

Inspection of Queens' School

Aldenham Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire WD23 2TY

Inspection dates:	18 and 19 March 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jonathan Morrell. This school converted to an academy in July 2011, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sian Henry.

What is it like to attend this school?

Queens' School is highly ambitious for its pupils. They are skilfully encouraged and supported by the school to become tenacious in pursuit of excellence. Pupils are very supportive and care deeply for their peers. Staff and pupils work tirelessly to ensure everyone can achieve their goals. The schools 'STAR' values shine through the pupils' behaviour here. These values are inherently part of the school's identity.

The school equips pupils with the desire, knowledge and skills to 'Dare to be Great'. This culture of aspiration enables pupils not only to achieve strong academic outcomes but also helps them to build character and confidence. The curriculum has been superbly crafted and deliberately explores every opportunity for rich learning experiences.

Teachers expertly deliver the curriculum. They model behaviours that encourage scholarship and, as a result, pupils are curious, interested and relentless learners. The school ensures all pupils are supported on their educational journey. Their well-being, welfare and needs are prioritised.

Across the school, pupils' conduct and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils seize every opportunity to participate in the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to complement their experiences in the classroom. The school's 'super-curricular' offer provides opportunities for pupils to participate in exciting events, activities, competitions and visits.

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

The school has developed a challenging and meaningful curriculum. It thoughtfully considers what it wants its pupils to experience, alongside providing the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need for their next stage in education. The number of pupils taking the full range of English Baccalaureate subjects has increased in recent years. Almost all pupils go on to ambitious destinations when they leave the school.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. This enables them to provide clear explanations, helping pupils to produce high-quality work. Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils create an environment where every opportunity to learn is maximised. Teachers skilfully use questioning to encourage deeper levels of thinking, leading to exceptional levels of curiosity in pupils.

Teachers are adept at checking what pupils know and remember. This ensures that pupils quickly understand complex concepts in great depth. Teachers carefully reshape learning to help any pupils who might be at risk of falling behind. Extra help for pupils who need it, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is well thought out and highly effective.

The school quickly identifies any pupil who is not a fluent reader and gives them the support to help them to read confidently. This priority is seen across many subjects, where pupils' competent reading allows them to access the curriculum easily and

understand texts and examination questions. This focus prepares them well for key stage 5, where students must navigate more-challenging texts and journals.

In the sixth form there is a stimulating, yet nurturing environment. There are a diverse range of courses that empower students to craft study programmes aligned with their unique goals and aspirations. The school provides exceptional opportunities for talented athletes through its sports academy, further complementing its strong academic offer. The majority of students secure places at their first-choice universities, including prestigious institutions. Additionally, an increasing proportion of students are advancing into apprenticeships, reflecting the breadth of opportunities.

Attendance is excellent and pupils enjoy coming to school. They have extremely positive attitudes and prioritise their own learning. Many pupils relish the opportunity to develop further by representing the school council, becoming ambassadors, working to support others and leading events and committees.

The school has created a comprehensive 'lifelong learning' programme which prepares young people, at all stages, for life in 21st-century Britain. Pupils are confident they have the skills to make informed and responsible choices about their lives. They also respect the diverse needs of others and actively support one another.

Careers guidance is excellent, equipping pupils with a comprehensive understanding of their future options. Pupils benefit from a wide range of enriching experiences. These opportunities ensure pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps in life. There are many ways the school supports this transition, including specialist advisers, meaningful work experience placements and visits from alumni to share their voyages.

Leaders are unwavering in their ambition for all pupils. They foster a clear, values-driven vision for the school. Their precise attention to detail ensures every pupil thrives as a result of their work. Staff at all levels benefit from high-quality training, collaboration and well-being support. Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school, creating a supportive community with pupils at the centre.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	136877
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345311
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	1,682
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	336
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sian Henry
Headteacher	Jonathan Morrell
Website	www.queens.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Queens' School operates as a single academy trust.
- The school currently uses one registered 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.

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, physical education, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in the sixth form.
- The lead inspector met with the director of education, the chief executive officer and chair of the trust and members of the local advisory board.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of school leaders, including those who are responsible for behaviour, safeguarding and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- An inspector met with early career teachers and staff involved in their induction.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to discuss their lessons, behaviour, personal development and their safety.
- 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.
- Inspections scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector considered the responses and free-text responses received during the inspection to Ofsted Parent View. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Louise Cooper, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Steven Hogan	Ofsted Inspector
Cathy Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Caren Earp	Ofsted Inspector
Likhon Muhammad	Ofsted Inspector

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