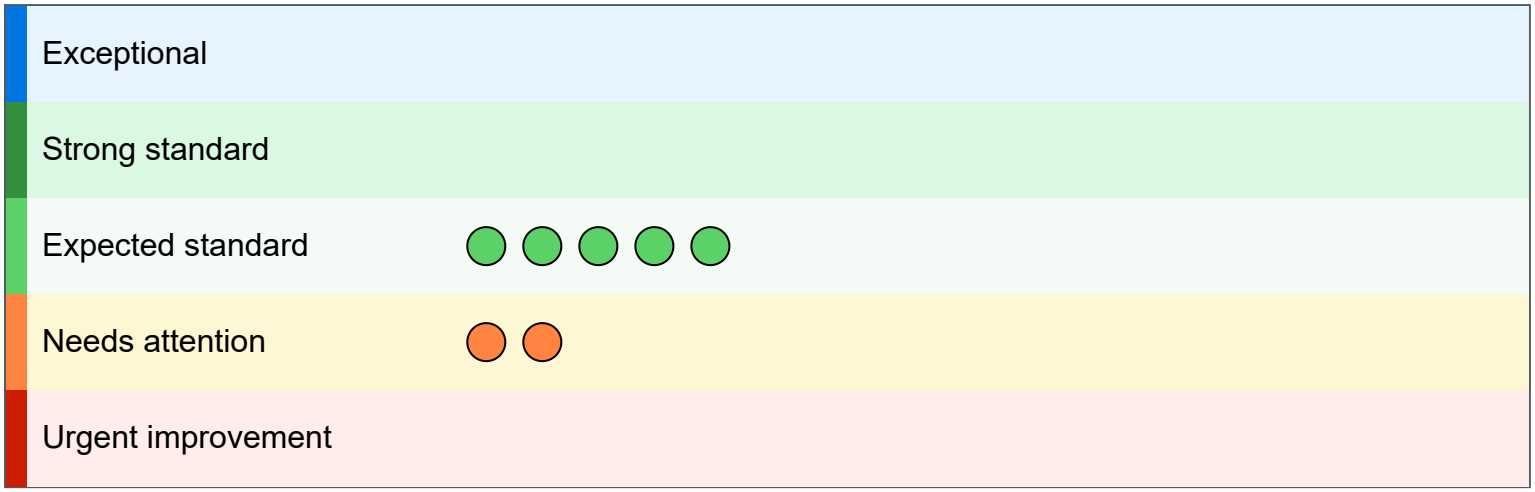
The King's Academy

Address: Stainton Way, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0GA

Unique reference number (URN): 134223

Inspection report: 19 May 2026



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 made attendance a clear priority. They have rebuilt routines and created a culture where pupils feel they belong. Leaders track patterns with care and act early when pupils begin to struggle. They work closely with families and outside agencies. This has had a great impact. Attendance has risen for all groups and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who face disadvantage now attend more often. Persistent absence has also fallen. Some pupils still find regular attendance hard but leaders are securing steady improvement. Current attendance is now in line with national figures.

Behaviour in school is generally calm and respectful. Pupils move around the site sensibly and lessons are typically free from disruption. Staff use clear routines and restorative conversations to help pupils learn from mistakes. Bullying is not common and pupils say that staff deal with it when it happens. Leaders act quickly and firmly on any racist or homophobic language. Leaders are strengthening the ways pupils can report concerns and receive reassurance after incidents. Pupils with SEND receive the adjustments they need. Suspensions have significantly reduced for all pupil groups and permanent exclusions are only used as a last resort after many supportive approaches have been exhausted.

Inclusion

Expected standard

Inclusion sits at the heart of this school and shapes daily life for every pupil. The school welcomes pupils with a wide range of needs and gives them the support they need to take part in lessons and wider activities. Needs are identified early through clear systems and staff check often to see if support is working. This helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who face disadvantage and pupils known to social care.

The school has three specialist provisions for hearing impairment, vision impairment and higher learning needs. These provisions give pupils expert help while still allowing them to learn with their peers. Staff also support pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs through calm spaces and trusted adults. Many pupils talk about small changes that help them learn such as earbuds to manage noise or quiet spaces when they feel overwhelmed.

Leaders use additional funding to improve attendance and to support pupils to close gaps. Pupils who are looked after or known to social care receive close pastoral care and take part in trips and clubs. Alternative provision is used with care and checked often to keep pupils safe. Leaders are working to further strengthen classroom practice and support available for the rising number of pupils with SEMH needs.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Following a period of turbulence, leaders have set a new culture built on belonging, inclusion and high expectations. They understand the school’s strengths and the barriers pupils face. Leaders have identified the right priorities and acted quickly to improve attendance,

behaviour and the quality of teaching. They analyse information with care and use this to shape strategy. Leaders have taken steps to strengthen teaching, raise expectations and improve consistency across subjects.

