

Inspection of Queen Elizabeth School

Crawley Green Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU2 9AG

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is not the same place that it was a few years ago. Almost everything has changed. The school has new leaders, a new uniform and even a new name. These changes have made a big difference. The school is a much better place to go to than it was before.

Pupils know that leaders want them to do well. Expectations of them are now much higher than previously. Most pupils work hard and do their best. As a result, they achieve well during their time at Queen Elizabeth School.

Behaviour has improved greatly. Pupils know the rules and the consequences for not following them. Pupils say that the rules are much stricter than they used to be. While some pupils find this difficult, the school is now a much calmer place, where pupils can concentrate and learn.

Pupils feel safe at school. They say that there are no problems with bullying. Pupils have excellent attitudes to equality and diversity. They treat each other with courtesy and respect. Pupils enjoy spending time with the school dog and looking after the chickens who live in the courtyard at the heart of the school.

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

The school has been through challenging and turbulent times since the previous inspection. The effectiveness of the school declined. That decline has been halted. The school is now on a clear upward trajectory.

Leaders recognised that the proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) was too low. They identified that the main reason for this was that too few pupils studied a language in key stage 4. Leaders took decisive action to address this. Most pupils in Year 10 are now studying a breadth of subjects that meet the EBacc requirements.

Leaders have tackled weaknesses in the curriculum well. Subjects are now planned effectively. Leaders have identified the most important knowledge and skills in each subject. These are revisited regularly so that pupils remember key knowledge in the longer term.

Some subject departments have had more disruption than others, with changes of leadership and teaching staff. In some departments, many staff are new or inexperienced. Pupils generally achieve well. However, where departments are less developed, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Teachers generally know their subjects well. They have the strong knowledge they need to challenge pupils effectively and to pick up on misconceptions quickly. Teachers think carefully about how best to present new learning. Teaching staff

regularly check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. They use the information they gather from these checks to adapt how and what they teach.

As with other aspects of the school, there have been weaknesses in provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) since the previous inspection. This is no longer the case. Leaders have introduced a range of effective systems and approaches. These have had a positive impact and pupils with SEND now achieve well. Leaders ensure that pupils who struggle to read are given the help they need to catch up quickly.

Pupils typically behave well. Learning is rarely disrupted by the behaviour of others. Despite the many improvements, some pupils do not have strongly positive attitudes to school and learning. This sometimes has a negative impact on their behaviour and issues such as the presentation of their work.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is strong. It covers a wide range of areas, including physical and mental health. This is a highly inclusive school where pupils learn to value and celebrate each other's differences. Careers advice and guidance are well developed.

Pupils are given a broad range of opportunities. There are frequent trips to theatres, museums and other places of interest. There are a wide range of clubs for pupils to attend. Leaders ensure money is not a barrier to prevent disadvantaged pupils from going on trips or attending clubs.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular and effective safeguarding training. This helps them to recognise possible signs of abuse and neglect. Staff report concerns about pupils promptly. The designated safeguarding leads are tenacious in their approach to protecting pupils. They take appropriate and timely action in response to concerns raised by staff. Leaders have ensured that robust measures are taken to ensure that the right people are appointed to work at the school. All the necessary checks are carried out before anyone is allowed to start work.

The PSHE curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject departments are less well developed than others. Where this is the case, the curriculum is sometimes delivered less effectively and some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, achieve less well. Leaders should take action to

increase the impact of subject leadership so that the curriculum is delivered highly effectively in all subjects, in order that all pupils achieve as well as they can.

- Some pupils do not have positive attitudes to school and learning. Where this is the case, pupils do not take as much pride in the school or their own work as they could or behave as well as their classmates. Leaders should take further action to ensure they 'win the hearts and minds' of pupils who are yet to be fully on board with the significant improvements to the school.

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	109707
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10277658
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,080
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Barrett-Kinsley
Headteacher	Rhoda McPherson
Website	qesluton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in September 2020. There have been several other changes to the school's leadership team since the previous inspection in January 2018.
- The school was previously known as Ashcroft High School. The school became known as Queen Elizabeth School in September 2021.
- The school uses one registered and three 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.
- The school plans to open a sixth form, on the same site, in September 2023.

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 met with the headteacher, the associate headteacher, other leaders and two governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, religious studies, history and 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.
- Inspectors also listened to pupils reading, scrutinised a range of school documents and observed pupils during breaktime and lunchtime.
- In order to check the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of pre-appointment checks, looked at records of child protection concerns, met with leaders and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 47 responses to Ofsted Parent View and 28 free-text comments. They also took account of 57 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and 65 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alan Gray	Ofsted Inspector
Dan Leonard	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Robins	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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