

King Ethelbert School

Canterbury Road, Birchington, Kent CT7 9BL

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is passionate about doing the right thing for pupils. She is well supported by school and trust leaders.
- This is a happy school where pupils learn well because they feel safe. They enjoy school and are respectful of each other and staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy a wide range of after-school activities and exciting visits. They are proud of their school and value the opportunities they have.
- Teachers plan engaging lessons. They use imaginative ideas to support pupils well in their learning. Consequently, most pupils currently at the school are making good progress.
- Teachers use pupils' achievement information well. Pupils are learning effectively because their teachers know their individual learning needs.
- School leaders put pupils' needs first. As a result, pupils study appropriate courses that prepare them well for the future.
- Current pupils' outcomes are improving quickly because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good or better.
- The school develops pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well.
- Middle leaders are highly ambitious and becoming more effective in their roles. As a result, they are impacting well on improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors support and challenge school leaders effectively. They have the right skills and knowledge to help leaders improve the school even further.
- Most-able pupils' outcomes are improving for existing pupils, although these improvements are not yet consistent across all areas of the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 4 have not been strong in the recent past. However, this vulnerable group's outcomes are now improving quickly.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are beginning to make better progress, because leaders use pupils' information better than they did in the past.
- The school works well with pupils and families to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. However, rates of persistent absence are still too high.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the effectiveness of middle leaders further, so that their work impacts more positively on improving outcomes for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, those who have SEN and/or disabilities and the most able.
- Continue the work to improve pupils' attendance so that rates of persistent absence reduce quickly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is determined to improve the school further. Her experience in school improvement across the multi-academy trust is being put to good use at King Ethelbert School, including sharing best practice and identifying opportunities to develop staff professionally.
- The school leaders are supported well by their partnership within The Coastal Academies Trust. They take advantage of joint professional development opportunities for staff across trust schools. For example, during the inspection trust staff worked together to develop strategies to challenge most-able pupils better.
- Senior leaders know the school's priorities for improvement well. As a result, they have quickly addressed the challenge of below average key stage 4 results. Consequently, pupils currently in school are making better progress than in the past.
- Recent appointments to the middle leadership team have been successful. They are a strong team and support and challenge each other increasingly well. As a result, outcomes for current pupils are improving quickly, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum which includes strong careers guidance that helps them make informed decisions about their futures. The social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision for pupils is also strong.
- Pupils engaged enthusiastically with Spanish pupils visiting the school during the inspection. This helped developed their language skills as well as learning about different cultures. Other opportunities such as performances by pupils at a local theatre help develop their wider appreciation of the arts.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain and beyond. One pupil spoke for others when she said, 'We learn about being in the world in this school.' Pupils talk to each other respectfully about sensitive topics. This includes discussions about differences in cultures and faiths.
- The school's use of additional funding has not had enough impact on improving disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in recent years. However, these pupils are now making better progress because of a sharper focus on their needs and improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making better progress because of recent changes in how the school records pupils' individual needs.
- Parents see the school in a positive light. Applications for entry to Year 7 are consistently over-subscribed. Parents shared with inspectors that they feel their sons and daughters thrive and receive excellent support and personal care.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting and other after-school activities, including netball and trampolining. The school's partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company provides pupils with excellent opportunities to develop their confidence and cultural capital.

Governance of the school

- The federated governing body's overview of the school is contributing increasingly well to improving the quality of education. Governors compare standards from the other federated school and use this information to challenge leaders effectively.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They know their role is a strategic one. They are supportive of school leaders yet question them appropriately when required. They request regular updates about pupils' achievements and are aware of the school's key priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The culture to keep pupils safe is strong. School leaders and staff know pupils well. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey said that their children feel safe and happy at school.
- Pupils are taught about issues relating to safer internet use well. They are knowledgeable about the risks to their own personal safety, because of the information they receive during assemblies and as part of the school's personal, social and health education programme.
- Leaders' partnerships with outside agencies and leaders from other schools are well developed. As a result, they access a useful network of external advice and expertise which helps them learn about local issues affecting pupils. This also helps them respond appropriately to any potential issues faced by pupils in the wider community.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching and learning are improving quickly across the school. Pupils enjoy and engage in lessons that challenge them to learn. As a result, the progress of current pupils is improving rapidly.
- Teachers have high expectations. Their subject knowledge is good. They use this to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding well. As a result, pupils are confident, engage positively, and are willing to take risks when learning about new things.
- Teachers know the individual learning needs of pupils well. They use accurate assessment information to identify pupils' strengths and areas to develop.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making better progress than before because teachers are more aware of their needs. Science is a good example of this, where pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making progress in line with other pupils within the school.
- Teachers are becoming more effective at using simple strategies to ensure that vulnerable pupils make accelerated progress. This is evident in pupils' mathematics work, for instance, where disadvantaged pupils are making the same or better progress as other pupils with similar starting points.

