

# Inspection of KWS Milton Keynes

R2D, 1-9 Barton Road, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK2 3HU

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Inspection dates: 8 to 10 July 2025

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Most pupils join the school having been absent from formal education for some time. Staff quickly build pupils' trust and confidence. Effective support and a nurturing environment help pupils to effectively re-engage with education. The success of the school's work and high ambition are reflected in pupils' positive achievement. They leave the school well prepared for the next steps in their education, employment or training.

The school's work to improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes is transformational. Typically, behaviour is exemplary. Respect and courtesy are the norm. Pupils warmly greet visitors and are keen to explain their work and talk about their experiences. They apply themselves exceptionally well in lessons and are proud of their achievements. One pupil, reflecting the view of others, commented, 'I feel privileged to come to this school.'

Pupils feel that they belong here. They enjoy school and speak warmly about how well staff care for them and the friends they have made. For many, this is the first school where pupils have built friendships. Pupils benefit from a range of diverse experiences that broaden their horizons and help to prepare them for independent living and adulthood. This includes trips within the locality, visits to London and a residential visit to the seaside.

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

The founding principle of this school is a determined moral purpose to make a positive difference to the lives of its pupils. This ambition is being realised through effective teaching and approaches that meet pupils' needs. By the time they leave the school, pupils gain a range of accredited awards and qualifications. This helps pupils and sixth-form students to realise their career ambitions and continue into further education.

Pupils benefit from a suitably broad curriculum. Priority is given to subjects such as English, mathematics and personal, social, health and citizenship education. For older pupils and students in the sixth form, the curriculum is increasingly aligned to different qualifications. These include academic and vocational subjects.

There is a structured phonics programme in place for pupils who need support with early reading. The school makes it a priority to address gaps in pupils' reading. Pupils benefit from opportunities to read more widely, using a range of appropriate texts. This supports them to become more confident readers. Texts are often chosen because they touch on social and moral themes, such as equality and racism. This contributes well to aspects of pupils' personal development.

Thoughtful transition and induction arrangements help staff understand each pupils' unique needs, including any that have not previously been identified. This enables the school to offer the right support from the start. Learning 'pathways' and goals

are informed by pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans and the school's well-considered assessment processes. However, in some aspects of the curriculum, the school has not identified clearly enough the steps that build towards pupils' long-term learning goals. This means that, at times, staff do not have enough guidance about what to teach to enable pupils to reach the highest possible outcomes.

A strength of the school is staff's strong knowledge of pupils and how they adapt their approaches to meet pupils' needs. High-quality guidance and support help pupils to overcome barriers to learning and foster confidence, resilience and enjoyment. Staff are sensitive to pupils' emotions and alert to any tension or anxiety. They expertly diffuse and de-escalate rising emotions. Staff have high expectations, build strong relationships and establish clear routines. They create a calm environment, where pupils feel secure and ready to learn. Pupils' focus, motivation and exceptional attitudes demonstrate the strong impact of the school's work.

The school's personal development programme and 'independent living' curriculum is well considered. It prioritises helping pupils get ready for adult life. Pupils learn vital everyday skills, such as travelling safely, cooking meals and understanding money. They help with daily tasks and take responsibility for making their own breakfast, such as poached eggs on toast. Pupils learn how to behave appropriately in different social situations and how to keep safe in various contexts, including when online.

Pupils' lives are enriched through new and exciting experiences, including visiting the theatre and travelling by train and underground. Through the residential visit, pupils experience simple pleasures, such as paddling in the sea. Pupils and sixth-form students receive clear, unbiased careers guidance that helps them explore options and make confident choices about their future.

One of the school's strengths is its partnership work with parents and carers. This includes helping pupils to overcome previous attendance challenges. As a result of this work, attendance is very high, and no pupils are persistently absent. This is remarkable given most pupils' previous difficulties and history of poor attendance.

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets the Independent School Standards and complies with Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. However, governance and leadership oversight of some aspects of record-keeping are not strong enough. Governance remains internal, and trustee roles, responsibilities and accountability systems are not clearly enough defined or sufficiently robust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- In some aspects of the curriculum, the school has not identified clearly enough what pupils need to learn as they progress through the curriculum towards their individual long-term learning goals. This means that, at times, staff do not receive enough guidance about what they need to teach. The proprietor should refine these subject curriculums to make clear the content and sequencing of knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn to support them in achieving the highest possible outcomes.
- Some aspects of governance and leadership, including oversight and some record-keeping practices, are not sufficiently robust. Currently, there is no external oversight and accountability processes are not clear enough. This hinders the school's understanding and evaluation of its work, including where further improvements are needed. The proprietor needs to strengthen leadership and governance oversight, including accountability processes, and improve the quality and consistency of record-keeping.

## **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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148420
<b>DfE registration number</b>	826/6019
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	10375009
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent day school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	5
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	KWS Educational
<b>Chair</b>	Karl Weaver
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Nichols-Weaver
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£57,604
<b>Telephone number</b>	07871 067991
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kwseducational.co.uk">www.kwseducational.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@kwseducational.co.uk">admin@kwseducational.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	28 to 30 June 2022

## Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Typically, pupils' needs are associated with a diagnosis of autism. Most pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have other SEND needs. These include speech, language and communication needs. All pupils have an EHC plan and are referred to the school and funded by Milton Keynes local authority.
- KWS Milton Keynes was registered by the Department for Education on 21 July 2021. This is the school's second standard inspection.
- KWS Milton Keynes is one of two schools owned by the proprietor, KWS Educational. The headteacher and the chair of the proprietor body are the two directors of KWS Educational.
- The school has a board of trustees that consists of the two members (directors) of the proprietor body, the deputy headteachers from the two KWS schools and an appointed chair, who is a family relation of the headteacher.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school is located at R2D, 1-9 Barton Road, Bletchley MK2 3HU. Since the previous inspection, the school has added two new rooms, including a room with cooking facilities.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietor body.
- Inspectors visited lessons, reviewed a sample of pupils' work and spoke with pupils and staff. Inspectors also considered curriculum information. They met with staff and leaders to discuss the school's curriculum and other aspects of the school's work.

- The lead inspector completed a tour of the premises and reviewed a range of documents to check the school's compliance with the standards.
- 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 views of pupils, staff and parents were taken into account, including their responses to Ofsted's online surveys. The lead inspector met with a parent on the morning of the second day of the inspection.
- The lead inspector held telephone discussions with a representative from the local authority and the local authority designated officer for safeguarding.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Cox, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Haynes

His Majesty's Inspector

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