need to be able to communicate fluently in French and Spanish. However, in some other subjects, the precise knowledge that pupils need to explicitly link one key idea to the next is not always thoroughly identified and considered. Consequently, not all pupils are able to confidently grasp more complex ideas, and therefore they do not learn as much as they could.

In lessons, new concepts are explained with clarity and precision. Teachers know it is important to check what pupils can remember from previous learning. However, in subjects where important knowledge has not been as precisely ordered, there is variation in how well teachers use this information to adapt learning. This can lead to lessons moving on too quickly. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

Staff are knowledgeable about the needs of pupils with SEND. Detailed support plans are regularly reviewed to check that teachers are supporting pupils in class

effectively. Regular help is given to those pupils who need additional support to read. Leaders are in the process of reviewing the impact of this work. Pupils read every day, selecting books from the well-resourced library. Students in the sixth form read with younger pupils to help them enjoy a wide range of texts.

Pupils are resilient. They feel valued and cared for. The well-planned tutor programme and personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum are highly regarded by pupils across all year groups. Pupils learn how to stay safe and how to look after their mental and physical well-being. Students in the sixth form collaborate with external agencies to deliver workshops to help younger pupils understand how to deal with peer pressure.

An abundance of opportunities helps to widen pupils' understanding of the world around them. School exchange visits to India or mountain climbing in Morocco help pupils learn about different cultures while developing newfound skills. Citizenship is actively promoted. This includes raising money for local charities, as well as using scientific research of air quality to appeal to the local council to reduce air pollution. The extra-curricular offer is impressive and accessed by the majority of pupils.

Leaders and governors unite behind their vision for all pupils to be well-rounded young people who are equipped for future success. Leaders ensure pupils attend school regularly and have a positive attitude towards learning. A highly effective and extensive careers programme informs pupils about the endless possibilities their future may hold. Sixth-form students receive expert guidance to gain top university places or prestigious apprenticeships with global companies.

Leaders continuously review how best to develop the knowledge and expertise of staff. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive. Governors ably support school leaders by asking probing questions to ensure decisions that are made are in the very best interests of all pupils. A range of information is used to carefully identify school improvement priorities. Leaders are working to further evaluate the provision for disadvantaged pupils to ensure all pupils excel.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have regular training to help them identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Records clearly show the swift action that leaders take to seek external help for pupils and their families. Leaders maintain regular communication with staff and professionals working closely with pupils. Together, they regularly review this support to make sure that pupils are safe and attending school well.

Leaders know the risks that pupils may face outside of school and ensure that the PSHE curriculum informs pupils of how to avoid these dangers. This includes online safety and topics such as the legalities of antisocial behaviour.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn has not always been precisely identified and ordered clearly enough. Consequently, not all pupils have the knowledge they need to confidently link and apply what they know to new learning. Leaders must ensure the important knowledge that pupils need to know is clearly identified and ordered so all pupils achieve the ambitious goals of the curriculum.
- Assessment information is not consistently used to recap and review learning. This means that gaps in knowledge can go unaddressed. Leaders must ensure that all teachers have the expertise they need to adapt teaching in response to where they identify pupils need additional support.

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	136570
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10265832
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
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	1,019
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	Roger Spicer
Headteacher	David Anderson
Website	www.queenelizabeths.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography, design technology and modern foreign languages. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with governors, including the chair of the governing board.
- Inspectors considered the 404 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including 281 free-text comments. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding lead, spoke with pupils and staff, checked school records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with governors.

Inspection team

Michelle Lower, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Philip Wayne	Ofsted Inspector
Ally Aldridge-Gibbons	His Majesty's Inspector
Phillip Blagg	His Majesty's Inspector

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