

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: King Edward VI CEVC School

Grove Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3BH

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

King Edward VI CEVC School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They particularly benefit from the wide range of subjects and from the care that staff take to ensure their well-being. The curriculum is well organised and there is a culture of high expectations. This means that most pupils achieve well in their learning.

Pupils say that behaviour has improved since September when new expectations were introduced. Pupils line up at the beginning of the day, mobile phones are no longer used in lessons and there are new routines in classrooms and around the school. As a result, behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils feel safe. They know that they can speak to the school if they have concerns and that the school will resolve issues quickly and effectively.

There are a wide range of activities at lunchtime and after school. These include sports, music and drama clubs, as well as interest-based clubs. There are also leadership opportunities such as being a prefect, house captain or sports leader. Pupils know that the school listens to their ideas. This means that the pupils who participate grow in confidence and develop a range of skills.

Pupils are confident to be themselves and develop good relationships with each other and with staff. There is a culture of kindness and support.

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is coherent and builds on previous learning. Teachers have a high level of subject knowledge. The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Teachers use information about how best to support pupils with SEND effectively. This includes pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for deaf pupils (specially resourced provision).

Teachers work together to share ways of teaching that support effective learning. For example, where teachers use skilled questioning, the knowledge of pupils, including those with SEND, is deepened. This is not yet consistent, and so not all pupils achieve as well as they could. The school also needs to provide further opportunities for extended writing so that pupils develop confidence and independence in their written work.

The school emphasises the importance of reading. Teachers teach vocabulary explicitly across subjects. The school identifies pupils who struggle with reading. They get the support they need to improve their reading and so access written material in lessons better.

The school has a strong focus on pupils' personal development. New arrangements for personal, social and health education have been introduced this year. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring pupils look after their mental and physical health. Pupils are taught how to manage stress and take action to look after themselves. There are also a wide range of activities, clubs, trips and visits. The school encourages pupils to identify their own aptitudes and to further develop their talents and interests. Further tracking would help to increase participation so that more pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, would benefit from developing their skills and increasing their enjoyment. The school ensures that pupils receive timely advice and guidance about local colleges, apprenticeships and employment. A careers fair helps pupils to understand careers education and employment opportunities locally and further afield.

The school works hard to ensure that pupils attend regularly. The school's comprehensive attendance systems mean that the gap between the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers is narrowing. The school understands that pupils will achieve less than their potential if they are not in school enough. Improving attendance remains a priority.

The school has introduced new behaviour systems this year. Expectations are clear and behaviour has improved. This means that the atmosphere in lessons and around the school is harmonious and purposeful.

The school has navigated a period of considerable organisational change for the school. Leaders recognise the changing needs of the school population and decisions are always taken in the best interests of pupils. The school works hard to engage with parents and to keep them informed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Effective questioning is not yet consistent in lessons. This means that some pupils do

not achieve as well as they could. The school should continue its work on ensuring that teachers develop their questioning skills.

- Some pupils do not engage with the rich extra-curricular offer that the school provides. This means that some pupils miss out on the opportunity to enjoy themselves and to develop their skills and interests. The school should track participation and encourage more pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to take part in these activities.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

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	124856
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10345270
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Cannon
Headteacher	Deri O'Regan
Website	www.king-ed.suffolk.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up their position in 2022.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average, as is the number of pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be entitled to the pupil premium is below average.
- A small number of pupils are educated off site in registered alternative provision and other unregistered provision approved by the local authority.
- A specially resourced provision for pupils who are deaf caters for 13 pupils. Pupils are placed in this provision by the local authority.
- King Edward VI is a Church of England voluntary-controlled school and received its most recent section 48 inspection in January 2019. The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools report judged the impact of collective worship and overall effectiveness to be good.
- 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

- 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 considered the quality of education in the following groups of subjects: English, French, science and Spanish; art and design, drama, geography, history, mathematics and visual and performing arts. Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspection team toured the site and visited a wide range of school activities, including assemblies, a mental health workshop, an orchestra rehearsal, sports clubs, a wind band, further mathematics and singing practice for the school production.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher, members of the senior team, middle leaders and pastoral and safeguarding leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and had conversations with the local authority excellence partner and staff from alternative education provisions.
- The inspection team considered 210 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and 163 written responses. They also reviewed the 519 responses to the pupil survey and the 97 responses to the staff survey.
- The inspection team analysed a range of the school's policies, procedures, governor minutes and self-evaluation documents.
- 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.

Inspection team

Carole Herman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Gammons	Ofsted Inspector
Caren Earp	Ofsted Inspector

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