

Inspection of John Kyrle High School and Sixth Form Centre Academy

Ledbury Road, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 7ET

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at John Kyrle High School and Sixth Form Centre Academy are confident, polite and welcoming. They enjoy coming to school. Sixth-form students are positive role models for younger pupils. They work hard and achieve high academic standards. Many younger pupils aspire to join the school's sixth form when they are older.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for pupils to be 'happy, successful and healthy'. However, leaders have not ensured that there are clear and consistent approaches to some aspects of the school's work. There is, for instance, too much variability in the quality of education across the school. This means that some pupils do not do as well as they should.

The school is calm and orderly. Pupils focus and behave well in the majority of lessons. Disruption is rare and little learning time is lost. When bullying happens, adults take it seriously. Most pupils have confidence that adults will sort out any problems they have.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. Pupils value these opportunities. Many make good use of them. The activities include a string quartet, a book club, a debating society and an equestrian club.

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

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a broad range of subjects. In the sixth form, the curriculum enables students to gain the knowledge and skills to succeed after school.

In most subjects, learning builds in a logical order. Curriculum leaders ensure that the essential elements of what pupils need to know and remember is clear. For example, in art, pupils in Year 7 learn to control light and dark tones before being asked to use this knowledge when painting an image. This supports all pupils well and helps them to be successful. However, the curriculum is not yet well planned in all subjects. In some subjects, teachers are unclear about the essential knowledge that pupils need to remember before moving on. This means that teachers sometimes ask pupils to complete work for which they are not prepared well enough. When this happens, some pupils struggle. This slows learning, particularly for those pupils with SEND.

In the sixth form, very positive relationships between staff and students support learning well. For instance, sixth-form students do not hesitate to ask for help when they are finding work difficult. Teachers respond promptly and provide helpful support. This stops students from falling behind. However, some pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not get the help they need in lessons quickly enough. This is because teachers do not always spot when pupils are stuck.

Leaders know which pupils need further help to become fluent and confident readers. These pupils are receiving valuable support from well-trained adults.

Pupils' attitudes to their education are positive. Pupils focus well on learning in lessons and cooperate well with each other most of the time. At other times of the day, pupils' behaviour is sensible and mature. For example, they sit together in small groups at lunchtime, chatting calmly and pleasantly.

The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is working well. The curriculum ensures that pupils get the information they need to keep themselves safe. This supports pupils in having an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. In addition, the school ensures that pupils have a good range of opportunities to meet with local employers. Those in Year 11 spoke positively about the advice they had received, including from the school's careers adviser. Many pupils have a clear view of the career paths they want to follow.

Pupils usually behave well in class and around the school. However, the school's behaviour policy includes very little information about how staff should manage unwanted behaviour should it occur. The interim headteacher, supported by leaders, is taking effective steps to remove these inconsistencies. Staff and parents and carers appreciate his efforts, but there is still more to do.

There have been significant changes to the governance of the school since the previous inspection. Most members of the current governing body have been in place since September 2021. They are ambitious for the school and keen for it to improve. However, governors currently do not have the knowledge needed to hold leaders to account for the quality of education in the school.

Since his appointment in January, the interim headteacher has worked hard to promote staff's well-being. Staff feel supported and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take pupils' welfare seriously. They are alert to any signs that a pupil may need support and they report concerns quickly. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they need to keep them safe. Safeguarding records are detailed and well organised. Leaders complete appropriate checks on staff before they are appointed.

As part of the school's PSHE education curriculum, pupils learn how to keep safe when online. In addition, they learn about healthy relationships and what to do if they have any concerns or worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning in some subjects does not set out the essential knowledge that leaders expect pupils to know and remember. This is a barrier to some pupils knowing more and remembering more. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, teachers are clear about the content pupils need to know and remember.
- In some subjects, teachers do not check pupils' understanding within lessons well enough. This means that teachers do not always know which pupils need additional help. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to check learning effectively in their subjects.
- Governors lack sufficient knowledge of education. This means that they are not able to hold leaders to account well enough for the quality of education in the school. As a matter of priority, governors should develop their understanding of their roles so that they know how to hold leaders to account.
- Leaders have not ensured that there are clear and well-understood policies in place for some aspects of the school's work, including curriculum, teaching and behaviour. This means that leaders' ambition for providing high-quality education is not consistently realised. Leaders should ensure that there are strong and well-understood policies in place for these important aspects of the school's work.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136399
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10226414
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	1,409
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	273
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthea McIntyre
Headteacher	Mark Burton
Website	www.jkhs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to the leadership and governance of the school. The previous governing body was disbanded in May 2021. All the members of the current governing body are new to their role. In addition, the previous headteacher left the school at the start of this year and an interim headteacher was appointed in January 2022.
- The school uses no alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives of governance, including the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, mathematics, English, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with some pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included: school policies, minutes of governing body meetings, external reviews, safeguarding records, curriculum plans, and pupils' attendance and behaviour records.
- Through discussions with leaders, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. An inspector also looked at documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record of checks on staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of different classes and at different times of the day. They talked to pupils informally about bullying, behaviour and welfare.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors also looked at responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Christopher Stevens, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Parr	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Lois Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Spoor	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022