School report

The Kingston Academy

Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT2 5PE

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	**Outstanding**
Effectiveness of leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	**Outstanding**
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	**Outstanding**
Outcomes for pupils	**Outstanding**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Since opening the school in September 2015, the headteacher has quickly established an ambitious culture which demands excellence for all.
- The trustees, headteacher and other senior leaders provide excellent leadership. They have ensured that teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding.
- Pupils make very strong progress across English, mathematics, science and humanities.
- Standards across the curriculum are high. Teachers ensure that pupils benefit from activities that deepen their thinking and stretch their skills.
- Leaders have established a stimulating learning environment. Teaching successfully challenges all groups of pupils to aim high and achieve their best.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is innovative and engages pupils' interests. Pupils of all abilities have numerous opportunities to develop their personal and social skills through an inspirational enrichment programme.
- Leaders and teachers check pupils' progress regularly. Pupils identified as at risk of falling behind receive high-quality additional support that improves their knowledge and understanding.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average, and pupils enjoy their time at school.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. They are respectful, well-mannered and articulate.
- Overall, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, including pupils in the specially resourced provision, make substantial progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress from their starting points, in line with their peers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the high-quality education that the school currently provides is maintained effectively as the school expands and reaches full capacity.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding

- The determined leadership of the headteacher and school leaders ensures that all staff share the vision of excellence and are equally ambitious for all pupils.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths of the school and areas that still need to improve further. Leaders waste no time in tackling their priorities for improvement in order to maximise how well pupils learn over time.
- Senior leaders track pupils' outcomes closely. As the school has no national examination results, staff work extensively with other schools and external agencies to check that their assessment information is accurate.
- Middle leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the school's priorities. They play a strategic role in driving forward improvements in their areas of responsibility and across the school. They are a well-trained and effective team.
- Teachers spoke profusely about the many excellent opportunities that they are given to develop their practice. Staff who are new to the teaching profession feel valued, well supported and enjoy their work.
- The Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding is used well. Year 7 pupils who joined the school with low attainment at the end of key stage 2 make very strong progress.
- The curriculum contributes very successfully to pupils' progress, behaviour, personal development and welfare. The curriculum is rich and creative, which broadens pupils' minds and helps them to think critically. Pupils are extremely positive about the 'going beyond' sessions, which help them to develop their interests and personal skills, including communication skills.
- The school provides an inspiring and wide-ranging extra-curricular programme, including sports, creative workshops and curriculum-based competitions. Such activities enable pupils to develop additional personal and social skills and qualities. The vast majority of pupils take up these additional opportunities. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about performing in the school's theatre production, visiting Iceland, and taking part in a volunteering award scheme.
- British values are strongly promoted through assemblies and tutor-time activities. Pupils develop a deep and mature understanding of other faiths, cultures and the importance of equal opportunities. Their sense of respect and tolerance, and of right and wrong, is well developed.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fully encouraged throughout all aspects of school life. Pupils are reflective and thoughtful about the needs of others. They grow quickly into well-rounded, caring individuals.
- Leaders have developed innovative and effective partnerships with local further and higher education providers, which benefit the school community.

- Pupil premium funding is used imaginatively to support disadvantaged pupils. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make excellent progress in all aspects of their learning and develop into resilient young people.

Governance of the school

- Those responsible for governance have a clear vision that this is an inclusive school, serving the local community. Trustees know the school very well and are determined to ensure that all pupils achieve the best that they can. They are clear about their statutory responsibilities. Written records of trust board meetings show that trustees provide a high level of challenge and support to senior leaders.
- Trustees understand their responsibility in relation to safeguarding pupils, and they have received appropriate training. Regular external reviews of safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils' welfare is at the heart of the work of the school.
- Trustees actively promote the health and well-being of the school community. Staff are very appreciative of the range of initiatives that have been put in place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school and that all staff know and understand their responsibilities in relation to keeping pupils safe. Staff receive regular safeguarding training, including about the 'Prevent' duty and child exploitation. This ensures that staff are vigilant to signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm and that they raise concerns without delay
- Working relationships between staff who have specific safeguarding responsibilities and outside agencies are strong in order to safeguard pupils' welfare. Staff work effectively with parents and carers as well as external agencies when pupils need support.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and are confident that any concerns that they raise will be dealt with swiftly. They spoke with maturity about the many ways that they are taught to keep safe, for example how to manage risk in difficult situations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment — Outstanding

- Teachers know pupils' academic starting points and use the information to plan tasks that meet the needs of all pupils very well, including the most able and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teaching is of consistently excellent quality in mathematics, English and humanities.
- Teachers have very high aspirations for their pupils. The depth of teachers' subject knowledge helps to extend pupils' understanding. Pupils often complete work that is of a standard above that typical for their age, especially in English, mathematics and science. Pupils make very strong gains in their skills and knowledge over time.

