

Kensington Aldridge Academy

1 Silchester Road, London W10 6EX

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders, governors and staff have the highest ambitions for pupils. Together, they have created a school where pupils are happy, safe and making excellent progress. What the school has achieved and sustained is remarkable.
- Senior leaders consistently review priorities, ensuring that subject leaders have the knowledge and skills to secure high standards in their own subjects. As a result, the quality of leadership at all levels is exceptional.
- Leaders have created a culture where the school's motto, 'Intrepidus' is at the heart of everything. It means to be bold, fearless and undaunted. In the words of a pupil, 'Intrepidus is a lifeline for us all, for our future lives.'
- Pupils live up to the school motto. They are hard-working, resilient and confident young people who are being fully prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They take great pride in their work and have highly positive attitudes to learning.
- Staff morale is exceptionally high. Staff enjoy working at the school and benefit from high-quality training. Teachers new to the profession feel very well supported in settling into the school quickly and developing their practice.
- The curriculum is carefully designed and reflects the school's performing arts specialism. Leaders do their best to ensure that the option subjects at key stage 4 reflect pupils' aspirations. The teaching of the curriculum ensures that pupils develop a deep understanding of what they are learning.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students make excellent progress overall, including the most able. Students are full of praise for the sixth form, including enrichment activities, work experience and careers advice.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in nearly all subjects. This is because teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan effectively to meet pupils' different needs and abilities.
- Teachers fully support pupils to develop the skills needed to be successful in their different subjects. Leaders have identified the need to improve outcomes further in design technology and computing science.
- Leadership of special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, including of the resource base, is highly effective. Leaders monitor and support pupils' academic and emotional development fully. Leaders are aware of the need to improve training for supporting adults to ensure that there is consistently high-quality support for all pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve pupils' progress in design technology and computing science so that it matches the excellent progress that they make in their other subjects.
- Follow through with plans to ensure that there is consistency in the high-quality support provided by supporting adults so that they can work with teachers even more effectively to maximise pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- All leaders have strong ambition for pupils. Leaders have created a culture of high expectations and a commitment to excellence from all staff. Teaching is highly effective across the school and ensures that pupils make substantial progress from their starting points.
- The senior leadership team complement each other exceptionally well. There is joined-up thinking and high-quality work across all aspects of the school. Subject leadership is excellent. Overall, the quality of leadership has ensured that staff apply school policies consistently well, for example in relation to managing behaviour and how teachers assess and review pupils' work.
- Leaders and staff have shown determination, resilience and commitment in steering the school through what happened after the Grenfell Tower fire. Parents and carers who replied to Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire, have been full of praise for how well and sensitively leaders have managed the school since the event.
- Leaders have a thorough and in-depth process of checking the quality of education that the school provides. This includes their decisions in organising regular and comprehensive external reviews of the school. Subject leaders share and check on their own practice by regularly working with other schools, including through the school's strategic agreement with Charterhouse and Godolphin and Latymer independent schools. These relationships with other schools enable leaders to review pupils' work, monitor the accuracy of teacher assessment, share resources and develop the curriculum. As a result, leaders have a deep and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The curriculum is designed carefully. It reflects the school's performing arts specialism, whereby pupils study art, drama, music and dance at key stage 3. These subjects are on offer for pupils to study at key stage 4. Leaders carefully balance pupil choice and individual careers guidance for pupils in Year 9 as they choose which subjects they want to study at key stage 4. Parents and pupils are pleased with the range of extra-curricular activities. Examples of these include Mandarin, robotics, chess club, swimming and girls' football. Extra-curricular activities are popular with Year 7 pupils in particular.
- Leaders use additional funding highly effectively. This includes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils in Year 7 who are catching up with their literacy and numeracy. Leaders carefully analyse pupils' progress to evaluate whether or not their spending decisions are making a difference. Overall, leaders identify and diminish quickly any differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils compared with that of their peers.