Most staff say that workload is manageable and that leaders listen and respond to concerns. Early career teachers value high-quality mentoring and training. Staff benefit from professional development which is well structured and linked to clear teaching principles.

Governors and trustees know the school well and meet their statutory duties. They visit regularly, ask challenging questions and check that leaders' actions are improving the school. They understand the school's context and support leaders to make decisions in pupils' best interests. Trust leaders provide additional expertise in curriculum, safeguarding and teaching. Leaders work closely with parents and the wider community. The school's relationships with families have strengthened and parents speak positively about the support they receive. Leaders also work with local agencies and community groups to widen opportunities for pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Leaders have built a personal development programme that reflects the school's values and the needs of the community. Pupils value the daily pastoral curriculum time and how this provides a space for reflection and discussion. Leaders check the personal, social and health education programme and adapt it when local issues and themes arise. Leaders are working to strengthen staff training and quality assurance of the personal, social and health education programme to ensure consistent experiences for pupils.

Pupils learn about relationships, consent, online safety and physical and mental health in age-appropriate ways. They talk about topics such as crime, peer pressure and scams with confidence. Pupils understand the school's values and can explain how these link to their behaviour and choices. They show an understanding of the importance of British values. Pupils also take part in a wide range of cultural and spiritual experiences. For example, an activities week, theatre visits, charity events and the annual school production help pupils broaden their horizons. Leaders track who takes part and remove barriers so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who face disadvantage can join in.

Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Pupils know who to talk to and say that staff help them with friendships, worries and confidence. Leaders work closely with outside agencies and keep detailed records of support. Vulnerable pupils describe how staff help them settle, make friends and feel included.

The school's careers education contributes significantly to pupils' motivation and sense of ambition. For example, Year 10 pupils speak with enthusiasm about recent careers events, including assemblies, tutor time sessions and a careers week. Leaders track destinations after Year 11 and Year 13 with care and a new system is now strengthening this process. Careers, progression and work-related learning are also well established in the sixth form and help students move confidently into their next steps.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard

Leaders provide clear direction for the sixth form. They have reshaped the provision with a greater focus on academic achievement and consistent teaching. Leaders monitor subject performance closely so that strengths and gaps are understood. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching. Staff know students well and use this to guide support.

Student outcomes in national assessments at the end of Year 13 are in line with national averages. Most subjects show stable performance over time. Leaders are working to improve consistency and raise the performance of a small number of subject areas that underperform. Teaching is calm and purposeful. Students value small classes, warm relationships with staff and clear guidance from teachers. They also benefit from a structured personal development programme each week. This includes enrichment sessions where students take part in extended projects, independent research, volunteering, work experience and preparation for independent life.

Students receive high-quality careers education. Weekly sessions, employer encounters and a progression week help them understand future routes. All students receive meaningful work-related learning and leaders track this carefully. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive tailored support that helps them take part fully and develop independence. Most students move on to university or training and leaders track this closely so that they can provide timely help if needed.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention

Outcomes in national assessments at the end of Year 11 are not where they need to be. Results have declined over recent years and fewer pupils now reach secure grades in English and maths. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities do not catch up quickly enough. Some pupils who start secondary school with weaker reading or number skills continue to struggle. Others who begin with more secure understanding are not achieving the high grades they are capable of. As a result, too many pupils leave Year 11 without the firm foundation they need for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Leaders understand the reasons for the decline and have introduced appropriate strategies to address it. They have improved attendance and are reshaping teaching so that pupils recall key ideas and use subject language with confidence. This is having an impact on current pupils who are showing better achievement in lessons. Staff are also working to close gaps and secure pupils' foundational knowledge.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

Teaching is mixed in its effectiveness. Some lessons show clear modelling and helpful practice tasks. Other lessons lack focus and pupils are unsure how new work links to what

they learned before. Teachers do not always use assessment well enough to spot misconceptions. This means that some pupils, including those with barriers to their learning, move on before they are secure in their learning.

Some pupils struggle to remember key ideas from earlier learning. This makes it hard for them to build deeper knowledge. Others find it difficult to explain important terms or use subject language with confidence. A number of pupils also wait for answers rather than thinking for themselves. Leaders recognise these issues and are working to improve how teachers check understanding and develop deeper thinking.