- Many teachers use questions skilfully. In philosophy and ethics and drama lessons, teachers use questions to check pupils understanding and deepen learning, impacting positively on pupils' progress over time.
- Teachers' passion for their subjects is a strength. Pupils are supported well because teachers want pupils to learn about their subjects. As a result, pupils engage well and enjoy learning.
- Teaching is developing pupils' literacy skills well. In many subjects the use of subject-specific language is challenging pupils well. This is evident in science, mathematics, English and the creative arts. As a result, pupils are learning a wide range of new vocabulary that develops their comprehension and understanding across the curriculum.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are courteous with staff and each other. Their physical and emotional well-being is developed well through the school's wider curriculum.
- Peer mentors support younger pupils sensitively. Staff mentor older pupils through their examination preparation. As a result, pupils' attitudes to school are positive.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils say bullying is dealt with effectively if it happens. Pupils treat each other fairly and inequality is not tolerated. Pupils are taught to respect each other's differences and treat all people equally. As a result, this is a supportive and caring community.
- The few pupils who attend the alternative provision are served well by these arrangements. Leaders monitor the quality of provision regularly to ensure that pupils' needs are well met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Classrooms are calm spaces. Learning is seldomly affected by poor behaviour.
- Pupils conduct themselves appropriately as they move around the school site. They respect the buildings and outside spaces. There is little litter or graffiti.
- Local issues are sometimes triggers for behaviours leading to fixed-term exclusions. However, school leaders work well with pupils and external agencies to support and reintegrate those affected in a timely manner.
- Rates of persistent absence are too high. Although staff act quickly if there are concerns with attendance, this is not having enough impact on reducing absence. Leaders know that more work is required to improve this situation.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good. Current pupils' work shows that they are making strong progress across a range of subjects and year groups. This includes boys, who have not achieved as well in the past.
- Pupils' work in key stage 4 shows that they are making better progress than previous cohorts, this includes in English and mathematics.
- Information about current pupils' outcomes is accurate. School leaders work with other schools, including within the trust, to check pupils' work and to confirm their internal assessments of pupils' achievements.
- Outcomes of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are improving because of the impact of middle leaders on developing tailored provision to meet their needs. Staff are now more aware of these pupils' individual requirements, although more needs to be done to secure even better outcomes for this vulnerable group.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are attending regularly and are making good progress because of the good support they receive.
- Most-able pupils have not achieved well in the past, although this group is now beginning to make better progress. The school's internal tracking information shows that most-able pupils are now attaining better than in previous years. However, more needs to be done if this group of pupils are to realise their full potential.
- Across most year groups disadvantaged pupils are catching up with other pupils quickly. In some year groups, disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving very rapidly due to a range of initiatives introduced by leaders. However, in some year groups more needs to be done to improve outcomes further.
- As a result of strong advice and guidance, pupils' curriculum choices as they start key stage 4 are appropriate. Leaders are not afraid to compromise the school's performance indicators by making the right choices for pupils. Because of this, the vast majority of pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education or training.

School details

Unique reference number	136584
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10046556

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	766
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Dave Roberts
Headteacher	Kate Greig
Telephone number	01843 831999
Website	http://www.kingethelbert.com/
Email address	kate.greig@kingethelbert.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2014

Information about this school

- King Ethelbert School is a smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The headteacher is also the headteacher of another school in the trust.
- The school is a member of The Coastal Academies Trust, a five-school multi-academy trust.
- The proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is above the national average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also above the national average.
- The governing body is a federated governing body serving both King Ethelbert School and Dane Court Grammar School. A new chair of the governing body has been in post since the start of September 2018.

- The school works with the Enterprise Learning Alliance which is an alternative provider for a small number of pupils from key stage 3 and 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook 33 full or part lesson observations, many with the headteacher and/or senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and one other member of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with the executive headteacher of The Coastal Academies Trust.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- The inspection team considered 45 responses to the staff survey, 40 responses to the pupil survey and 62 responses to the parent survey, including accompanying free-text messages.
- An inspector spoke to a representative of the alternative provider used by the school.
- Inspectors checked the single central record and other safeguarding policies and documentation.
- The inspection team considered information provided by the school for the monitoring of teaching and learning, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, as well as plans for the use of additional funding.
- Inspectors considered the school's published performance information and its internal progress and attainment information.
- An inspector heard Year 7 pupils read.

Inspection team

Dylan Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pat Slonecki	Ofsted Inspector
Scott Norman	Ofsted Inspector
Frederick Valletta	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 www.gov.uk/ofsted.

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 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018