

Inspection of King Solomon High School

Forest Road, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 3HB

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

King Solomon High School has seen significant change since the last inspection. Pupils are beginning to benefit from recent improvements. Pupils recognise that behaviour is improving and that expectations are now clearer. The majority of pupils are polite and respectful. There have been several changes to staffing, including the use of temporary teachers. This has made it difficult for some pupils to build trust and have confidence that staff will be able to resolve any concerns.

The expectations for pupils' achievement have increased as a result of the clear strategic vision that has been set out by the new headteacher. Most pupils are responding well to these rising expectations and achieve well in their GCSE examinations. However, there remains significant variability in the way that the curriculum is implemented, due, in part, to changes in staffing. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who struggle to read confidently.

The diversity of the school community is a strength that is celebrated. Pupils are kept safe in school. Although a range of extra-curricular activities is provided, including sports, music and drama, many pupils do not currently participate in these opportunities.

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

The curriculum reflects the breadth and ambition of what is expected nationally. Pupils can choose from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects, typically achieving well at the end of key stage 4. However, the take-up of some subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate is low. Leaders are aware of this and are taking action to improve the proportion of pupils, for example, who choose to study a language.

Since the previous inspection, a significant amount of work has been undertaken to improve the quality of education. For example, subject leaders have received helpful training to develop the curriculum. In each subject, the key concepts that pupils need to understand and the sequence in which they are taught has been carefully identified. Similarly, assessment systems have been improved so that teachers more routinely identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. This is intended to help pupils remember long term the content they have been taught. Teachers build in opportunities to check for understanding by careful use of questioning.

Much of this work is recent and is not fully embedded. There are inconsistencies in the delivery of the curriculum, which result in some pupils, and students in the sixth form, not learning as well as they should. For example, leaders recognise that pupils with SEND do not consistently receive the right support. Although plans are in place to address this, staff have not had sufficient training and guidance to understand pupils' specific needs. As a result, tasks and activities are often not suitably adapted

to help pupils to access the curriculum. Similarly, there is not a co-ordinated approach to support pupils who find reading difficult. This impacts the ability of these pupils to achieve well across the curriculum.

Leaders have set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. The new policy provides clear and helpful guidance. Classrooms and corridors are generally calm and orderly. Most pupils are attentive in lessons. However, the school's high expectations are not applied consistently by staff. As a result, some incidences of poor behaviour are not dealt with quickly.

Suspensions are used appropriately, and the reintegration of pupils back into lessons is managed well. For example, some pupils receive mentoring support to help them moderate and improve their behaviour. Most pupils attend school well and appropriate systems are in place for improving this further. Effective support is provided to help those who struggle to attend regularly and on time.

The personal development curriculum is designed to help pupils to reflect on issues, such as democracy and importance of safe and respectful relationships. However, pupils' understanding of these ideas is limited. The school's careers programme is being developed. For example, Year 12 students benefit from the opportunity to attend work experience placements. However, there is currently limited capacity and partnerships with external organisations to offer a range of advice and guidance to pupils across the school.

Leaders, and those responsible for governance, are committed to improving the school. They have a secure understanding of the current strengths and have identified the right priorities moving forward. Leaders recognise that a key priority is to significantly increase the expectations that exist for pupils' learning and behaviour and that staff apply these consistently. The views of staff are mixed. Some, including those at the start of their careers, feel well supported by leaders. They appreciate the structure, clarity and vision of leaders and the opportunities they are receiving to develop professionally. However, this is not the case for all staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Tasks and activities are not sufficiently well adapted for pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils struggle to access the planned curriculum and do not develop the depth of knowledge they need to achieve well. The school should ensure that staff have appropriate training and guidance so that pupils with SEND are well supported to learn the intended curriculum.

- There is not a coherent and systematic approach to support pupils who struggle with reading. This is preventing some pupils from accessing the full curriculum and achieving as well as they should. The school should make sure that weaker readers receive the additional help they need to build their accuracy, fluency, confidence and develop a love for reading.
- The revised systems that have been put in place to better manage behaviour are not consistently implemented or well understood. As a result, incidents of weaker behaviour are not addressed swiftly. The school should ensure that the high expectations for behaviour, as reflected in the revised systems, are consistently applied. This includes the school engaging effectively with the community to embed a positive culture between all stakeholders.

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	102861
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10313889
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
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	1,003
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Brian Westbury
Headteacher	Michele Phillips
Website	www.kshsonline.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 November 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been several changes to the leadership of the school, including a new headteacher.
- The school has a modern orthodox Jewish character. The last section 48 inspection took place on 7 and 8 November 2023.
- The school currently makes use of four registered alternative providers of education.
- 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

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, performing arts and physical education. To do this, they met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, had discussions with staff and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- 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 held meetings with staff and with pupils. Behaviour was observed both in lessons and around the school. The views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were considered through discussions and looking at information collected from Ofsted's online surveys.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of the governing body, as well as a representative of the local authority.

Inspection team

Robert Grice, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Lisa Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
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