The curriculum gives pupils a wide range of subjects and clear routes as they move through the school. Leaders have strengthened the order of learning in many areas so that ideas build in a more logical way. This is helping pupils to follow new work with greater confidence. Some pupils still find reading and vocabulary difficult and this slows their progress. Leaders have ensured that appropriate support is in place to help these pupils.

The curriculum is inclusive. Staff adapt lessons so that pupils with different needs can take part. Leaders know that teaching is not yet consistent and are taking appropriate steps to strengthen it.

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

This is a school built on kindness, belonging and high expectations. Pupils feel known, valued and supported. Staff build positive relationships and help pupils start each day with a clear sense of purpose.

Many pupils enjoy their learning and speak positively about some subjects. Sixth-form students value the clear guidance they receive from teachers. However, outcomes at the end of Year 11 have declined over recent years. Some pupils who start with weaker reading or number skills do not catch up quickly enough. Some pupils who begin school with secure understanding are also not achieving the grades they should. This hampers how well some are prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Pupils experience variable teaching quality across the school. Leaders know this and have begun to strengthen teaching so that current pupils recall key ideas, use subject language confidently and think more deeply.

Staff are true to the school's vision that each child is 'infinitely precious'. They ensure that all pupils are included in every aspect of school life. Pupils enjoy many clubs and activities that broaden their interests such as chess, gardening, creative writing and baking. They also take part in a wide range of cultural experiences. These include theatre visits to study Shakespeare, presenting scientific research at conferences and international trips during an activities week. Pupils build their social conscience through events that support local charities such as a colour run and readathons.

Pupils feel safe and say they have trusted adults. Pupils generally behave calmly and are respectful to adults. Bullying is not common and pupils say staff act when concerns are

raised. Pupils understand how to stay safe online and in the community. Pupils' attendance has significantly improved and most pupils now attend more regularly.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all subjects embed systematic retrieval, explicit vocabulary teaching and precise checking of understanding, so that pupils secure the knowledge they need to progress.
- Leaders should ensure that improvements in curriculum delivery lead to improved outcomes across all subjects and pupil groups.
- Leaders should strengthen the consistency of behaviour expectations and the support provided to pupils, so that behaviour and attitudes improve for all.

About this inspection

This school is part of Emmanuel Schools Foundation, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Professor Mark Pike, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stewart McKinlay.

Inspectors carried out this 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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMI.

Inspectors spoke with the principal, trust leaders, school leaders, governors and trustees during the inspection. They spoke with staff and pupils. They visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Christian religious character. Its last section 48 inspection was in 2023.

This school has three on-site specialist SEND provisions: a vision impairment additionally resourced provision; a hearing impairment additionally resourced provision and a higher learning needs support unit.
The school caters for a wide range of special educational needs and /or disabilities. These include visual impairment, hearing impairment, cognition and learning needs and social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school currently makes use of five alternative provisions, including two that are unregistered.

The school has undergone a significant change since the last inspection. A new principal has been appointed.

Principal: Simon Reader

Lead inspector:
Chris Carr, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Simon Barber, Ofsted Inspector
Rob Spurr, Ofsted Inspector
Karen Blackburn, His Majesty's Inspector
Ian Rawstorne, His Majesty's Inspector
Jessica McKay, His Majesty's Inspector
Philip Wheatley, 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 19 May 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,416
Above 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: 1,067

School capacity

1,530
Above 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: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

38.95%
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: 28.9%

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

8.05%
Well 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

15.32%
Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

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)

Resourced provision and SEN unit

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

VI - Visual Impairment, HI - Hearing Impairment, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty, SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	30.5%	45.4%	Below
2023/24 (final)	42.4%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.9%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	37.9	46.1	Below
2023/24 (final)	41.5	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45.3	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.40	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.28	-0.03	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	15.7%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	21.3%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	21.6%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	29.6	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	29.7	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.3	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-1.00	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.67	-0.57	Close to average

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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	15.7%	53.1%	-37.4 pp
2023/24 (final)	21.3%	53.1%	-31.9 pp
2022/23 (final)	21.6%	52.4%	-30.8 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	29.6	50.4	-20.8
2023/24 (final)	29.7	50.0	-20.3
2022/23 (final)	35.3	50.3	-15.1

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-1.00	0.16	-1.17
2022/23 (final)	-0.67	0.17	-0.84

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (revised)	89%	92%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	91%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	33.59	35.00	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.87	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	34.24	34.16	Close to average

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (final)	-0.2	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below

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 (3 term)	11.5%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	12.9%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	11.3%	9.0%	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 (3 term)	32.6%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	36.1%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	36.0%	26.5%	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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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