

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: King Edward VI Community College

Ashburton Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5JX

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 June 2025

Outcome

King Edward VI Community College has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Alan Salt. This school is part of the Education South West multi-academy trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Matthew Shanks, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graham Austin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and sixth-form students are proud to attend King Edward VI Community College. The school has worked hard to create a community where pupils feel they belong. This is built on the foundation of kindness and mutual respect. Consequently, bullying is rare and pupils trust staff to help them with any concerns.

Pupils relish receiving rewards for their efforts. They achieve well in their qualifications. They understand their responsibilities for behaving well and are keen to learn. Pupils value the calm working environment during lessons. The school has high expectations for pupils' conduct and acts swiftly if behaviour does not meet these. Pupils are supported to learn from incidents to make sure they are not repeated.

The school has a clear ambition for pupils develop their own individual characters. The school commits to this with the #keepthepromise extra-curricular pledge. The school's '11 by 11' challenge encourages pupils to try something new. Clubs such as creative writing, marine biology and drama help to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils value their leadership roles as ambassadors. They look for opportunities to contribute to the school, for example by creating the Peace Garden for everyone to enjoy.

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

The school, with the support of the trust, has developed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum for pupils at all key stages. The broad range of subjects offered enables pupils to study qualifications aligned to their future aspirations. Increasing numbers of pupils are choosing to study the subjects that form the English Baccalaureate.

The school has identified effective approaches to delivering the curriculum. Teachers are well trained to utilise the 'core 4' and 'adaptive 4' approaches to help pupils learn and remember. For example, teachers model and explain concepts clearly. However, at times, teaching does not help pupils to develop their depth of understanding of topics or support them to explore concepts as fully as it could.

The importance of reading is promoted throughout the school. Pupils read regularly individually and as a class. They enjoy choosing the books from the 'KEVICC Cannon'. This diverse collection of books has been chosen to promote reading for pleasure and encourage discussion. The school is quick to identify pupils who need additional reading support. Highly trained staff help these pupils to improve their accuracy and fluency.

The school swiftly identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are effective mechanisms in place to closely review how well the school meets these needs during lessons. These pupils also receive well-considered additional support when appropriate. For example, pupils benefit from high-quality communication interventions.

Raising attendance is a key priority for the school and the trust. The school sets high expectations for pupils and families. This is matched with the support needed to overcome any barriers to attending school. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to rise and the level of persistent absence has reduced significantly.

The school's personal development programme has been reviewed recently. This new curriculum is carefully planned to prepare pupils well for adult life. This includes online safety and healthy relationships. The school also provides pupils with extensive mental health support. Pupils understand what it means to be a citizen in modern Britain. For example, they recognise the importance of tolerance and respect for others. Students in the sixth form follow a bespoke curriculum that also incorporates students' requested topics such as personal finance for independent living.

The school's careers guidance offer prepares pupils for making key decisions about qualifications and future plans. Pupils are well informed about potential pathways into apprenticeships and higher education. They are encouraged to be aspirational for their future. Pupils engage with the world of work through work experience, careers fairs and guest speakers. Pupils move successfully to their next stages of education, training or employment.

The school and the trust have a shared vision for an inclusive school at the heart of its community. This drives the work of leaders at all levels. Leaders' accurate self-evaluation

is used to celebrate strengths and plan for further improvements. Since joining the trust, those responsible for governance at school and trust level have begun to develop strategies for ensuring leaders are held to account for the impact of their work. This remains a priority for the school.

Staff value the professional networks and training available to them. The collaborative curriculum work across the trust is minimising the impact on workload for staff. Leaders and those responsible for governance show genuine care for staff well-being. Consequently, staff feel invested in and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teaching strategies do not support pupils to develop and deepen their knowledge and understanding as well as they could. This affects how well pupils retain and recall knowledge over time. The school should make sure that teaching approaches enable pupils to gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, King Edward VI Community College, to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

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	149247
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10378996
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	903
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	147
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graham Austin
CEO of the trust	Matthew Shanks
Principal	Alan Salt
Website	www.kingedwardvi.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- King Edward VI Community College converted to become an academy school in September 2022. When its predecessor school, King Edward VI Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The school is part of the Education South West multi-academy trust.
- The school uses one registered and five unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders at all levels. Inspectors also spoke with staff, trust executive leaders, local governors and trustees.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documentation, including the minutes of governance meetings, the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the view 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 considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sara Berry, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Collins

Ofsted Inspector

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