

Inspection of The Kingsway School

Foxland Road, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 4QX

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Recently, leaders have raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour at The Kingsway School. This is helping some pupils to enjoy their learning. Many pupils told inspectors that they have a trusted adult who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. For the most part, pupils feel happy and safe at school.

Despite leaders' efforts to improve pupils' behaviour, a few pupils reported that some of their peers do not treat them well. Some pupils are subjected to discriminatory language. A small number of pupils said that they do not report this unkind behaviour because they perceive that a few staff do not take their concerns seriously. Nevertheless, when pupils report bullying, leaders take appropriate action.

Leaders expect pupils to achieve well. To this end, they have designed a suitably ambitious curriculum. However, leaders have not ensured that some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who have fallen behind their peers in their reading knowledge, benefit from appropriate support. Some pupils' learning across the curriculum is uneven as a result.

Pupils typically appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities that leaders provide, including sports clubs and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Nonetheless, pupils do not learn sufficiently well about the importance of tolerance and respect for others.

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

Recently, leaders have taken judicious steps to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Subject leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. Most subject leaders have defined the essential knowledge that they expect pupils to remember. This is helping most pupils to learn increasingly well. However, leaders work to ensure that pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), access the same ambitious curriculum in its early stages.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. In the main, they design effective learning activities that enable pupils to build on what they know already. Teachers frequently check that pupils have learned and remembered the knowledge that is most important for subsequent learning. Some pupils achieve well.

Typically, leaders identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND in a timely way. Leaders provide teachers with useful information about the needs of these pupils. Despite this, many teachers are not equipped to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have prioritised reading through the wider curriculum. For example, teachers use a range of strategies to develop pupils' vocabulary. However, leaders do not have effective systems to identify and remedy the gaps in the reading knowledge of those pupils who do not read as fluently and confidently as they should. This hinders how well these pupils access the wider curriculum.

Most pupils are focused on their learning and want to do well. Typically, this leads to a calm and orderly atmosphere in classrooms. However, a minority of pupils sometimes cause disruption in lessons and around the school site. Leaders have started to take action to address this negative behaviour.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn a range of information to prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils learn about the differences between people. However, some pupils continue to use derogatory language, including sexist and homophobic language, towards their peers. Leaders have not tackled this aspect of pupils' behaviour effectively. This is affecting some pupils' enjoyment of school.

Pupils experience a suitable careers programme. For example, pupils in key stage 4 spoke enthusiastically about their recent mock interviews. These have helped pupils to prepare for the next stage in their education or training.

Trustees recognise that the school needs to improve. They have taken action to begin this process. Governors have begun to challenge leaders more effectively to raise standards. They have gained a thorough understanding of leaders' improvement priorities. Leaders are taking appropriate actions to address areas of concern. However, at times leaders at all levels have not had sufficient oversight of the impact of their actions. This means that some actions have not made the positive difference that leaders intend within the planned timescales.

Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Many staff recognise that the school needs to improve. Nevertheless, they feel proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have recently strengthened their safeguarding systems and processes. They have ensured that staff are trained well to identify any pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders have ensured that there are robust procedures in place for staff to report concerns about a pupil's welfare. Leaders work closely with external agencies to secure timely and appropriate support for pupils when necessary.

Some aspects of leaders' safeguarding records are not as thorough as they should be. This particularly relates to checks done on a small number of pupils when they are not in school. While this does not mean that pupils are unsafe, in a very small number of cases leaders are not able to identify patterns of concern as swiftly as they should.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example they learn about the dangers of knife crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not had sufficient oversight of the impact of their work to improve the school. This means that some actions have not made the positive difference that leaders intend. Leaders should accelerate their plans to ensure that there are sufficiently rigorous processes in place to enable them to drive improvement of the school at a more rapid pace.
- In a very small number of cases, leaders' safeguarding records do not clearly record the actions that leaders have taken to check that some pupils are safe when they are not in school. As a result, leaders, including governors, do not have the information that they need to swiftly identify patterns of concern. Leaders should ensure that safeguarding records are sufficiently detailed.
- Some teachers do not use the information that they receive about pupils with SEND to adapt their delivery of the curriculum effectively. This means that some pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, do not learn the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that staff are fully equipped to support pupils with SEND to learn well.
- Leaders have not identified or addressed the gaps that some pupils have in their reading knowledge. This hinders how well these pupils access the wider curriculum. Leaders should ensure that they identify the elements of reading that pupils find difficult, so that they can support these pupils to catch up quickly.
- Leaders do not have a robust approach to dealing with pupils' use of discriminatory language. This means that some pupils have little confidence in these issues being resolved, which impacts on how positively they feel about school. Leaders should ensure that they have appropriate systems in place to address pupils' unkind or intolerant behaviour.

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	142509
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10283776
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1324
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen White
Headteacher	Anna Fowler
Website	www.kingsway.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This academy is part of the Education Learning multi-academy trust.
- A new headteacher was appointed very recently. This headteacher has been seconded from another school within the multi-academy trust.
- The school operates a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provision caters for pupils with severe learning difficulties from Year 7 to Year 11. There are currently 22 pupils accessing this provision. All these pupils have an education, health and care plan. Places are commissioned through the local authority.
- The school uses six registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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

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 leaders and staff.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of both the trust and the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and design, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. The inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents and records relating to pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Sally Rix, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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