

Inspection of a good school: Kelmscott School

Markhouse Road, Walthamstow, London E17 8DN

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Kelmscott School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and teachers openly welcome visitors into their school. They are proud of what they achieve here. Pupils and teachers are fully committed to the school's motto of 'putting learning first'.

The new headteacher and his team have high expectations for all. This is clear from leaders' two non-negotiable rules. Pupils said that these rules have improved behaviour considerably. In most subjects, pupils focus well and are keen to improve their knowledge. During breaktimes, pupils enjoy socialising with each other. They get along well and behave sensibly.

Pupils learn particularly well in English and modern foreign languages. This is because leaders plan what pupils need to learn carefully. Teachers design lessons which introduce new content in a logical order. They make sure that pupils have the necessary knowledge to understand more complex ideas.

Pupils feel safe. Leaders and staff work hard to minimise any risks to pupils, both in and out of school. Pupils told me that bullying is not a problem. Leaders deal with any incidents swiftly and carefully. Staff are present at the school gates to ensure that the day starts and ends calmly. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any concerns about their safety. They value the support that staff provide.

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

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for all pupils. They know their school and pupils well. They have accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders and staff work together to remove any barriers to pupils' learning. They aim to ensure that pupils have every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

In Years 7 to 9, all pupils study national curriculum subjects. Most subjects are planned so that pupils develop a deep understanding of the concepts they learn. This ensures that

pupils are well prepared to begin studying formal qualifications. Pupils choose from a wide range of options in Years 10 and 11. For example, the school offers GCSEs in engineering and Latin. Pupils receive effective guidance on what subjects they should choose. Staff make sure that pupils' choices reflect their future aspirations. Leaders make sure that the EBacc suite of subjects is an option for all. Year 12 students study a personalised programme including mathematics and English. The courses enable students to move on to further education colleges of their choice.

Subject planning contains clear goals for what pupils should learn. In modern foreign languages, for example, planning sets out exactly how leaders expect pupils to develop their knowledge over time. Pupils confidently explained how teaching builds on what they already know. In English too, teaching is sharply focused on making sure that pupils learn what leaders expect. This ensures that pupils achieve highly.

Leaders are improving how mathematics and science are planned and taught. Although further work is needed, leaders' actions have strengthened the quality of pupils' learning in mathematics. Teaching is designed to help pupils build their existing knowledge progressively. This is increasing pupils' confidence in their mathematical ability. Nevertheless, some teaching overlooks the importance of making sure that pupils grasp new ideas securely. Leaders' work to strengthen science is not as far forward as in mathematics. Pupils study appropriately ambitious topics. However, some teaching is not focused enough on preparing pupils for their future learning. This holds pupils back from deepening their knowledge as they progress from one year to the next.

In most lessons, pupils behave well. This includes in the sixth form. Pupils know what teachers expect of them. In science, however, pupils' attitudes to learning are not as positive as they should be. Sometimes, pupils lose interest in tasks and distract others. Adults do not expect pupils to refocus promptly on their work. This also hinders pupils from achieving to the best of their abilities in this subject.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well here. These pupils access the full range of subjects on offer. Extra help is tailored to pupils' needs and ensures that they understand what they learn. Parents and carers were very positive about the support their children receive.

In all year groups, pupils access a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Examples include musical productions, 'eco club', athletics and regular outings. In addition, all pupils take part in a 'tutor programme'. This includes studying topics on mental health and being a responsible citizen. Leaders are keen to strengthen the quality of this programme further. Pupils' wider development is a clear priority for the leadership team.

Parents and staff praise the school's leadership. Teachers appreciate the ethos of support and team spirit. Parents, staff and pupils complimented the school's warm and inclusive atmosphere.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders work relentlessly to protect pupils, both in and outside of school. The safeguarding team has detailed knowledge of the needs of the pupils they support. Leaders waste no time in following up concerns. They work with a range of external agencies to support pupils and their families effectively.

The programme for pupils' personal, social, health and economic education reflects pupils' needs and the potential risks in the wider community. Leaders update the programme regularly in response to any concerns they identify. Staff take a proactive approach to educating pupils about safeguarding issues, including those in the local area.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils achieve well in most subjects. However, they are capable of achieving more in science and mathematics. Teaching is not sharply focused on ensuring that pupils learn and remember what they have been taught, particularly in science. Pupils sometimes struggle to draw on their prior learning when they study new concepts. Leaders should ensure that teaching enables pupils to build and deepen their knowledge step by step. They should develop teachers' expertise in using and adapting subject planning.
- Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils typically try hard to meet these expectations. In science, however, pupils' attitudes are not as strong as they could be. This gets in the way of them learning well. Leaders and staff should ensure that pupils behave as well in science lessons as they do in other subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Kelmscott School to be good on 24–25 May 2016.

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	103105
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10121556
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
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	838
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	14
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Kiri Tunks
Headteacher	Sam Jones
Website	www.kelmscottschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 May 2016

Information about this school

- The new headteacher was appointed in September 2019. He was previously the school's deputy headteacher.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider: The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London (CONEL).

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and governors.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: English, science, mathematics and modern foreign languages. In each subject, we met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' work.
- We considered the views of staff during four meetings with groups of staff. We also took into account the 64 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

- We observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times. We looked at behaviour records, including the actions taken in response to any incidents.
- We met with four groups of pupils. We also took into account the 26 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.
- We reviewed safeguarding records, including records of recruitment checks on staff. We also considered the views of 47 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's survey for parents.

Inspection team

Hayley Follett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jeff Cole

Ofsted Inspector

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