- The quality of teachers' guidance to pupils on how to improve their work is excellent. Pupils welcome the range of advice that teachers provide, and reflect carefully on how best to make improvements to their work.
- Homework is used well to capture pupils' interest and extend their learning beyond the classroom. Pupils have worked with teachers to put an effective homework policy in place. Pupils take pride in their work.
- The school has introduced an inspirational internship programme, which runs across all subject areas. All pupils involved in the programme are challenged to develop a wide range of skills.
- The school has a well-thought-out assessment policy, and pupils are formally assessed twice throughout the school year. Teachers check pupils' work against that of pupils in other local schools to ensure that assessments are accurate. Those pupils who fall behind receive effective additional support and, as a result, catch up quickly.
- The school's approach to writing promotes the development of pupils' writing skills, which they apply successfully to their written work across all subjects. Pupils apply their high-level literacy skills and make substantial progress in English, geography and history.
- Pupils in the specially resourced provision benefit from high-quality support tailored to their needs. They develop their social skills very well, and participate successfully in learning in the main school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare — Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' academic resilience. The vast majority of pupils are confident and participate actively in a wide range of learning situations.
- Pupils enjoy being part of a school community where everyone is valued and included in all that the school has to offer. They recognise that discussions about equality and prejudice help them to understand and value the uniqueness of others. Consequently, pupils recognise the diversity of British society and respect differences.
- Pupils have numerous opportunities to develop leadership skills and contribute to school life as members of the school council, reading mentors and mental-health ambassadors. Pupils develop maturity and a keen sense of responsibility through these roles.
- Pupils receive effective and impartial careers advice and guidance, which supports them when they make important decisions about their futures. They spoke highly of the quality of support that they have received from the school's partner institutions when choosing GCSE programmes of study.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep safe, for example, when online. They are very clear that staff in school would help them if they had any problems. The

number of bullying incidents over time in the school is very low. Pupils said that if any bullying does occur, staff deal with it effectively.

- The overwhelming response to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, was extremely positive about the school. As one parent put it: 'Pupils receive lots of input and care from staff as well as dynamic teaching. The school has succeeded beyond my expectations.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders have put effective systems in place to help teachers manage the behaviour of pupils highly effectively. Pupils are very aware of the school's behaviour system and understand how and when it is applied.
- Pupils are self-assured, polite and respectful when speaking to staff and visitors to the school.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision behave well and attend regularly. Leaders and staff keep a close eye on pupils' welfare to ensure that they benefit from the support that they need, both academically and in their personal development.
- The number of pupils who are excluded from school is well below the national average. This is because pastoral support for pupils' personal development encourages pupils to manage their behaviour effectively. Pupils spoke positively about 'the nucleus', which provides a secure space for them when they need time for reflection.
- Whole-school attendance is above the national average. Strategies to secure good attendance are effective. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils — Outstanding

- Pupils' progress is excellent because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is exceptionally strong.
- Pupils' work shows that the vast majority of pupils, including those who are the most able, typically make substantial and sustained progress across all subjects. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is equally strong because of the well-targeted teaching and extra help that they receive.
- Leaders have introduced a successful programme to promote reading. Pupils read with confidence, including those who have not attained the standard expected for their age at the end of key stage 2
- Pupils of all abilities have the knowledge and skills that they need to approach the opportunities available in the next stages of their education with confidence. This includes effective preparation for their chosen GCSE subjects.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities matches that of other pupils with the same starting points. Pupils who are supported in the school's specially resourced provision also make substantial progress from their starting points.

- Alongside excellent academic outcomes, pupils make substantial gains in their communication and social skills. They articulate their knowledge in a reflective and mature manner and relish the opportunity to think critically.

School details

Unique reference number	141862
Local authority	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10047363

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	532
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Peter Mayhew-Smith
Headteacher	Sophie Cavanagh
Telephone number	020 8465 6200
Website	www.thekingstonacademy.org
Email address	enquiries@thekingstonacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2015. It is part of Kingston Educational Trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school has a specialist provision for nine pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Malden Oaks.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of subjects throughout the school. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work. They observed pupils' behaviour during break and lunchtimes, and at lesson changeover times, in assembly and during registration.
- Documentation, policies and the school's practice were considered, with particular regard given to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the trust board and several members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and formally, including during visits to classrooms.
- The inspection considered the views of 144 parents who replied to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of 41 staff and 44 pupils who completed Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Parker, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jason Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Verity Lane	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Gorman	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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