

Inspection of Kimichi School

Eastbourne House, 111 Yardley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, West Midlands
B27 6LL

Inspection dates: 27 to 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Kimichi School is a special place, where pupils feel valued and cared for. As many pupils said, 'Being here allows us to be free to be ourselves.' Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They genuinely care about each other and treat each other with the utmost respect. Staff care deeply about the pupils and help to keep them safe.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported to thrive and achieve well. Staff know and understand individual pupils well and ensure that they are supported to overcome any challenges they may face. The curriculum is ambitious and supports pupils to achieve well both academically and personally. Pupils rise to, and often exceed, leaders' expectations.

Music is at the heart of the school's offer. Leaders use music to support pupils to develop their teamwork, confidence and performance skills across all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils have the opportunity to go on a wide variety of trips and experiences. For example, pupils have visited France, Greece and Iceland, as well as visiting the Houses of Parliament in London. Leaders ensure that all opportunities are open to every pupil and put additional support in place to facilitate this.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well academically. It also teaches pupils the skills needed for life beyond school. All pupils study a broad range of subjects. Learning is well planned and sequenced. Pupils regularly revisit important concepts which helps them to recall their learning. The vocabulary that pupils need to know and use is carefully identified. As a result, pupils talk knowledgeably about their learning.

Staff know the pupils well. They use assessment to identify what pupils know and plan learning accordingly. Work is carefully matched to the pupils' individual needs. Most staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, at times, pupils do not always produce work of a high enough quality. This is because the expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistent across all staff and subjects.

Reading is prioritised across the school. The curriculum carefully identifies the texts that the pupils will study from Year 5 to Year 11. Leaders have chosen the texts carefully to ensure that pupils revisit key themes and concepts as they progress. As pupils develop an understanding of the texts, they are given the skills to be able to talk and understand them in depth. For pupils who find reading challenging, support is put in place to help them catch up with their peers.

The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND effectively. Staff are well trained to adapt learning to the individual needs of the pupils. Leaders fully consider the needs of these pupils when planning and teaching the curriculum. For example, staff

are familiar with presenting learning in different ways so that pupils remember their learning.

In the sixth form, there are a variety of courses on offer including A levels and BTEC National Diplomas. Starting in Year 7, all pupils receive careers advice and guidance to help them know what opportunities are available to them beyond school. Sixth-form students learn about university as well as other options. However, the careers programme does not always give pupils enough information about all of the most up-to-date options that may be available to them.

Pupils are polite and courteous and have excellent attitudes to learning. Many pupils arrive at the school after struggling in previous settings. Leaders understand this and quickly build strong and trusting relationships with the pupils. Pupils are taught to understand and be able to manage their feelings. As a result, pupils learn how to spot signs of anxiety and, therefore, are able to regulate their behaviour. This helps pupils to attend regularly. As one pupil said, 'I wake up and I'm happy - it's a joy to come into school.'

Pupils learn about equality. They know about protected characteristics and say that bullying does not happen at the school as everyone is fully accepted. Democracy is embedded throughout school life. The school captain leads the weekly school council meetings. The meetings take place in a very warm and friendly atmosphere where everyone's voice is heard and listened to. Staff take a backseat while the school captain negotiates agreed decisions about the pupils' daily lives, including pupils' rewards and sanctions.

The character development of pupils is exceptional. Leaders have carefully planned a curriculum that supports all of the pupils to succeed beyond the school. For example, through the 'life' curriculum, pupils learn about using public transport, what a mortgage is and how to do laundry.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the support their children get. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel valued and said that their workload and well-being are considered by leaders.

The proprietor and governors have a shared moral purpose to ensure that the pupils are at the heart of all leadership decisions. Governors ensure that they hold the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, to account. They have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. The school has ensured that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are also met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's systems ensure that pupils are safe at the school. The processes for recording and reporting safeguarding concerns are clear and understood by all staff. The school meets the requirements of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023.

However, leaders and governors would benefit from continuing to familiarise themselves with the document.

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

- The expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always consistent across all staff and subjects. This means that pupils do not always produce the best work they can. Leaders should ensure that staff have consistent expectations of individual pupils to ensure that they can achieve their very best.
- Although careers education is in place, it does not always support pupils to have the most comprehensive understanding of opportunities available to them. Leaders should ensure they continue to access the most up-to-date and relevant careers advice to ensure pupils understand all of the routes and options available to them.

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

Unique reference number	141242
DfE registration number	330/6017
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10322593
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	9 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	9
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sally Alexander MBE
Headteacher	Sally Alexander MBE
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,200 to £9,750
Telephone number	01216 795 298
Website	www.kimichischool.co.uk
Email address	hello@kimichischool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 to 24 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school is registered to provide full-time education for boys and girls aged nine to 18.
- The school is in Birmingham. It was registered as an independent school in August 2014 and is housed in a residential property.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in November 2022, when it was judged to require improvement overall.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, during the course of the inspection. Meetings were also held with the deputy headteacher and other leaders in the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and music. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of staff, parents 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 lead inspector met with a representative of the chair of governors and other members of the school's governing board.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mary Maybank

Ofsted Inspector

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