

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Kingsmoor Academy

Ployters Road, Harlow, Essex CM18 7PS

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Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

## Outcome

Kingsmoor Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of academy of this school is Angie Skinner. This school is part of the Academy Transformation 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), Mark McCourt, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Patricia Beanland, OBE. There is also an executive principal, Angela Lymbouris, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They follow The Kingsmoor Way and can explain how rules and routines create a happy, safe environment. For example, pupils face the teacher when listening, helping them to hear clearly and see what is being shown. The school provides rewards that encourage individual and team success. The always award recognises pupils who consistently show the school's values, including being responsible and respectful. House credits promote teamwork, with the winning house earning a termly reward like a popcorn party or extra playtime.

Pupils' calm, focused behaviour creates classrooms where learning thrives. Consequently, more and more pupils meet the school's high expectations, with many attaining well in statutory assessment tests. Pupils appreciate the school's structured approach to teaching, where teachers typically demonstrate and explain first, followed by guided practice with a partner. This helps them start their work with confidence and accuracy.

There is a range of opportunities that enrich pupils' wider development. They enjoy memorable events like the Kingsmoor Carnival, local sporting tournaments and school talent show. Younger children shine in the Little Stars Christmas concert, while the school choir performs at national events. Older pupils relish responsibilities, such as the house

captains who award stickers for polite lunchtime behaviour. These experiences help to shape pupils' charming character.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has developed a clear curriculum with strong support from the trust. Teachers benefit from guidance, such as the right is right approach, which ensures clear teaching and regular checks on pupils' understanding. This helps many pupils produce high-quality work. Trust-led networks allow leaders to learn from evidence-based practices and share ideas. Ongoing training keeps staff well-prepared, helping to manage workload and protect their well-being.

The school prioritises reading from the early years onwards, with children eagerly engaging in activities. For instance, nursery-age children learn to hear the first sound in a word and link it to the right letter. Staff regularly check pupils' reading. This helps to identify those who need extra support. Extra support includes effective tuition and opportunities to read aloud.

In the early years, children write using letter sounds they know, building their spelling skills and confidence. Staff use simple tools, like boxes, to show where letters go or pictures to spark ideas, to help children with their writing. These supports help children to move from writing single words to full sentences.

In key stages 1 and 2, pupils write often in different subjects, but at times, the teaching of writing does not focus enough on the key aspects they need to secure for their age. So, mistakes in grammar, punctuation and spelling persist, making their writing less clear. Leaders recognise this, but their work to address it is at an early stage.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities effectively. Staff work closely with parents and carers to understand each pupil's needs and choose the right strategies. The school uses evidence-informed approaches, such as speech and language toolkits with progress checkpoints, to support pupils' development. The school has strengthened relationships with families through regular contact and events like coffee mornings, building trust and supporting each child's development.

The trust and school collaboratively introduced what they deem a warm, strict approach to behaviour. Pupils understand and follow the expectations, putting this down to assemblies and lessons that teach them the benefits of behaviours. On rare occasions when behaviour support is needed, leaders ensure pupils and staff feel well guided and classrooms remain calm.

The school's enrichment programme supports pupils' wider development through trips, workshops and competitions. For example, it hosted and often won the local judo tournament. The school uses extra-curricular clubs to train pupils to take part in sports with confidence and success. Workshops, such as one on Florence Nightingale, as well as opportunities to meet with visitors, including faith and non-faith leaders, deepen pupils' understanding of concepts and new vocabulary learned in lessons.

Trustees ask the school key questions to help leaders to reflect on their work. It helps leaders to justify decision making and celebrate success, as well as identify when a change of approach may be needed to resolve an issue. Trustees value local input, considering how best to recruit local governors who can understand the school and its needs. Ultimately, trustees and local governors work well to check and challenge leaders' work appropriately.

The school fosters strong engagement with parents by ensuring that leaders and staff are approachable. The impact of the school's work with parents is evident, for example, in the pupils' strong attendance rates. The school acts as a vital liaison, connecting parents with local services to meet each family's needs.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's approach to teaching writing does not ensure that all pupils secure the foundational knowledge and skills they need, such as letter formation, spelling and sentence demarcation. As a result, some pupils do not write as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers have the expertise to model and teach these concepts and skills effectively, and that pupils are supported to embed them consistently across 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138996
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378521
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	301
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Pat Beanland, OBE
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Mark McCourt
<b>Principal</b>	Angie Skinner (head of academy)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kingsmooracademy.attrust.org.uk">www.kingsmooracademy.attrust.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school shares a local governing body with another school in the trust. There is a single chair of the local governing body for both schools.
- Due to a declining birth rate in the local area, the school will reduce its published admissions number in the Reception Year from 60 to 30 in September 2025. This means the school will return to being a one-form entry primary school.
- The school offers before-school childcare for pupils who attend the school. It is run by school staff and overseen by school leaders.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings that involved leaders from the trust and the school, including two trustees, the deputy CEO, the director of primary education, the director of safeguarding, three executive principals, the head of academy and two assistant principals.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and wider school experience, and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector reviewed school documentation, including the academy improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the trust board and minutes of meetings of the local governing body.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

## **Inspection team**

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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