

# Inspection of King's Leadership Academy Bolton

Lever Edge Lane, Great Lever, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL3 3LA

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is David Crosby. This school is part of the Great Schools Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Shane Ierston, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joseph Spencer.

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

King's Leadership Academy is a welcoming and friendly school. Most pupils live up to the school's values. This contributes to the respect and tolerance that they demonstrate for the opinions and beliefs of others. Pupils relish the opportunities to celebrate diversity. This helps all pupils, regardless of their differences, to feel part of a school community.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), forge strong relationships with their teachers. Teachers are approachable and supportive of pupils' needs. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The trust has worked closely with the school to improve the behaviour management system. Most pupils respond well to the new routines and strategies. This means that classrooms are typically calm and orderly.

Pupils study a comprehensive programme that promotes their personal development. Almost all pupils, including those with SEND, complete The Duke of Edinburgh's Award in Year 9. Pupils enjoy taking part in a large range of outdoor pursuits. For example, they canoe and rock climb as part of their leadership residential trip. These opportunities encourage pupils to be resilient and work together as a team.

The trust and the school have high aspirations for pupils' academic success. Most pupils work hard and achieve well overall.

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

The trust works effectively with the school to help negate the potential disruption caused by the temporary school buildings which are housed on the split site. Trustees and members of the local governing body provide effective challenge to the school about all aspects of its work. This helps to continually improve the quality of education for all pupils, including those with SEND.

There have been recent improvements made to the breadth and depth of the curriculum at key stages 3 and 4. However, the subject choices in key stage 4 are not as broad as they could be. This means that some pupils are not prepared as well as they should be for their next stage of education.

The school ensures that the curriculum identifies the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to emphasise subject-specific vocabulary. This helps pupils, including those with SEND, to access subject content. Nevertheless, some teachers do not use assessment strategies consistently well. At times, this leaves gaps in pupils' learning. Therefore, some pupils do not have sufficient knowledge to learn new content.

The school has enhanced its systems to identify and support pupils with SEND. This helps pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum and achieve as well as they could.

The trust has worked with the school to prioritise reading. Pupils who find reading difficult are identified quickly and supported effectively. Regular reading sessions promote pupils' knowledge of a wide range of different books. Most pupils read widely and often.

The school engages well with parents and carers to improve pupils' learning. For example, parents provide support with homework and behaviour. Pupils, including those with SEND, attend school regularly. This reflects pupils' motivation and keenness to excel. Pupils' behaviour and conduct are strong in the classroom. This creates a purposeful learning environment.

Pupils with SEND engage fully in school life. They take on many student leadership roles. Pupils, including those with SEND, are enthusiastic about their 'student parliament' duties. Such roles help them to build their confidence and communication skills.

The school places a sharp focus on broadening pupils' awareness of the wider world. For example, pupils regularly take part in trips to the theatre, museums and different countries. Pupils learn about and appreciate various religions through their visits to different places of worship. For instance, they visit a gurdwara, mosque, temple and church. Pupils support the community through events such as the 'winter wonderland'. As a result, pupils have a secure understanding of life in modern Britain and the wider world.

Pupils benefit from a strong careers programme. They receive impartial careers advice, meaningful work experience and mock interviews. The school equips pupils with the skills that they need for success beyond school.

The trust and the school are considerate of staff's workload when making decisions about assessment, staffing and supervision duties. Staff value the support and professional development that they receive. They are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The subject choices in key stage 4 are not as broad as they could be. This means that some pupils have limited knowledge to pursue wider subjects beyond school. The school should ensure that key stage 4 pupils have access to a broader range of subjects so that they are prepared well for their next steps.

- Some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively enough. This means that some pupils have gaps in their learning. The school should ensure that teachers check and address pupils' misconceptions so that they can learn new content well.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147077
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294410
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	911
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Joseph Spencer
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Shane Ierston
<b>Principal</b>	David Crosby
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kingsbolton.com">www.kingsbolton.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Great Schools Trust.
- The school opened in September 2019.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The school operates from premises at two temporary sites. One site accommodates pupils in Years 7, 8, 10 and 11. Year 9 pupils are taught at a different site.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider for a very small number of pupils.
- The school provides after-school care for pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the alternative provider.
- Inspectors held meetings with the CEO of the trust, the school's principal, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during social times and during movement around the school at both sites.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, art and design, history and Spanish. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, pupil premium, behaviour and attendance, alternative provision, early careers teachers, careers, SEND and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation and attendance and behaviour records. Inspectors also reviewed minutes of the trustees' and the local governing body meetings.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

## **Inspection team**

Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Derek Yarwood	Ofsted Inspector
Phill Walmsley	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Pomeroy	Ofsted Inspector

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