

The King's School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Elisabeth Linley HMI

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

The King's School is an independent Christian school for boys and girls from three to sixteen years of age. The school was founded in 1980 and moved to its current rural location just outside Eastleigh in Hampshire in 1994. In 2006, the King's School, the King's Primary School and Winchester Christian Primary School merged to form one new school called The King's School and continued to operate on two sites until September 2010 when all pupils moved to the significantly refurbished Lakesmere House site. There are 254 pupils on roll; of these 13 attend part time. Currently, Years 5 and 6 are taught separately and Years 1 and 2 are taught together, as are pupils in Years 3 and 4. Children of Nursery and Reception age are taught as one class; 11 children attend part time and none is in receipt of government nursery funding. There are two pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and there are two looked after children. The school's motto is 'Wisdom, Stature, Favour' and it aims to 'treasure childhood and enable its pupils to develop strong relationships with God that equip them with the knowledge, skills, personal qualities and qualifications to achieve success at school and beyond'. The senior school was last inspected in 2006 and the registered nursery provision was inspected in 2008. This is the first inspection of the school's current provision.

Evaluation of the school

The King's School provides a good quality of education and is successful in meeting its aims. Pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and the good curriculum; pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. However, children's outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good because of the effective partnerships established with parents and carers and the good quality pastoral care that is provided for all pupils in school. Arrangements for pupils' safeguarding are effective. School leaders have been successful in their work to implement the regulations not met at the time of the last inspection and all but one of the regulations for independent schools are now met.

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

Quality of education

The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 and satisfactory provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Commercially produced schemes of work are mainly used to aid curriculum planning in Key Stages 1 to 3 and are adapted to meet pupils' needs. In Key Stage 4, the curriculum reflects the syllabus of the external examination boards. Provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education (PSHE) is integral to the school's curriculum and is delivered through themes.

In Years 1 to 6, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. In literacy, daily time is given to developing pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills; for example, pupils work through a comprehensive programme to develop early reading and writing skills. Science is an important part of the curriculum as is physical education which follows a programme supported by a specialist. Biblical Studies is a major area of the curriculum and is designed to cover key Biblical themes taught through events or topics. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) in Key Stages 1 and 2 is limited and remains a priority for development.

The Key Stage 3 curriculum gives English, mathematics, science and religious studies equal time to reflect the school's distinctive ethos. Provision for physical education includes off-site activities at a local leisure centre and activities such as football and netball in the school's own grounds. Pupils choose either Spanish or French in Year 7 and in Key Stage 4 they choose two optional subjects when Years 10 and 11 are taught together; they study their first option in Year 10 and their second in Year 11. Pupils also take religious education in Year 10 and can be entered early for GCSE mathematics. Pupils are taught ICT through a Diploma in Digital Applications. However, provision and access for ICT continue to be a focus for development throughout Key Stages 3 and 4.

Effective links have been established with a local secondary school with curricular benefits in physical education, drama and technology. Careers advice assists the right choices for pupils' further education or the work place; pupils report positively on the supportive links with Connexions. Year 10 work placements are also planned by pupils, and parents and carers with the support of the school.

Support for pupils who are looked after or have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well planned. Effective partnerships exist with parents and carers and positive links are made with external agencies to meet pupils' specific needs. In pupils' personal education plans, appropriate targets are set to match their individual needs. Pupils identified as needing additional support for their learning are aided through effective withdrawal and class-based support provided by a full-time and part-time member of staff.

The curriculum is enriched with an appropriate range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils engage in the performing arts and enjoy the school's summer Shakespeare week. Pupils from Years 3 to 9 take part in residential summer camps and Key Stage 4 pupils work towards the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Through the school's work with the Kingdom Education Centre in Rwanda, Year 10 and 11 pupils also have the opportunity to work in a primary school abroad to share their experiences and faith.

Teaching and assessment are good overall and satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils benefit from the small classes; teachers know their pupils very well and meet their individual needs effectively. In Key Stages 3 and 4, teaching was seen to be consistently good. Outstanding teaching was exemplified by very good pace and very good questioning that promoted pupils' thinking, as when considering the different styles of Chinese art. Outstanding teaching was also observed in Key Stage 2 in numeracy lessons. When teaching is satisfactory, pupils do not consistently pay attention or there is not sufficient new learning. Nonetheless, evidence of good relationships between pupils and teachers is clear. As a result, pupils make good progress in relation to their individual starting points. The large majority of Year 11 pupils leave for sixth form colleges.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers assess pupils' reading and writing against national norms and record pupils' progress accordingly. The assessment cycle is based on regular subject assessments in Key Stages 3 and 4. In addition, pupils take tests in Years 3, 4, 5 and 8 that are used to validate assessments throughout Key Stages 2 and 3. At the beginning of the year, targets are set and discussed with parents and carers, and pupils. Reports to parents and carers during the year include the progress made. Although much work has been completed to develop assessment procedures in Key Stage 2, they are not implemented consistently throughout Years 1 to 6.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The majority enjoy school and this is reflected in their very positive attitudes to work, their good behaviour and good attendance. Relationships are very good and pupils work together effectively. As a result, their self-esteem and confidence develop very well. All are clearly proud of their school and value its Christian ethos. By Year 11, pupils have a strong understanding of Christian ethics and ways of life, with much experience of Christian spirituality. Pupils serve their school in different ways. Senior pupils adopt leadership roles as house captains, house prayer leaders, sports team leaders and by reading with primary pupils. Pupils in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 represent their peers through the 'Pupil Voice' and the fledgling school council. The democratic nature of elections for these groups provides some good insights into public institutions. Information about other faith groups is presented positively and pupils are highly respectful of others who have a faith or culture that is different to their own. However, from discussion and questionnaires, it is clear that pupils' understanding of other faiths is superficial and they would like it to be improved.

