

# Inspection of a good school: The Key Education Centre

Tukes Avenue, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 0SG

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Inspection dates:

16 and 17 May 2023

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at the Key Education Centre are prepared well for their next stage of life, whether this is a return to a mainstream school, college or work. They feel supported well to overcome any difficulties they previously had at school. Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve, and the majority of pupils work hard to live up to these.

During their time here, pupils learn to understand their own emotions and reactions to situations. Leaders are determined that pupils' aspirations and achievements are raised when they join the school. Consequently, pupils develop their confidence and resilience, and their chances of success in life are improved.

Most pupils behave very well. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and the majority of staff are highly skilled in supporting pupils. When this is working well, pupils can learn in a calm and friendly environment. However, this is inconsistent, and the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils regularly disrupts lessons.

Staff know and understand pupils particularly well. Pupils know that staff will always listen to them and try their best to help them solve any problems. Pupils are confident bullying is rare, and that staff deal with it quickly if it does happen. Consequently, pupils feel safe.

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

Leaders work with resolve to ensure pupils can achieve their potential. Successfully promoting pupils' personal development and well-being is rightly at the heart of provision. Alongside this, the academic curriculum is designed to give pupils as many chances as possible to gain suitable qualifications.

When pupils join the school, teachers use assessments well to find out what pupils already know and can do. This allows staff to understand the difference between gaps in pupils' knowledge because they have missed school, and any specific, special educational needs they may have. Teachers then tailor pupils' individual learning pathways effectively.

The quality of curriculum delivery is variable. In many cases, teachers skilfully use a range of appropriate techniques and strategies in lessons. There are some strong examples of personalised approaches to teaching the curriculum that ensure that pupils remain engaged in their learning. Here, teachers and learning support assistants adapt content as needed. Consequently, pupils understand and respond well to what is being taught. They successfully build their knowledge and skills over time and make great progress. However, this is not consistent across the school. Where delivery of the curriculum is weaker, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have recently introduced a thoughtful strategy to support pupils who struggle with reading. The approach is beginning to help pupils to gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent readers. Pupils who need extra support get this, and during the inspection, pupils were proud to read out loud during lessons.

While leaders, and many staff, undoubtedly have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, staff do not apply these consistently. Generally, staff use carefully considered approaches to managing behaviour well. This results in many pupils learning to manage their own behaviour effectively. Alongside this, the majority of pupils respond well to the school reward system, gaining points for doing 'the right thing'. However, a combination of behaviour strategies applied inconsistently and weaker curriculum delivery leads to a significant minority of pupils' behaving in a way which disrupts learning for others.

Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the wider world and of their place in it. This rightly includes regular opportunities to learn how to socialise and get along well with others, including while out in the wider community. Pupils benefit from a variety of work-related learning opportunities, for example a recent visit to a commercial kitchen to see chefs at work. Leaders provide pupils with strong support for their transition to college and useful, independent advice to support pupils in making appropriate future decisions.

Staff fully appreciate how much leaders prioritise staff well-being and are dedicated to making sure that workload is manageable. Strategies such as regular supervision and meetings with leaders mean that staff feel valued.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Staff have in-depth knowledge of pupils and of relevant contextual concerns. As a result, they are able to notice anything worrying and quickly report anything that concerns them. Leaders' systems to record and monitor concerns are robust and enable them to deal with any

concerns quickly and efficiently. The pastoral team, including the family support workers, provide a huge amount of invaluable support to pupils and their families.

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

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

- The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils is not good. Consequently, learning in some classes is disrupted regularly. Leaders should ensure that strategies to support the high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct are applied consistently across the school.
- There is variation in how well the curriculum is implemented across the school. As a result, the curriculum does not meet the needs of all pupils effectively. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the curriculum so that it meets leaders' intent.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133778
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269123
<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	24
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Leanne Forde-Nassey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.thekeyeducationcentre.gov.uk">www.thekeyeducationcentre.gov.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The Key Education Centre caters for pupils who are temporarily unable to attend a mainstream school. This is either because they have been/are at risk of being permanently excluded, or because they are unwell or emotionally vulnerable. While there are only 24 pupils on roll, there are approximately another 120 pupils who attend the school on dual registration.
- The school is on two sites, one in Gosport and the other in Havant.
- Since the last inspection, the Key Education Centre has almost doubled in size after taking over another education centre, previously on the Havant site, that closed.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also met with members of the management committee and spoke on the phone with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, cooking and psychoeducation. These deep dives included discussions with curriculum leaders and teachers, lesson visits with leaders, talking to or observing pupils and looking at their work/evidence of their learning.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, pupils' work and a range of documentation, including for individual pupils. This included individual pupil targets and documents to track and monitor progress towards these. The lead inspector also looked at the school self-evaluation and development plan.
- To look closely at safeguarding in the school, inspectors spoke to leaders, staff, pupils and members of the management committee. Inspectors looked at a range of safeguarding documentation and systems, including the school's single central record, which contains details of recruitment checks.
- Inspectors considered the views of 24 pupils and 52 staff who completed the Ofsted surveys. While there were not enough responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View, to be considered, inspectors took into account the school's own recent parent surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Maxine McDonald-Taylor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Jacobs	Ofsted Inspector

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