- Leadership of special educational needs, including the specialist provision in The Grandin Centre resource base is highly effective. Leaders know pupils exceptionally well. They track pupils' progress carefully and are quick to spot and deal with any issues in relation to pupils' emotional and/or academic progress. Leaders keep detailed records and evidence of the strong progress pupils make towards their ambitious targets.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Pupils show high levels of tolerance and respect for different beliefs and cultures. They are sensitive to and aware of differences, for example about autistic spectrum disorder and sexuality. They learn to reflect deeply on their learning experiences. For example, one pupil commented that they are taught 'to never think inside the box'. The school takes every opportunity to celebrate pupils' individual and collective successes. Pupils interact well at social times and during lessons. The school's house system encourages pupils to work together on different projects and competitions. The school is preparing pupils very well for their lives in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is highly effective in holding leaders to account. For example, governors ensure that leaders give them information about pupils' progress in a meaningful way. This helps them to understand how different groups of pupils are achieving. They are fully aware of how additional funding is used and the difference that it is making for different groups of pupils. Governors choose to visit the school regularly, including to observe teaching and to review different aspects of the school.
- The governing body receives a wide range of information about safeguarding. Governors discuss with leaders how the school keeps pupils safe, for example in the effectiveness of the school's work to educate pupils about the 'Prevent' duty.
- Collectively, governors know the school extremely well. They have played an active part in establishing a highly successful school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders know pupils well and the risks posed by the surrounding community, for example in relation to gang affiliation, knife crime and radicalisation. They think carefully about how best to educate pupils in relation to these risks. An example of this is the school's education package on female genital mutilation. Leaders educate pupils in all year groups about female genital mutilation in a sensitive, yet purposeful, way. As a result, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and manage risks to their welfare. Parents agree that their children are safe at school and well looked after.
- Leaders have clear procedures for training staff and check that they have the knowledge to spot and report any concerns that they may have about a pupil. Leaders are quick to deal with these concerns, including following up promptly and where necessary with external agencies. A range of effective early help and counselling are used by the school to meet pupils' needs. Leaders' record-keeping of safeguarding concerns are fit for purpose.
- The challenges of helping pupils and staff manage the emotional and psychological consequences of the aftermath of the Grenfell Tower fire have been carefully managed. Counselling and therapeutic sessions for staff and pupils continue so as to ensure that effective support is provided.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They use it to plan carefully and select activities that enable pupils to think deeply about their learning. As a result, pupils have a thorough understanding of the topics they study and use sophisticated subject terminology when they talk about their work.
- Teachers are skilful in their use of questioning. They know their pupils well and use questions to check effectively on pupils' knowledge and/or to deepen their understanding. Teachers give pupils the time that they need to practise their skills and to make sure they are confident about what they are learning.
- A few examples of highly effective teaching seen during the inspection included pupils:
 - being given a variety of challenge questions in mathematics to deepen their ability to solve problems relating to the use of histograms; pupils found the activity hard, but persevered to use their knowledge to tackle the work
 - confidently discussing their views on misogyny in their analysis of a character from 'Of mice and men'
 - demonstrating excellent German speaking and pronunciation skills after only having studied the subject for a few months
 - presenting a 'sketch and freeze' in a group in drama, with the rest of the class having to evaluate the effect of the different methods of communication that they had observed.
- The above examples are typical of teaching at the school. Teachers have high expectations. They routinely give pupils challenging work that helps them to develop excellent knowledge, skills and understanding of their subjects.
- Teachers are particularly skilled at giving pupils guidance and encouraging them to respond to it, in line with school policy. Pupils find the feedback from teachers helpful as it ensures that any gaps in their knowledge are identified and tackled swiftly.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons. Teachers and supporting adults know pupils' needs and adapt their teaching accordingly. Parents who responded to Parent View were positive about the support provided to meet their children's needs. However, leaders understand the need to refine the training for supporting adults so that there is consistently high-quality support for these pupils and that they make the progress of which they are capable.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident, resilient and hard-working and develop into mature and thoughtful young adults. They use words like, 'inclusive', 'family' and 'community' to describe the school. Pupils treat each other with respect and show tolerance of individual differences.

