

Inspection of King's Leadership Phoenix Academy

4 Enterprise Way, Liverpool, Merseyside L13 1FB

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 March 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The principal of this school is Daniel Cross. This school is part of the Great Schools 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), Shane Ierston, and overseen by a board of trustees, co-chaired by John Rigby and Joanne Hornby.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend this school have the opportunity to reset their attitudes to learning. They get the attention and support they need to succeed. The strong relationships that pupils develop with the staff help to break down barriers to learning. Pupils' attitudes change and they begin to engage and enjoy learning. Their confidence and resilience improve. Pupils thrive in this school and move successfully back into mainstream, specialist education or post-16 provision.

Although pupils arrive from a wide range of schools, they settle quickly into school life. The welcoming, happy and supportive environment helps pupils to make new friends. Pupils get on well together. At breaktimes and lunchtimes staff and pupils play games and socialise together. Pupils are happy in school. For some pupils, this is the first time they have enjoyed learning.

The school has high expectations for all pupils' achievement. Pupils rise to this challenge. The school goes to great lengths to support pupils to develop into responsible, respectful citizens who are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils talk about the individualised support that they receive around their personal needs and mental health. Many find this life changing.

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

The school's curriculum considers pupils' academic, personal and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A broad range of academic subjects ensures that pupils who are in the school for a short period of time keep up with their peers. Pupils in Year 11 achieve a wide range of GCSE qualifications.

The school's curriculum contains a wide range of components that elevate the opportunities for pupils to excel. Pupils' needs, including those with SEND, are identified accurately. The curriculum is shaped to meet these needs. It includes targeted strategies to address pupils' academic, personal, social, emotional and mental health needs. Pupils also discuss some challenging and relevant topics such as racism, exploitation and positive relationships.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use assessment strategies well to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. They then use this information to plug those gaps and help pupils move on in their learning. Staff also have the knowledge and skills to support pupils with their personal and emotional needs.

The school identifies pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. It ensures that these pupils get the support that they need to improve their reading skills. The school has placed less emphasis on pupils' writing skills in the curriculum. This means that some pupils do not write with sufficient fluency and accuracy.

The school uses an effective approach to improving pupils' behaviour. Pupils appreciate the mantra, 'tomorrow is a new day'. Pupils know that when they have not met the

school's expectations, they will be helped to make the right choice for the next day. Over time, this fresh start helps pupils to regulate and manage their own behaviour.

Pupils benefit from a range of activities designed to build resilience and teamwork. This includes the trust's carefully designed and innovative 'King's Adventure' programme. This aims to nurture future leaders and equip pupils with essential skills for success in life. Pupils take part in enjoyable, challenging and adventurous activities.

A well-designed careers programme, alongside input from an independent adviser, helps pupils to research a wide range of future career opportunities. As a result of the confidence pupils gain, and the encouragement and high aspirations the staff have of them, Year 11 pupils have high ambitions. Some pupils in Year 11 have already taken steps towards their future career path.

Many pupils have had poor attendance in their previous school. The school works closely with parents and carers to remove barriers to attendance. In most cases the improvement in attendance is significant.

The trust has ensured that the school, trustees and members of the local academy council have a secure understanding of effective policy and practice in relation to running an alternative provision school. They ensure that the school has a positive impact on all its pupils.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the opportunities that they have to improve their professional expertise. This includes specific training to reduce their workload. Staff all enjoy working at this school and appreciate the support they receive from the school and those in the wider trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum does not set out clearly enough the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn for writing, including grammar, punctuation and handwriting. This hinders teachers from ensuring that pupils consistently learn to write with accuracy and fluency. The school should ensure that the curriculum identifies these skills clearly and progressively so that pupils build accuracy and fluency in their writing.

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	143746
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10348354
Type of school	Secondary alternative provision
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Rigby (co-chair) Joanne Hornby (co-chair)
CEO of the trust	Shane Ierston
Principal	Daniel Cross
Website	www.kingsphoenix.com
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has re-located to new premises.
- The school is part of the Great Schools Trust.
- All pupils are dual registered with their commissioning mainstream school. The school offers 12-week programmes for pupils in key stage 3 and in Year 10. They also have a full year offer for pupils in Year 11.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision and one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school caters for pupils with behaviour needs and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to Year 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with the principal, directors of education from the trust, senior leaders and subject leaders. The lead inspector spoke to trustees including the co-chairs and the vice-chair of the local academy council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, science and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including policies and analysis of pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Inspectors spoke to some pupils and staff about the school. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lunch and breaktimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Julie Bather, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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