

Queensway Junior Academy

Address: Hillary Road, Thetford, IP24 3DP

Unique reference number (URN): 149636

Inspection report: 10 February 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have worked tirelessly to improve behaviour and attendance. As part of this work, they have ensured the school is a calm and welcoming place for pupils. Most pupils now attend school well. Pupils typically behave well. Leaders recognised that some pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, were missing too much school. Their unrelenting focus on removing barriers to attendance is having the desired impact. Disadvantaged pupils now attend more regularly, although leaders know there is more work needed for some pupils. Overall, attendance is now close to the national average.

Behaviour has improved significantly. Previously, the school had a high number of suspensions. Leaders recognised that some behaviour was disrupting learning and took decisive and effective action. Pupils and staff now understand the clear expectations. Trained staff consistently uphold these expectations, and pupils respond well. Suspensions have reduced considerably. The school is a calm and purposeful environment that supports learning. As a result, pupils get along and behave well. They are polite and respectful. They have no concerns regarding bullying.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate and well-informed understanding of teaching across the school. They have improved the curriculum significantly over the past 3 years. The ambitious and carefully organised curriculum ensures pupils have the right opportunities to progress across the different subjects.

The curriculum prioritises pupils' reading, writing and mathematics knowledge. The school supports pupils to catch up where they have gaps in this key knowledge. The teaching of reading is particularly effective. Where needed, well-trained staff help pupils catch up with their peers. They recognise the importance of enabling pupils to read fluently so they can access the full curriculum. Writing, including handwriting, remains a focus area. Leaders have implemented additional measures. However, more time is needed for the impact to be evident in some pupils' writing.

Overall, teaching is effective. Typically, teachers explain and model learning clearly. They provide opportunities for pupils to work through examples together. Teachers question pupils to check their understanding and set learning tasks that help pupils practise and consolidate their learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt tasks skilfully to help pupils with SEND access learning alongside their peers.

On limited occasions, teaching is not as effective as it could be. This is because some aspects of learning are not always presented as clearly as possible. At times, a small number of pupils have gaps in their learning that are not always picked up and addressed as quickly as they could be.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders strive for all pupils to be fully included in school life. Leaders work hard to positively engage with disadvantaged pupils and their families. The proactive work of leaders with external agencies secures the support which disadvantaged pupils need. The school's pupil premium strategy is carefully targeted and has a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils. The plan identifies what disadvantaged pupils need to ensure an active role in school life. Disadvantaged pupils access trips and take on leadership roles. They attend school more regularly than they have in the past. The actions taken help disadvantaged pupils to succeed across different areas of school life.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Staff are trained to provide an environment where pupils with SEND can learn successfully. Plans identify barriers to learning. Teachers set targets that help pupils with SEND progress suitably from their various starting points. Leaders carefully track the impact of the support that is in place for pupils with SEND. Any changes needed are done in a timely manner. In class, tasks are generally adapted well. This enables pupils with SEND to learn successfully alongside their peers.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

School and trust leaders have worked together intensively to raise standards. They have rightly focused on creating a clear and progressive curriculum and have taken effective action to improve behaviour and attendance. Some work is ongoing, but leaders are clear about their next steps and are making quick improvements where needed. Leaders are determined to continue the positive improvements achieved so far.

Staff appreciate the positive team spirit and collaborative working atmosphere. They value the open, supportive culture. Staff feel well supported with their workload and wellbeing. Staff training has been central to the improvement journey. The trust provides a range of training, from whole-school development to bespoke support. This is working well and has significantly improved the consistency of teaching over time. Leaders recognise that further work is needed to develop specific areas of this. Those responsible for governance fulfil their roles very effectively. They provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders. They are proud of the improvements made and understand where more work is needed to match their ambition for the school and its pupils. Collectively, those responsible for governance and school leaders make decisions that are in the best interests of pupils. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school is working hard to bring parents and carers along on the improvement journey. While there are notable points of celebration, further work is needed to break down some barriers and fully engage the parent community in all aspects of school life.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

The school recognises the importance of developing pupils more widely. It has put in place a well-considered personal development programme that prepares pupils well for life in

modern Britain.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is securely in place. It ensures pupils gain age-appropriate understanding of key topics in the modern world. For example, pupils talk confidently about how to behave online and how to keep themselves safe when using technology. They also understand the importance of healthy relationships and respecting and celebrating differences, including different family structures.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to widen their understanding of potential future career pathways. For example, dog groomers, police officers and photographers visit the school to explain their work and how pupils can aim for these professions. Pupils' wider talents and interests are well catered for. They eagerly take part in sporting competitions and are proud of their recent football tournament victory. Opportunities to sing in assemblies and school performances allow pupils to broaden their talents. They help to develop their self-esteem and confidence. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils fully benefit from these experiences.