- Through a variety of ways, including the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, leaders ensure that pupils know how to stay safe in an age-appropriate way. Pupils speak confidently about how to keep themselves safe when online and in managing risks to their own safety.
- Pupils are fully aware of the different types of bullying. They report that bullying is rare and say that when it does occur, it is dealt with effectively. Parents agree. The school has a zero-tolerance to bullying and uses fixed-term exclusion to reinforce its expectations.
- The school's careers programme is well designed and effectively built into the PSHE programme. Pupils in Year 9, for example, explore careers and related subjects in detail. They are supported through one-to-one guidance to help them think about different subjects and their future careers and study decisions beyond Year 11. Pupils in key stage 3 learn about the world of work and being an entrepreneur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. They want to learn and do well, and take great pride in their work. Pupils listen to each other and show enthusiasm for each other's opinions and points of view.
- Pupils behave at all times in a calm and orderly way. This includes when they move around corridors, in the playground and in the canteen. They treat the building with respect; for example, they do not drop litter and they tidy up after themselves in the canteen.
- Leaders and staff have high expectations for behaviour, and staff manage behaviour consistently well during lessons. Leaders have high standards, and will not tolerate certain behaviours, such as fighting or disruptive behaviour.
- As a consequence of taking a tough stance, the proportion of fixed-term exclusions is now reducing. This is due to the school's success in helping the small number of pupils who needed to improve their behaviour, for example through providing mentoring and using off-site provision.
- Attendance before the Grenfell Tower fire was consistently high and above the national average. After the fire, as a result of the school's move to temporary accommodation and the issues that continue to affect family lives, attendance has slightly decreased. However, leaders are doing everything possible to raise it back to previous levels, including with the support of the local authority in providing transport for pupils to get to school.
- A small number of pupils are educated off-site at the local authority provision for a short period of time, typically between one to six weeks. Leaders carefully manage and monitor attendance and welfare and provide appropriate work. The use of the off-site provision helps pupils to improve their behaviour for when they return to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils at the school, including the most able, are making excellent progress in almost all of the subjects that they study. This is because teachers know their classes well and match work to pupils' different needs and abilities. For example, in English the most able use an excellent range of vocabulary to show their understanding of Stalinism. Overall, in design technology and computing science pupils' progress is not as strong as it is in their other subjects.
- Teachers encourage pupils to read and write with confidence, for example in learning to analyse and evaluate in written form, as well as using subject terms when they give responses to questions.
- Leaders' careful use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils ensures that they put in place interventions and support that make a difference. Reviews of pupils' work across the curriculum, an evaluation of the school's assessment information and observations of teaching show that disadvantaged pupils work hard and make the same substantial progress as their peers.
- Pupils who are educated through the resourced provision, The Grandin Centre, are mainly taught in mainstream lessons and receive additional specialist support, as required. Leaders monitor their progress carefully. A review of a wide range of these pupils' work and observing them in their classes shows that they are achieving well. They are also making strong progress in achieving targets relating to their emotional and social development.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers, both emotionally and academically. This is because of effective support from leaders, teachers and additional adults. Leaders accept that there are some instances where supporting adults are not consistently helping pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- As a result of high-quality teaching and a demanding subject curriculum, pupils develop strong subject-specific skills that help them to become confident mathematicians, linguists, historians and scientists, for example. Over time, they are being extremely well prepared for the next steps in their education.

16 to 19 study programmes

Outstanding

- Leadership of the sixth form is excellent. In a relatively short period of time, leaders have established a highly successful sixth form. The sixth-form curriculum is based on academic subjects and a wide range of subjects is on offer. As there are no pupils in Year 11, all students in the sixth form come from other schools.
- Year 12 students sat their AS-level examinations in summer 2017. This was the school's first set of external examination results. Attainment was high and showed that overall, and from their different starting points, students typically made excellent progress. For example, the most able students achieved their aspirational target grades in almost all of their subjects.

