

Inspection of Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy

Jermyn Street, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 7RS

Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Josephine Smith. This school is part of Robert Carre Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Nick Law, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jon McAdam.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Kesteven and Sleaford High School. They thrive in the extremely positive culture that the school has established. In classrooms, pupils engage eagerly with the high-quality learning opportunities that staff provide. Pupils work hard and take pride in their successes.

Staff share the very highest expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve exceptionally well. This is demonstrated consistently in external examinations. Most pupils go on to take advantage of the superb sixth-form offer. Students in the sixth form are very well prepared to go on to aspirational destinations.

The school's programme for personal development is especially well considered and complements the academic curriculum. The programme has been designed precisely to give pupils the knowledge and skills they need to flourish. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They know why equality and diversity matter and understand the fundamental British values. The sixth-form enrichment programme includes sessions about cooking and guidance on managing finances. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, take on leadership roles enthusiastically, such as house captains and subject prefects. They are proud to support their peers and the school community.

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

The curriculum is exceptionally broad and ambitious. In key stage 3, it stretches pupils to gain knowledge beyond the expectations of the national curriculum. This prepares pupils to be successful in key stage 4. The vast majority of pupils study all of the subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate. In the sixth form, students choose from a very wide variety of challenging academic and vocational courses. The curriculum has been very well designed to meet the needs of all pupils. The school has thought carefully about where adaptations might be needed to make sure that pupils with SEND can be successful.

In all subjects, the curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils build on what they have learned before as topics become increasingly complex. Subjects are further enhanced by enrichment opportunities. For example, pupils can join clubs in creative writing or journalism to further develop their talents and interests in English. Trips to Europe complement learning in French and German, as well as providing memorable cultural experiences.

Reading is an important part of the curriculum. Pupils read often from challenging texts that cover a broad range of genres. They enjoy access to a well-stocked library. There is good support for weaker readers that helps them to gain fluency and confidence with their reading.

Teachers are subject specialists. They use their knowledge and expertise to deliver clear explanations and prepare learning activities that require pupils to think deeply. Teachers

check pupils' understanding carefully and often. They ask questions that promote discussion and deepen pupils' understanding. Thoughtful feedback helps pupils to improve their work. Staff accurately identify any pupils with SEND. They routinely make sure that these pupils can work independently and achieve well.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, consistently display exceptionally positive attitudes to their studies. They engage thoughtfully and enthusiastically with all learning activities. When a task is demanding, pupils rise to the challenge eagerly. Behaviour is exemplary. No time is wasted in lessons. Around school, pupils are polite and respectful of each other and staff. Sixth-form students are highly motivated. They use independent study time purposefully. Attendance is excellent.

The school provides strong support for pupils' well-being. Pupils learn how to maintain good mental and physical health. When pupils need extra help, this is provided by well-trained and compassionate staff. Some sixth-form students act as well-being ambassadors for younger pupils, who value this support. Pupils benefit from lessons in maintaining positive relationships and friendships. They learn how to use the internet and online applications safely.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, benefit from high-quality advice about future education and career choices. Subject curriculums connect learning closely to career possibilities. Assemblies and tutor-time activities promote aspiration and keep pupils well informed.

Trust leaders, trustees and governors know the school very well. They share the school's vision to provide an exceptional academic and personal development offer for all pupils. The trust provides strong support and rigorous challenge to school leaders to ensure that this vision is realised.

Staff are immensely proud of their school. They value opportunities to continue to develop their expertise and support to manage their workload. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent typified the views of many with the comment, 'The school really does want every child to flourish.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

Unique reference number	137667
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10254832
Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils on entry	Girls
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	753
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	122
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jon McAdam
CEO of the trust	Nick Law
Headteacher	Josephine Smith
Website	www.kshs.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Robert Carre Trust.
- The school is part of the Sleaford Joint Sixth Form, in collaboration with two other local schools. This means that some sixth-form students attend some of their lessons at the other schools in the collaboration.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, the chair of the board of trustees, the chair of the local governing body, and other representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their work in several other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders and reviewed records relating to attendance, behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff, pupils, and parents through discussions and using Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Christine Horrocks	Ofsted Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Sheppard	Ofsted Inspector

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