

Inspection of a good school: Kings Langley School

Love Lane, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire WD4 9HN

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

Kings Langley School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is David Fisher. This school is part of Kings Langley School Trust, which is a single academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Frances Stickley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending school. Staff know pupils well. Pupils benefit from warm and positive relationships. This supports them to be confident to share how they feel and seek support when they need it. Pupils know that staff are there to help them. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

All pupils, including students in the sixth form, learn about what good character is. They do this through the school's effective character development programme. This teaches pupils about how to make positive choices. As a result, pupils independently behave in a calm and civilised way.

Pupils access a broad, interesting range of subjects that challenge them academically. They typically achieve well. On occasions, pupils do not have the chance to extend and deepen what they learn. This can limit how well pupils learn more complex knowledge.

Pupils enjoy a wealth of personal development opportunities. This includes activities week at the end of the school year. This brings everyone together. Every child has a meaningful opportunity to be a leader. Leadership roles include wildlife, sports, diversity and inclusion, music and the school council. There is something for everyone to be involved with.

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

The school has carefully thought through and planned the knowledge pupils should learn in each subject. The school has ensured that its curriculum planning is ambitious and builds the complexity of what pupils learn over time. For example, in mathematics, when

pupils join the school, they revisit their understanding of number. This ensures they have the foundations needed to study algebra. By sixth form, students have the skills to understand more complex mathematical concepts.

Leaders have defined how teaching approaches best support pupils to retain knowledge. Teachers are knowledgeable and provide clear explanations that help pupils understand topics. For example, 'quick start' activities help pupils to connect previous learning and allow teachers to spot and address any gaps in pupils' understanding effectively. The school has trained staff in these approaches and checks how well they are working. This has ensured that teaching typically supports pupils to achieve well. In a few instances, some staff do not routinely provide activities to enable pupils to engage in deeper discussion or explore learning in more depth. When this happens this limits how well pupils develop a secure understanding of more complex knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need to help them make progress. The school clearly identifies the needs of pupils with SEND and the adaptations they should receive. Although there is some minor variation, staff typically provide effective support for pupils with SEND so that they achieve well.

Reading is a real strength of the school. Those pupils at the earlier stages of reading get precisely targeted support to help them catch up. All pupils are encouraged to read widely. Teachers carefully consider how the texts they use further develop pupils' comprehension. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers.

The school has ensured pupils' behaviour is managed successfully through a culture of warm and positive relationships. Staff support pupils to manage their emotions successfully. Pupils are typically focused and engaged in lessons. Behaviour around the school site is respectful. The school has suitable systems in place to ensure good attendance.

Pupils receive effective careers guidance, across the school, to help them make the best choices to support their next steps. For example, sixth-form students who wish to apply for prestigious apprenticeships or universities get highly useful additional support. As a result, many students are successful in achieving places.

Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in their personal development. This is a very effective aspect of the school's work. Pupils benefit from a vast range of enrichment opportunities. Across key stage 3, pupils go on two residential trips and then trips abroad in Year 9. These build bonds between pupils and develop their character and teamwork. Trips enhance the curriculum and develop pupils' understanding of society and culture. For example, pupils visited Berlin to deepen their knowledge of the Holocaust. An extensive range of sporting fixtures extends those who enjoy sport. Sports teams have achieved a variety of successes at district and county level.

Trustees know the school well. They provide effective challenge and support for leaders. Leaders have ensured there is a comprehensive programme to support staff's workload and well-being. Staff highly value this programme and feel every key decision is made with workload in mind.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, some teachers do not make the most appropriate teaching choices. Where this is the case, pupils do not get sufficient opportunities to develop and extend their knowledge. This then limits how well they consolidate more complex knowledge. The school needs to further ensure all staff are able to implement highly effective teaching strategies consistently well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in December 2014.

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	139036
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10295057
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,087
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	135
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Frances Stickley
Headteacher	David Fisher
Website	www.kls.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Kings Langley School is a single academy trust. Those responsible for governance have duties as directors under company law and trustees under charity law. The trustees are referred to as governors by the school.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2019.
- The school has recently opened a new sixth-form building to accommodate a rise in sixth-form applications. The school has recently opened an artificial sports pitch which is also utilised by the wider community.
- The school makes use of 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

- 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.
- To discuss governance, an inspector met with trustees, who included the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leads, the head of sixth form, the behaviour and personal development leads, school subject leaders and staff.
- An inspector met with the school improvement partner to gather their views on the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and history. 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 spent time in sixth form on both days of the inspection and held dedicated meetings with sixth-form students.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects, including science, personal, social, health and economic education and relationships and sex education and health education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. Inspectors reviewed information and records of pupils' behaviour.
- 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. Inspectors also held meetings to explore attendance and use of alternative provision.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Liz Smith

His Majesty's Inspector

Charlie Fordham

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024