- Current students are making excellent progress. Teaching is as effective in the sixth form as it is at key stages 3 and 4. Students feel that the pre-reading before lessons encourages them to become more independent and to be better prepared for what they will learn when they are in class.
- In sixth-form teaching, teachers challenge and support students to access difficult topics. For example, in an observation of teaching in mathematics the teacher expertly guided students through common algebraic misconceptions. The clarity of the explanation and use of questioning ensured that students were then able to complete examination-style questions. In psychology, students have developed strong essay-writing skills and the teacher's guidance has helped them to analyse and evaluate different theories highly effectively.
- Leaders fully support teachers' professional development and ensure that partnership work with other schools is managed carefully. For example, Godolphin and Latymer School supports both staff and students by giving additional advice and guidance to students on the university admission process. Teachers also attend external courses offered by the examination boards. These strategies have combined to help teachers gain confidence in their subject knowledge and in understanding examination requirements.
- Students in the sixth form are full of praise for the teaching, support and guidance that they receive. They particularly appreciate the range of enrichment, careers advice and work experience opportunities. One student said that there is 'never a day when there is nothing about careers'. Careers advice and guidance are high-quality, purposeful and help students to make decisions about their future. A parent commented that they felt it was a 'strong community school' and that their 'child was very happy he made the school first choice for sixth form'.
- Students are taught how to help themselves stay safe, for example in looking after their sexual health and mental well-being. They feel safe in school and well prepared for their entry into employment or university.
- Attendance is high in the sixth form. Students, through the house system, interact with younger pupils, for example through competitions. Their behaviour is excellent and they are extremely strong role models for younger pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	140212
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10031658

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	897
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	193
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mick May, OBE
Principal	David Benson
Telephone number	020 7313 5800
Website	www.kaa.org.uk
Email address	info@kaa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Due to the school being in very close proximity to Grenfell Tower, the school has had to move to their current temporary, purpose-built, high-quality accommodation, about one mile away from the school. Leaders anticipate that the school will move back to its original building in September 2018.

- The school is sponsored by Aldridge Education and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
- The school has a formal agreement with Charterhouse and Godolphin and Latymer, which are two independent schools.
- The school opened in September 2014, and is an average-sized secondary school. There are currently pupils in Years 7 to 10, with a growing sixth form.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also well above the national average. The proportion that speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school has a specialist resource provision, The Grandin Centre. The centre provides support for pupils who have been diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder. There are currently 16 pupils in the provision. They generally attend lessons in the main school, but receive support in the centre, including at break and/or lunchtimes, as specified in their education, health and care plan or statement of special educational needs.
- A small number of pupils are educated on a short-term placement in alternative, off-site provision. This is through The Golborne Centre, which is the local authority pupil referral unit.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited a range of classes. School leaders accompanied inspectors on all classroom visits. To evaluate the quality of pupils' learning over time, inspectors reviewed a wide range of pupils' work across the curriculum.
- The inspection team held a range of meetings with senior and middle leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. Inspectors held meetings with governors, teachers new to the profession, a group of staff and different groups of pupils, including some sixth-form students. The lead inspector held a meeting, including a conference call, with representatives of the two sponsors.
- Inspectors evaluated 52 replies to Ofsted's survey for staff, and 27 replies to Parent View. There were no replies to the pupil survey. Inspectors also evaluated the school's surveys of pupils, parents and staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation provided by leaders, including: internal assessment information for pupils in all year groups; AS-level examination results and leaders' self-evaluation and improvement planning. They scrutinised minutes of governing body meetings; attendance and behaviour information; a variety of school policies; the single central record of recruitment checks and a wide range of other information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hailey, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Murray-Hudson	Ofsted Inspector

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