

The Eastbourne Academy

Brodrick Road, Hampden Park, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 9RQ

Unique reference number (URN): 136106

Monitoring inspection report:

29 April 2026

At the most recent graded inspection, the following areas were identified as needing to improve:

Over time, leadership and oversight of the school has been ineffective. Pupils' underachievement and disruptive behaviour have not been tackled with sufficient urgency. The school and those responsible for governance should make sure that strong oversight of the school drives rapid improvement.

Pupils' achievement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), remains low. As a result, many pupils do not attain the qualifications that they need to progress to their next stages of education, training or employment. The school should ensure that achievement of all pupils improves, and that all pupils are given access to high-quality education.

Over time, too many pupils have been regularly absent from school. The proportion of pupils who miss a significant amount of their schooling remains high. Consequently, many pupils miss vital learning and do not have the knowledge and skills they need to achieve well. The school should ensure that it continues to review and adapt its current approaches, so that attendance improves rapidly, persistent absence decreases and that in-school truancy is eradicated.

The school does not ensure that the expectations of pupils' behaviour are consistently high. Many pupils are unclear about the expectations of their behaviour or the importance of treating others with respect. In lessons, disruption is frequent and, as a result, some pupils feel anxious or uncomfortable. This negatively affects pupils' learning. The school should clarify its expectations for pupils, including what happens when these are not met. It should ensure that there are systems in place to support staff and to follow up on sanctions when required.

Leaders and trustees are taking effective action to improve the school but continued work is needed to remove the requires significant improvement designation.

During the monitoring inspection, inspectors focused on the following evaluation areas:

- Leadership and governance
- Inclusion
- Curriculum and teaching
- Attendance and behaviour

Leadership and governance

Since the previous monitoring visit, you have continued to consolidate and refine the improvements you had started at that time. These are now having a positive impact and are worthy of celebrating. Your work, supported by the new consultant headteacher, provides effective leadership and clarity of vision.

You have maintained your accurate understanding of the school's context and how this impacts the changes that are necessary. Your vision and moral purpose are highly evident. You have maintained a sharp focus on improving teaching and learning to increase pupil engagement in school. You have made significant impact on improving behaviour, especially during unstructured times. Staff and pupils value the efforts of all leaders to improve their school.

You rightly recognise that there is still more work to do. Whole-school attendance remains below national averages, particularly for pupils with SEND. The rate of severe absence is not improving rapidly enough, although you have made some improvements in the rate of persistent absence. You have further work to do to improve your positive communication with parents and carers. You have plans to do this crucial work, for example by developing a home-school agreement.

Safeguarding

At the previous graded inspection/monitoring inspection, safeguarding was evaluated as being effective.

Inclusion

You have continued to focus on helping pupils to build a sense of belonging in their school. This helps to ensure that they are prepared for their next steps in education in order to thrive. You continue to focus on making sure that teaching meets the needs of all pupils. You have strengthened your focus on identifying the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, accurately. Staff have been trained to use this crucial information to enable them to make adaptations to teaching to support all pupils to learn effectively. Most staff do this well. There is still some variability in how well teachers support the most vulnerable pupils in lessons. You are aware of this and continue to support all staff through effective professional learning.

You engage widely with external agencies to secure appropriate support for pupils who need it. You have further strengthened your relationship with the local authority, and they have supported your staff professional learning programme. You have strengthened the team of support staff who work alongside teachers, including recruiting more learning

support assistants and higher-level teaching assistants. This enables your intervention work to be targeted to those pupils who have identified gaps in knowledge and skills to catch up quickly.

Curriculum and teaching

You continue to have an accurate understanding of where the strengths and areas for development remain in this crucial part of your school development plan. In some subjects, you have made further refinements to the curriculum to design to ensure that pupils learn, consolidate and practise vital knowledge and skills over time. For example, in science, pupils now participate more regularly in practical experiments to develop scientific enquiry skills. You have further strengthened your approach to ensuring that pupils develop strong foundations, particularly in English and mathematics. Specialist teaching helps pupils who have fallen behind catch up with their peers swiftly and effectively.

Classrooms are typically calm and industrious. Teachers regularly use retrieval activities at the start of lessons to ensure that pupils recall previous learning and use this to build new knowledge and skills. Teachers present information clearly. Typically, teachers use assessment well to check pupils' understanding. Where there are gaps, teachers slow down to help pupils consolidate learning before moving on. There is still some variability, however. Occasionally teachers' activity choices to support learning are not as closely matched to pupils' needs as they could be. You have focused on improving professional learning for staff this year. This has included providing expert sessions, led by the local authority, to support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs.

Attendance and behaviour

Attendance remains a concern. Too many pupils miss school too frequently. Overall attendance remains below national averages, despite some marginal improvement over the last 2 academic years. You are acutely aware of the need to make rapid improvement in this area. You have recently strengthened the leadership of attendance and have formulated a strategic plan to address weakening attendance. There are some successes, however. In-school truancy has been eradicated. The new late room appears to be effective in supporting pupils to arrive to school on time, although this work is in its infancy. Highly personalised support is provided to those who need it most and this is beginning to help them improve their attendance to school. As you are aware, there is more work to be done.

Behaviour has improved considerably. While there has been an increase in suspensions since Christmas, this is due to the tightening of expectations. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is much improved. Pupils appreciate this and state that the changes have been 'noticeable' and 'very welcome'. Pupils move around the school sensibly and engage with each other and staff politely and respectfully, both in lessons and during social times. Pupils know that the use of prejudicial language and bullying do happen occasionally but believe both have decreased significantly. They are confident that, when reported, staff deal with both issues swiftly. You are aware that occasional low-level disruption occurs in lessons where pedagogical choices that staff make require sharpening. This remains a focus of yours.

Leaders and trustees should continue to work to address the priorities for improvement identified in the last graded inspection report.

About this inspection

The inspector carried out this monitoring inspection under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005, and it was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require significant improvement following the graded inspection that took place in January 2025.

The school's previous inspection and the first monitoring inspection were carried out under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) at that time. The renewed EIF took effect from 10 November 2025. The areas for improvement identified at the school's graded inspection and subsequent monitoring inspection have been cross-referenced to the relevant evaluation areas in the inspection toolkit for consideration on this monitoring inspection.

The purpose of this monitoring inspection was not to determine grades for any of the evaluation areas set out in the school inspection toolkit. The purpose was to identify and report on the school's progress in addressing priorities for improvement since the school's previous inspection.

Since the last inspection, a new consultant headteacher joined the school.

During this inspection, meetings were held with the co-headteachers and other senior leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust and other senior leaders to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection.

Lead inspector

Linda Culling

His Majesty's Inspector

About this school

School capacity	900
Number of pupils on roll	772
Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable)	Yes
Type of specialist provision (if applicable)	Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

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