

King's Reach Education

Address: St Hilary's House, Reculver Walk, Senacre, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 8SW

Unique reference number (URN): 149070

Inspection report: 28 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	● ● ●
Expected standard	● ● ●
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

✔ 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.
- **Insufficient evidence:** Inspectors were unable to gather sufficient evidence to judge whether safeguarding standards are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Most of the pupils attend King's Reach having spent significant periods of time out of education. Leaders have an approach designed to re-engage pupils into education positively. Bespoke work with young people and their families supports them to develop more positive attendance. This includes family therapy, developing positive relationships and further engagement work. This work has significant impact. Pupils increasingly attend well, and leaders are tireless in their pursuit of this being higher still.

Behaviour in the school is very positive. While many join the school having struggled to regulate their behaviour at other institutions, pupils here are supported to develop positive relationships both with staff and their peers. High staffing ratios mean that pupils receive personalised support linked to their needs. Coaches and tutors support them to develop secure and confident relationships, to identify their triggers and to develop more effective strategies to regulate their behaviour. As a result, pupils and staff work well together, there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and lessons are uninterrupted. Leaders and staff consistently seek to develop meaningful engagement in learning, again using bespoke approaches to positively develop pupils' aspirations and see their education as something in which they can succeed.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

A highly inclusive ethos sits at the centre of leaders' vision and is woven into the practices of staff across the school. Many pupils join the school with significant barriers to learning and interruptions to their education. All pupils in the school have education, health and care plans. Pupils' needs are identified carefully and are well understood by staff. Much of the curriculum is delivered one to one, meaning that staff design lessons to carefully address pupils' needs and they can make effective adaptations to learning in lessons.

A raft of additional interventions further support pupils who need additional input. For example, many pupils benefit from specific therapeutic interventions to aid them in overcoming trauma. This supports their increasing emotional wellbeing and resilience. For others, work with parents and carers is undertaken to help support pupils' development. Each package of care is uniquely designed around pupils as individuals. As a result, pupils thrive in the care of staff, who know and understand them and their needs very well. Their progress is carefully tracked, meaning that staff can be confident where their work is impacting positively, and where their provision needs adjustment.

Leaders are responsive in adapting their provision so that it supports pupils' changing needs. For example, curriculum pathways are regularly adjusted in line with pupils' developing resilience and capabilities. This bespoke support aids pupils in making effective progress from their starting points and ensuring they get the right support at the right time.

The curriculum and enrichment offer for pupils' wider development is a strength of the school and bespoke to pupils' individual needs. Pupils are encouraged to think about their 'Future Me' and develop positive aspirations for their futures. Through both the well-considered personal, social, emotional, health and relationships curriculum and wider enrichment opportunities, pupils develop a secure and detailed knowledge of the most essential aspects identified by leaders. Pupils receive an effective and personalised careers education, including workplace and college visits, to help them develop positive ambitions for their future lives. As a result, pupils are especially well prepared for life beyond the school.

The highly effective impact of this offer can be seen in the growth in pupils' personal skills, knowledge, independence and self-esteem that is carefully tracked by staff and leaders. Leaders' insightful understanding of pupils and families enables support to be provided that aligns with the school's ambitious personal development priorities. This includes fostering pupils' resilience, independence, and capacity to lead fulfilled lives, as well as supporting their self-esteem and promoting highly positive social conduct.

The programme to support and broaden pupils' interests and talents is planned precisely to ensure that pupils receive opportunities across the arts, music, sport and culture. This offer is wide and extensive. Pupils' experiences help them to develop an appreciation of other cultures and religions. For example, one small group were visiting a local gurdwara during the inspection.

The school's pastoral support is also highly effective. Leaders' detailed knowledge of each pupil enables support to be highly responsive to changes in pupils' presentation. This enables leaders and staff to provide support for pupils and their families so that they can overcome their previous barriers or interruptions to learning, and equate education with success.

Expected standard ●

Achievement

Expected standard ●

Typically, pupils achieve well in this school. Many pupils have spent significant time out of education, and leaders and staff identify where gaps in pupils' previous learning need to be addressed. They are supported effectively to develop their knowledge, particularly in the foundational skills. As a result, pupils make effective progress from their starting points.

Pupils are also supported to develop increasing resilience and foster positive and productive relationships with staff and peers. This includes developing an understanding of their own triggers, developing mechanisms to support their ongoing social development and interactions with others.

Pupils develop knowledge and skills across an increasing range of subjects to help them to equate school with success. An increasing range of qualifications are studied and pupils

work towards successful completion of these, including GCSE, NVQ and unit awards.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have undertaken significant work to develop and broaden the curriculum since the last inspection. There is now a greater balance struck between academic subjects to develop pupils' foundational skills and knowledge, such as English and mathematics, and other subject areas that tap more directly into pupils' interests. English and mathematics are delivered by specialists with appropriate subject expertise. Other areas of the curriculum are supported by coaches, who access planned curriculum materials to support pupils in developing their knowledge and skills. Leaders continue to develop this provision. For example, supporting staff to develop greater subject expertise and confidence across the curriculum. Recent work with peers from another specialist school is helping to develop this practice further. Much of the curriculum is delivered one to one by staff. As a result, staff are able to match learning closely to pupils' individual needs, identify where more support is needed and put this in place rapidly.

