

Inspection of King Arthur's School

West Hill, Wincanton, Somerset BA9 9BX

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and parents value the positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils. Most pupils attend well and are punctual. Pupils recognise that more is now expected of them. Most are striving to meet leaders' expectations.

In many lessons pupils behave well. They wear the awards that they gain for their efforts and achievement with pride. Many have a dazzling array of badges that they have earned through meeting leaders' expectations and aspirations for them. Pupils are clear that bullying is not a widespread issue. However, a small minority do not feel that it is dealt with well enough by staff when it does happen.

Pupils' wider development is well catered for. Many participate in a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged take part in these. Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about events, such as drama productions and of their leadership roles.

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

Leaders have done much to improve the curriculum. It is now ambitious and reflects the high aspirations they have for all pupils. Pupils with SEND learn the same subjects as their peers. They receive the support they need to achieve well. In key stage 3, the curriculum is broad. In key stage 4, few pupils continue to study a modern foreign language. As a result, most pupils do not study the full suite of subjects which make up the English Baccalaureate. Leaders have acted to improve this, although it has yet to have impact.

Leaders are clear about the knowledge that they expect pupils to acquire at each stage. However, teaching does not always help pupils to build their knowledge well. Some teachers do not always check that pupils understand new learning, or that they remember what they have learned before. This means leaders' ambitions for the curriculum are not always realised.

Pupils who do not read well enough get the help they need to improve their fluency. Reading aloud is part of most lessons. Pupils understand the importance and value of reading. Leaders have promoted this with pupils and with parents. However, many pupils remain reluctant to read. Some pupils do not read widely or often enough to develop their love of reading.

Leaders have clear systems to help teachers to manage pupils' behaviour. However, not all staff follow these systems or insist that pupils meet the high expectations that leaders have of them. As a result, not all pupils behave consistently well and learning is sometimes disrupted. Some pupils are uncomfortable about the intolerant language used by a minority of their peers.

The careers programme is thorough. It prepares pupils well for their next steps in education. Pupils move on to courses that are aspirational. This includes pupils with SEND. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Pupils understand British values, although a few do not always display the tolerance that is part of these. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultural backgrounds through many different subjects. Pupils are active citizens, who contribute to the community. For example, Year 9 pupils support Year 7 through the buddy system, as they transition from primary school.

Staff have confidence in the leadership team, many of whom are new to their roles. They appreciate the support they get in developing their own expertise, and the ways in which leaders take account of their workload and well-being.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They support and challenge leaders. Additional resources from the trust have recently added capacity to the leadership team. This is helping leaders to tackle the areas they have identified as needing to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a clear understanding of the importance of safeguarding in all aspects of school life. They are well trained. When they pass on a concern they are confident that it will be acted on.

Leaders make prompt referrals to other agencies when required. They are tenacious in following these up.

The curriculum helps pupils know how to keep themselves safe and what to do if they have any concerns. Strong pastoral support helps pupils know that there is a trusted adult who can help them. Pupils learn about online safety and healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teaching does not always help pupils to remember what they have been taught. Consequently, sometimes they are not able to build on the knowledge that they already have. Leaders need to ensure that teaching enables pupils to remember more of what they have been taught.
- Some staff do not always check that all pupils have understood new learning. This means that errors, misunderstandings and gaps in knowledge persist for some pupils. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils are supported to make the best possible progress through the curriculum.

- Pupils do not behave as well as they should in some lessons. This means that learning is sometimes disrupted. Leaders need to ensure that pupils behave consistently well.
- A small minority of pupils use offensive and intolerant language. This upsets their peers. Leaders must ensure that pupils know that they must be respectful of those who are different from them and demonstrate this in the way they speak of others.

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](#)' 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	147016
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10247344
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Rees
Headteacher	Jen Jacklin
Website	www.kingarthurs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses three alternative providers, one of which is unregistered. A small number of pupils attend these. Most pupils attend school for the majority of their education.
- King Arthur's School converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, King Arthur's Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2017 it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, governors and trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history and geography.
- For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons in subjects including personal, social, health and economic education, languages, science and food technology as well as the deep dive subjects.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online survey.
- An inspector spoke to the alternative providers used by the school.
- An inspector met with staff from the trust.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Benjamin Houghton	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Foley	Ofsted Inspector

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