Pupils' wellbeing is carefully considered. A well-trained inclusion team supports pupils when they find things difficult. The support hub provides a safe space for pupils to take a break or reflect on their choices. Additionally, targeted outdoor learning sessions further support pupils' emotional wellbeing. Strong links with the local secondary school help pupils feel socially and emotionally ready for their next stage. Visits and transition opportunities help pupils feel confident about moving on.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Published outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 have remained below national averages. However, there was a notable improvement in 2025. Leaders have rightly focused on raising achievement in these areas and this work is beginning to bear fruit. Across year groups, pupils now generally achieve with more positive consistency. They develop reading fluency, which enables most pupils to access the ambitious curriculum. That said, pupils have not always been consistently supported well enough in developing their writing. Some older pupils have gaps in important knowledge, such as writing fluently and spelling.

Pupils develop a suitable depth of knowledge across subjects other than in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, pupils talk confidently about the Stone Age and the Vikings. They can discuss and recall key facts they have learned about these periods in history.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud of their kind and welcoming school. They readily share their enjoyment of learning and talk confidently about the knowledge and facts they have learned. Pupils value

their positive relationships with teachers. They know staff will help them if they ever feel worried or need help to understand their learning.

Typically, pupils progress securely through the school's ambitious curriculum. However, over time, too many pupils have not met the expected outcomes in national tests. This means they are not as academically prepared for secondary school as they need to be. Leaders are ambitious for pupils' achievement. Their actions have started to bring about improvements.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils know the routines and expectations. They enter school calmly each morning and quickly get on with their planned learning tasks. Pupils value the consistency and fairness. They see the positive impact this has on their behaviour. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly. As a result, pupils feel safe in school. Pupils treat each other and visitors with kindness and respect. Behaviour across the school is typically positive.

Pupil leaders make a meaningful contribution to school life. They eagerly apply for these roles and are proud to be democratically elected. They act as strong role models for their peers. For example, play leaders enthusiastically organise playground games for younger pupils from the neighbouring school. They help make breaktime a positive experience. Pupils get along well and enjoy being active together in their play.

The range of educational visits enrich pupils' learning. Leaders recognise their role in providing these opportunities for all pupils. For example, every pupil in Year 6 attends the residential trip. The school removes barriers to attendance so all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, typically attend well and access the wider opportunities and experiences available.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to work closely with families to break down barriers to attendance, supporting all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to attend school even more regularly.
- Leaders should support staff to further develop their subject knowledge and pedagogical approaches so they can deliver the curriculum with confidence and clarity across the different subjects of learning.
- Leaders should ensure that staff have the expertise to address gaps in pupils' knowledge effectively, particularly for the key foundations of learning, including pupils' transcriptional writing skills.

About this inspection

This school is part of the Inspiration 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), Gareth Stevens, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Theodore Agnew.

Inspectors carried out the full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal and other school leaders during the inspection. They also spoke with the chair of trustees, members of the academy committee, the CEO and a range of leaders from the trust.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Principal: Abigail Wright

Lead inspector:

Jonny Wallace, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Julie Winyard, Ofsted Inspector

Alastair Heath-Robinson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 10 February 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

151

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

271

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

51.66%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

5.96%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

21.85%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	51%	62%	Below
2023/24 (final)	24%	61%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	65%	75%	Below
2023/24 (final)	58%	74%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	59%	72%	Below
2023/24 (final)	38%	72%	Below
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	59%	74%	Below
2023/24 (final)	60%	73%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	52%	47%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	5%	46%	Below
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	62%	63%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47%	62%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	57%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	16%	58%	Below
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	57%	61%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	42%	59%	Below
2022/23		59%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	52%	69%	-17 pp
2023/24 (final)	5%	67%	-62 pp
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	62%	81%	-19 pp
2023/24 (final)	47%	80%	-32 pp
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	57%	78%	-21 pp
2023/24 (final)	16%	78%	-62 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	57%	81%	-23 pp
2023/24 (final)	42%	79%	-37 pp
2022/23		79%	

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	6.4%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	7.1%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	7.2%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	24.2%	13.3%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	26.9%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	24.3%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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