Pupils' understanding of cultural diversity is promoted well through the curriculum. In particular, the school's work with a Rwandan community has a strong impact on the school and the pupils' outreach work for the global community. Pupils are very well prepared for their future economic well-being. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award offers challenging opportunities for leadership, self-reliance and team work and all pupils develop very good team-working skills in lessons. Very good personal development and good basic skills prepare them well for the next steps in their school life.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Staff are trained in safeguarding and first aid as required. Risk assessments have been implemented for fire safety, and guidance on the management and leadership of off-site activities is of good quality. There are clear policies for the promotion of good behaviour and anti-bullying. Pupils are appropriately supervised around the school, for example during staggered break times.

Staff provide good quality care for pupils' individual pastoral needs. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school and know who to go to if they have any concerns. They report that through science and PSHE they learn about keeping safe, for example in being taught about road safety, anti-bullying, sex and relationships education and internet safety. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and enjoy sporting opportunities; some represent county and national teams. However, through their questionnaires pupils indicated that they would welcome further guidance on promoting a healthy lifestyle.

The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Appropriate checks for the appointment of staff ensure that they are suitable to work with children and the checks are recorded in a single central register as required.

Premises and accommodation at the school

Suitable premises enable pupils to work and have recreational time in a safe and secure environment. The senior school building, comprising the original and extended building, includes a number of specialist rooms, for example a hall for assemblies and the performing arts, science laboratories, art and design rooms and an ICT suite. Disabled access is good and the school's medical room has been purpose built to meet all requirements. The Early Years Foundation Stage and primary provision are based in temporary demountable buildings alongside the small hard-surfaced recreational area. Although the school is kept clean and tidy, the standard and maintenance of decoration are inadequate in the temporary buildings and in the original school building. Attractive and extensive grounds offer good provision for outdoor games.

Provision of information

The school provides a broad range of information for parents and carers through, for example, the prospectus and the website, and meets all requirements.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

Procedures for handling complaints meet all the regulations.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The overall effectiveness of the setting is satisfactory. Staff work hard to ensure that partnerships established with parents and carers are effective. Children enjoy school and are enthusiastic to play and engage in new experiences. They get on well together, behave very well and learn to share resources. Children know how to keep safe. They trust the staff who work with them and can turn to them when in need of help. Children have a good understanding of healthy eating. A fruit snack, with either milk or water, is served mid-morning with reminders to wash hands before eating. Children make good progress overall and achieve good outcomes. This is as a result of the good quality care provided, the strong partnership between staff and parents and carers, and focused teaching in the developing early reading and writing skills. However, provision, and leadership and management are satisfactory. This is because, while staff are committed to the principles of children's self-initiated learning, their learning is very teacher directed with limited opportunity for children to develop independence. Similarly, although children are taken outside as a group, for example to engage in planting activities and exploration of the woodland area, access to outdoor learning is not as frequent as it might be. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage does not consistently ensure well-planned activities, both indoors and outdoors, that promote opportunities for children's self-initiated play and learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- improve and maintain the standard of decoration in the original school building and in the premises designated for the Early Years Foundation Stage and primary provision (paragraph 23(p)).

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Improve provision for ICT throughout the school.
- Develop consistency in the implementation of assessment and recording procedures by extending the good practice established in Key Stage 2 into Key Stage 1.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, improve the range of well-planned activities, both indoors and outdoors, that promote opportunities for children's self-initiated play and learning.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	✓			
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage		✓		
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Christian		
Date school opened	1980		
Age range of pupils	3–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 115	Girls: 126	Total: 241
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 5	Girls: 8	Total: 13
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 1	Total: 2
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,625–5,690		
Address of school	Lakesmere House, Allington Lane, Fair Oak Eastleigh, SO50 7DB		
Telephone number	023 8060 0986		
Email address	Head@thekingsschool.eu		
Headteacher	Mr Paul Johnson		
Proprietor	Hampshire Christian Education Trust		