

Inspection of King Solomon International Business School

Lord Street, Birmingham, West Midlands B7 4AA

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 September 2024
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of the primary phase in this school is Michelle Grannell and the headteacher of the secondary phase is Tom Ashley. This school is part of the Falcon Education Academies 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), Angela Barry OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr Nikki King CBE.

What is it like to attend this school?

Across all phases of the school, relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils understand the school's values of educational excellence and character development. They said that the school is an improving environment in which to learn. However, while children in the early years and pupils in the primary phase of the school typically achieve well, secondary-age pupils experience a poor education. They are ill-prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are happy and safe. They know who to talk to about any concerns that they may have. During lessons most pupils behave sensibly. However, during breaktimes and lunchtimes, some pupils' behaviour is not as positive. Some pupils do not treat others with respect and some others use derogatory language. Staff monitor pupils' behaviour around the school, including at social times. However, some staff do not address and deal with pupils' poor behaviour well enough.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. In the primary phase, pupils support each other well and have opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Pupils have a range of extra-curricular activities to choose from and staff organise some educational trips to broaden pupils' horizons. However, the weak delivery of the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum means that older pupils are not prepared well enough for life in modern Britain.

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

The school has undergone a period of significant change and development. This includes new staff in senior, subject and pastoral leadership roles. This turbulence has had an impact on the school's work to bring about sustained improvement. Due to the closure of the trust, the school is currently receiving considerable external support to tackle the weaknesses in pupils' education. However, this work is still in its infancy.

The quality of education that children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 receive prepares them well for the next stage of learning. However, this is not the case in the secondary phase. Many aspects of the curriculum in the secondary phase are at the earliest stages of development. As a result, secondary-age pupils do not build on their strong foundations. They do not learn all that they should. Their achievement is poor.

In some subjects, especially in the primary phase, the curriculum identifies the important content that pupils need to know and remember. Mostly, teachers deliver curriculum content clearly and in a logical order so that pupils' understanding builds over time. However, this is not true for all subjects. The curriculum in the secondary phase is at a much earlier stage of development. This means that teachers are unsure what should be taught and when this should happen. It also means that the activities that pupils complete do not help them to build a strong body of knowledge over time.

Some teachers check what pupils have learned and adapt their teaching so that pupils build on what they know and can do. This is done more effectively in the early years and

the primary phase. However, a considerable number of teachers do not check what pupils know and remember well enough, especially in the secondary phase. When this happens, teachers do not spot if pupils have fallen behind in their learning. This leads to pupils having gaps in their knowledge, which then limits their progress through the curriculum.

In the early years, children get off to a positive start. The curriculum is clear and delivered well. This enables children to learn all that they should. Teachers provide activities that are well matched to children's needs. Staff model effective communication, supporting children to develop language and independence. Children are happy in the early years and they thrive. Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 typically build successfully on this positive start throughout the primary phase.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. Some staff use the information that they receive about individual pupils to adapt their teaching. However, some pupils with SEND, particularly in the secondary phase, do not receive effective support to meet their identified needs. This hinders the progress of pupils with SEND.

The school has effective strategies to support pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read, especially in the primary phase. The phonics programme is taught consistently well. The books that children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read are closely matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils who find reading difficult receive the support that they need so that they can catch up. As a result, most pupils become fluent readers during the primary phase of their education. In the secondary phase, pupils receive specialist support to address specific gaps in their reading knowledge, such as phonics, grammar and comprehension.

Absence from school is preventing a considerable number of pupils from achieving as well as they should. Some pupils are persistently absent. The school is beginning to engage with parents and carers more meaningfully to reduce absence levels. This is showing some early impact for some pupils.

The school has recently reviewed the expectations for pupils' behaviour, including movement between lessons and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils know these expectations. They said that behaviour has improved. However, some pupils do not follow these expectations well enough during social times. Staff do not tackle instances of unkind behaviour consistently well.

The PSHE curriculum is carefully organised. However, this curriculum is not delivered well enough, particularly in the secondary phase. This means that pupils do not build on what they know. Some pupils do not remember the important information that they need in readiness for life in modern Britain. Pupils receive a range of careers guidance and information on their post-16 options.

The trust has invested time and resources to tackle weaknesses at the school. However, this has not brought about sustained improvements quickly enough. The school has not evaluated which actions are the most effective in addressing its shortcomings. For

example, the school does not have a clear overview of how well disadvantaged pupils are achieving. Trustees and members of the local governing body have a secure awareness of the importance of safeguarding and pupils' well-being. The school consults staff about policy changes and carefully considers staff's workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, particularly in the secondary phase, the curriculum is at an early stage of development. The school has not identified clearly enough what it wants pupils to learn and how this will build progressively over time. This affects pupils' learning. The school should ensure that the curriculum across the school is carefully designed and well ordered so that pupils learn all that they should.
- The curriculum, including PSHE, is not delivered well enough, especially in the secondary phase. This means that pupils do not build a secure body of knowledge to support their future learning or their readiness for life in modern Britain. The school should ensure that teachers are well equipped to deliver curriculum content so that pupils can build their knowledge progressively over time.
- Teachers do not consistently check that pupils understand what has been learned and what they can remember. This is particularly evident in the secondary phase. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed effectively. As a result, pupils' progress through the curriculum is hindered. The school should ensure that teachers consistently check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching accordingly to close any gaps in learning.
- Absence rates are high. Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, miss too much school. This affects their learning and achievement. The school should further build on its initial work with parents and external agencies to ensure that the barriers that stop pupils attending school are removed.
- Some pupils do not behave well enough during unstructured times. They use derogatory language to each other. This disrupts social times for others. The school should ensure that staff follow the revised behaviour systems so that incidents of poor behaviour are addressed consistently well.

HMCI strongly recommends that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers. The position regarding the appointment of early career teachers will be considered again during any monitoring inspection we carry out.

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	149155
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10344192
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nikki King CBE
CEO of the trust	Angela Barry OBE
Headteacher	Tom Ashley (head of secondary phase) Michelle Grannell (head of primary phase)
Website	kingsolomonibs.com
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Falcon Education Academies Trust. The school joined the trust in April 2022.
- The school is designated as a 4 to 19 academy free school. At the time of the inspection there were no sixth-form students on roll.
- The head of the secondary school phase was not present at the time of the inspection.
- The school is part of the Christian Faith Education Service. The school received its last section 48 inspection of church schools in November 2018. The school is waiting for confirmation of its next section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- 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. 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) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, art and design, history, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work and talked with some pupils about their learning. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning. They also checked the school's website.
- 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.
- The inspectors observed informal times of the day as part of their evaluation of safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors held meetings with the chair of trustees and the CEO of Falcon Education Academies Trust, representatives of the trust providing external support, the heads of school and other school leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. The inspectors also talked informally to pupils, staff, parents and carers to gather information about school life.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

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