

Inspection of Kings Ash Academy

Pimm Road, Paignton, Devon TQ3 3XA

Inspection dates: 25–26 May 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive a good-quality education. Typically, teachers have strong subject knowledge. There is a sharp focus on getting pupils reading and doing mathematics. Some subjects, such as French, are taught by specialist teachers. Pupils' physical development and keeping fit and healthy are prioritised right from the start. Pupils feel safe and adults care for them well.

Pupils enjoy getting 'stuck in'. Teachers notice when pupils try hard. They praise pupils for their achievements. Pupils are particularly proud when they are given the 'unsung heroes' award.

Pupils study every subject in the national curriculum. In previous years, the curriculum did not include everything that pupils needed to know and remember in each subject. Much work is being done to upgrade teaching plans to put this right. Pupils are catching up quickly now. They are learning and remembering more and doing much better.

Pupils behave well and attend regularly. They are clear that they will not tolerate bullying. However, on occasion, it does happen. Pupils know how to get help. However, a small number of pupils feel that staff could be quicker to make it stop.

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

Leaders are determined to serve the local community well. Parents and carers recognise that the quality of education and home-school communication have improved a lot.

The executive headteacher has built a strong and effective team. Staff training is a central feature of leaders' work. Staff are continuously developing their knowledge in a wide range of subjects. They apply their training well. For example, teachers made important changes to the mathematics curriculum. Staff now make precise checks on what pupils understand. Teachers use this information to plan demanding sequences of work. Pupils do very well in mathematics and enjoy it.

All staff focus sharply on getting pupils reading. Staff make accurate checks on the sounds that pupils know. Pupils get timely support to overcome any difficulties they have. They experience success and gain the knowledge they need to become confident readers. Pupils use their secure knowledge of phonics to spell words accurately.

The curriculum covers every subject it should. Leaders are putting plans in place to ensure that the curriculum progresses systematically from Nursery to Year 6. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced well enough. Pupils do not cover the depth of knowledge they should in every subject. The head of school and her team are already making the right changes to improve the curriculum. Nonetheless, they are further forward in some subjects and phases than others.

In Nursery, the carefully crafted curriculum is very effective in helping the youngest children learn and develop. This sets up children well for what comes next. However, the curriculum in Reception does not build on the previously rich experiences in some areas of learning. Leaders are tackling this, but it is early days.

Teachers are starting to implement better planned sequences of work in Years 1 to 6. Pupils are beginning to learn more and remember more in history, geography and science. Older pupils are achieving very well because teachers in Years 5 and 6 are skilfully adapting their teaching to include knowledge in the wider curriculum that was missed in previous years.

Leaders identify pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. The curriculum meets most pupils' academic needs very well. However, on occasions, teachers do not implement their teaching plans precisely enough for pupils with education, health and care plans. When this happens, pupils do not get enough practice to secure all the essential knowledge they need to achieve well.

Subject leaders have strong capacity to lead their subjects effectively. Leaders' recent work to check that pupils are learning the curriculum well is already paying off. Nonetheless, leaders do not always identify when teaching misses important steps within sequences of work, so some pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.

Teachers support pupils' personal development well. Pupils explore 'big ideas' such as identity, culture, conflict, sustainability, and health and well-being. They learn about current issues in the world. During the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, pupils learned about changes to the local and national economy, and the work of the NHS. Staff teach pupils about optimism, perseverance and empathy.

Trust leaders have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They hold leaders to account for what pupils achieve in English and mathematics. However, their work to hold leaders to account for ensuring that pupils gain the depth of knowledge they should in every subject is in its infancy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Recruitment procedures ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils. Leaders responsible for safeguarding work closely with families and external agencies. They make swift referrals to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need. Staff take particular care to identify concerns quickly and use the school's agreed procedures. Staff have a clear understanding of contextual risks in the local community and are vigilant in reporting concerns. The school's curriculum makes sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teaching plans do not build from one year to another consistently well. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders must ensure that the planned curriculum covers the depth of the knowledge it should in every year group and subject, so that all pupils are well prepared for their next stage.
- Leaders do not always identify when teaching misses important steps within sequences of work. This hampers some pupils' progress through the curriculum. The trust must ensure that leaders monitor more effectively how well pupils are learning the curriculum, in every subject, so that no learning is missed, and all pupils gain all the essential knowledge they need to achieve consistently well.
- The school's curriculum is not yet coherently planned and sequenced in some subject areas. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about and are making any necessary amendments in response to the pandemic. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied in this case.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	138773
Local authority	Torbay
Inspection number	10184452
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gavin Jones
Headteacher	Jessica Humphrey (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.kingsashacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	25 February 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The head of school leads the school on a day-to-day basis.
- The executive headteacher has overarching responsibility for the school.
- There are three assistant headteachers.
- The school has a Nursery provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school is part of Bay Education Trust (BET). This is a small multi-academy trust of two primary schools and one secondary school in Torbay.
- The school uses one alternative provider, Play Torbay.
- The school has a much larger proportion of pupils with SEND than that seen nationally.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection began on 7 May 2021 as a monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005. Having found that the school's performance appeared to be improving, the inspection was deemed to be under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. As a section 5 inspection requires more inspector time to complete than a monitoring inspection, we returned on 25 and 26 May 2021 to complete the full inspection.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school, three assistant headteachers, the SEND coordinator and subject leaders.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography, science and physical education. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils, and listening to pupils reading to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. Inspectors met with designated leaders of safeguarding, reviewed a range of school documentation, and talked with staff and pupils. Inspectors also considered the school's safeguarding curriculum and its effectiveness in providing pupils with the information they need to keep safe, including in relation to child exploitation and local safeguarding risks.
- Inspectors considered a range of other school documents, such as the school improvement plan and subject plans. Inspectors also reviewed records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and exclusions, bullying, and racist incidents.
- The lead inspector met with BET trustees. She also held meetings with the chief executive officer, a national leader of education and the school's external adviser.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and free-text comments. They also reviewed the school's internal survey of parents. The lead inspector considered staff surveys as part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Costello

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