For those who need additional support to read with confidence, an appropriate phonics and reading programme is in place. Pupils also access courses that match their individual talents and emerging skills. For example, a growing number are learning trade skills, including in the recently created 'Trade School', where pupils develop increasing expertise in fields such as carpentry, electronics and plastering.

Leaders recognise the need to continue to develop this offer further still as pupils' capacity to learn continues to develop. They have appropriate plans to develop this more broadly.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, staff and the proprietary body are all united in their vision to support the most vulnerable pupils to see value in and aspire to complete their education. Leaders have an astute understanding of the barriers that previously disrupted educational experiences may present to future success. A clear moral purpose drives the actions and decisions they make, which are consistently in pupils' best interests. Personalised pathways are designed to support pupils so that these barriers can be challenged and overcome, and pupils can achieve well.

Leaders and the proprietary body have made changes to their approach for oversight since the last inspection. There are now appropriate mechanisms in place for the proprietary body to assure themselves of leaders' work and the strengths and areas for development of the school. School visits, both by representatives from the proprietary body and external experts, help assure them of the quality of pupils' experiences. They offer appropriate challenge to leaders to ensure that provision continues to develop effectively.

Leaders carefully consider staff workload and professional development. Staff are supported to undertake their roles effectively. They know they are part of a close-knit school community and speak very positively about the ways in which leaders check in on their wellbeing. This contributes to the school's highly supportive culture, which encompasses staff, pupils and their families.

The proprietary body has an appropriate understanding of the independent school standards, and have ensured that these requirements are fully met. They are developing connections with other independent schools to further develop this confidence so that they can continue to assure themselves that the actions they take are in line with these requirements.

The proprietary body applied for a material change to the school's registration to increase the maximum number of pupils from 10 to 15. This was considered during this standard inspection. The proprietary body intends to continue with the current bespoke curriculum offer for these additional pupils. The site has enough space to accommodate 5 extra pupils. Leaders have appropriate plans to recruit the additional staff required to maintain the staff-to-pupil ratios that would be required were the increased number of pupils to be granted. Therefore, all aspects of the requirements of the independent school standards are likely to be met if the proposed changes are approved.

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

Most pupils attending King's Reach do so after significant interruptions to their previous education, often resulting in considerable gaps in prior learning that need to be addressed. Here, pupils receive the support they need to re-engage in learning positively and see education as something worthwhile and achievable. Pupils benefit from personalised curriculum pathways that support them to develop essential skills. This tailored offer is designed to address their learning gaps, closely matched to their special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils are supported to develop their talents and interests, both through their curriculum and as part of the school's wider offer. For example, some pupils engage in the recently developed 'Trade School' that teaches them skills, including plastering, decorating and joinery.

Many pupils also need support to develop positive behaviours as well as their confidence and resilience. Pupils flourish as a result of the positive relationships they have with staff and the highly supportive pastoral care they receive. Pupils here feel safe, behave well, and treat staff and one another with high levels of respect. Bullying is especially rare, and is dealt with effectively if it does happen. Pupils attend school increasingly well, with tailored work to identify and overcome previous barriers to positive attendance. These approaches ensure that pupils achieve well and make effective progress from their starting points.

Pupils are encouraged to aspire to more positive futures. Each pupil has a tailored 'Future Me' programme that supports their wider and personal development. They are encouraged to think about where their skills might take them in terms of future careers or further study. They receive effective support to develop increasing independence so that, when they leave the school, they can move on to successful futures.

Next steps

- Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is consistently taught well across subjects to further support pupils' achievement.
 - Leaders need to further develop their approaches to reading and writing so that staff maximise the opportunities across the curriculum to support pupils in developing these essential skills.
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About this inspection

The proprietary body is King's Reach Ltd, and the chair of the proprietary body is Richard King.

The fees currently charged by the school are £97,000.

The email address of the school is info@kingsreach.org.uk

Inspectors carried out this standard inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, and checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

This was a standard inspection combined with a material change inspection. As a result, alongside the standard inspection activities, inspectors also sought to ascertain whether the school had the capacity to increase its pupil numbers from 10 to 15 pupils. It was determined that the school was likely to meet the standards related to the material change request.

At the time of the inspection, the school was operating outside of its registration.

Head of school: Paul Kirrage

Independent school standards

Independent school standards are either met or not met for each category.

1. Quality of education provided

Standards met

All standards have been met.

2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Standards met

All standards have been met.

4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Standards met

All standards have been met.

5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

6. Provision of information

Standards met

All standards have been met.

7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Standards met

All standards have been met.

8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Standards met

All standards have been met.

Lead inspector:


Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Simon Graydon, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 28 April 2026

Total pupils

12

School capacity

10

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

12

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

12

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.

Insufficient evidence

Inspectors were unable to gather reliable enough evidence to grade an evaluation area. This is rare and normally only happens if there are no pupils on roll at the school.

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