

# King James's School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107754
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	336945
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christine Harrison

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	878
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Stahelin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Lamb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	St Helen's Gate Almondbury, Huddersfield West Yorkshire HD4 6SG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 36 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and four groups of students. They observed the school's work; and looked at documentation, including the school improvement plan, assessment information that tracks students' attainment and progress, and the school's records of lesson observations. In addition, 406 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised, along with questionnaires returned by staff and a representative sample of students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether students' progress has continued to improve in line with the trend that was evident in assessment information for 2008
- the pace of students' learning and the level of challenge that teachers provide for students of higher ability and those who are gifted and talented
- the effectiveness of the school's action on the European and global aspects of community cohesion
- the success of the school's leadership and management in improving students' achievement in subjects where they were not doing as well.

## Information about the school

This average-sized school serves an area on the eastern outskirts of Huddersfield. The number of students has increased steadily since the previous inspection. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. Most students come from White British backgrounds, with one in ten coming from a wide range of other groups. Almost all students speak English as their first language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The school has held specialist status in science since 2004. It now also has specialist status in mathematics. The school holds a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools Award, and has, more recently, gained the ICT Mark and Artsmark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

## Main findings

This is a good and improving school where students of all abilities and from all backgrounds are happy and achieve well. The headteacher has a passion for improvement, shared with a skilful and enthusiastic leadership team, and is constantly seeking to make things better for students. As a result, the curriculum continues to evolve to meet the needs of all groups and examination results have risen steadily over recent years.

The school provides a good environment for learning. Students are very well cared for and safeguarding arrangements are exemplary. As a result, students feel safe and say how much they enjoy the friendly atmosphere around school. Behaviour is good so that lessons almost always proceed without interruption. Students understand that teachers want them to do as well as they can and they respond by working hard. As a result of the good teaching they receive, students make good progress during their time in school, reaching levels of attainment that are above the national average.

Students know their targets and the level or grade at which they are currently working. They generally get good advice from teachers about how their work could be improved. However, these suggestions for improvement are not always written down, making it more difficult for students to refer back to them in the future.

Extra-curricular activities are a strength of the school and participation rates are high. In particular, the many sporting activities are much appreciated by students and make an important contribution to developing healthy lifestyles. The use of time with tutors at the beginning of the day varies from group to group but, in too many of these sessions, teachers do not make enough use of the time to enhance students' personal development and give them opportunities for reflection. The school's specialism makes a strong contribution to the links developed with local primary schools, enhancing the quality of transition arrangements.

The school makes a satisfactory and improving contribution to community cohesion. It has forged new and successful partnerships with schools from different parts of the local area. However, it has not yet fully evaluated the impact of this work on students. Links with communities further afield, both nationally and globally, remain underdeveloped.

The school's track record in improving students' achievement, together with its accurate self-assessment, comprehensive and detailed plans for further improvement and the whole-hearted commitment of the staff, indicate that the school is well placed for further improvement.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve community cohesion by:
  - extending links with communities further afield, both nationally and globally
  - fully evaluating the impact on students of the school's actions to promote community cohesion.
- Ensure that students have regular written feedback on how their work could be improved so that they can refer back to the advice they have been given.
- Make consistently good use of time with tutors to enrich students' personal development.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Students concentrate well and learn quickly in most lessons throughout the school. As a result, they make good progress over time and gain examination results that are above average and better than might be expected from their test results when they arrive in Year 7. Hence their achievement is good. There is no significant difference between the achievement of students from different ethnic groups; all do well. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive very effective support and make particularly good progress. In recent years, the higher ability students and those who are gifted and talented have not made as much progress as other groups. However, in 2009, the proportion of A and A\* grades, in line with other aspects of GCSE results, improved and it is clear that the gap is closing and these students now make good progress. The school's specialist status has had a significant impact on academic outcomes for pupils, particularly in GCSE results for science and mathematics.

Students enjoy their learning and show respect for each other and their teachers. They value the opportunities they are given to take responsibility and contribute to the school community as buddies, senior students and members of the school council or sports council. They gain good basic skills including literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Their attendance is good and they work successfully together in teams so that they are well equipped for their future working lives. Year 11 students prepared carefully for their 'mock interviews' and obviously appreciated the opportunity they were given. Students have good understanding of social and moral issues but their opportunities for spiritual development are less well developed.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers generally have high expectations of all students and provide effective support to ensure that they make good progress. The good range of teaching styles and activities helps students to maintain their concentration, although some students said they would prefer more practical activities in their lessons. Teachers use good questioning techniques to check that students have fully understood the topics they are studying. They make imaginative use of interactive whiteboards, provided through funding from the school's science specialism, to add interest and reinforce the major points that students need to remember. Teachers usually plan lessons thoroughly, taking into account the needs of all groups in the class. However, in some lessons the activities planned are not sufficiently challenging to enable the higher ability students to make the best possible progress.

The curriculum is successful in meeting students' needs throughout the school. In Key Stage 3 the new 'learning to learn' course is well planned and much appreciated by students. In Key Stage 4, partnerships with the other local schools and colleges provide several vocational options, together with carefully tailored courses to meet the needs of those in danger of becoming disaffected. The higher ability students are well catered for, notably with separate science and statistics courses and the opportunity to study Latin. The school's specialism contributes strongly to curriculum enrichment, for example, enabling it to provide a range of activities to promote science and mathematics, including a science week, 'Mathematics Challenges' and a science roadshow.

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Highly committed staff provide well-targeted care and support to meet the needs of all students. Staff work well with external agencies when necessary. Arrangements for supporting vulnerable students are excellent and the school is successful in helping these students to overcome any barriers to their education. Students feel confident in having someone to turn to when they experience problems. They and their parents value the good guidance and information provided, initially, for primary school pupils before they join the school and continuing, in most respects, throughout students' time in school. However, the planning for personal, social and health education is not as effective as it might be and students do not always see the relevance and value of those lessons.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior leaders know their school very well. Inspectors agree with all the judgements the school has made about itself. The school makes excellent use of targets; if it is possible to set a numerical target for an aspect of its work, this school does so. These targets are challenging and, importantly, the school is generally successful in exceeding them. As the school has progressed, more staff have become involved in taking an active leadership role. Curriculum leaders are involved in the 'toolboxes' which provide a rigorous review of each department's work. The school's specialism is very effective in leading the way in improving the quality of teaching and learning across the whole curriculum, with much innovation being trialled through specialist subjects. As a result of these and other initiatives, previous weaknesses in specific subject areas, for example, in English, information and communication technology, art and religious education, have largely been overcome. Nevertheless, there are slight inconsistencies across the school, for example in teaching quality and in students' behaviour, that still require attention as the school strives to become outstanding.

The school is very determined to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity to succeed and is not in any way disadvantaged. The good achievement of all groups of students indicates the success of the school's policies and interventions. Nevertheless, the higher ability students are not always challenged sufficiently in lessons and this remains a minor inequality. Governors are skilled and knowledgeable about the school. They challenge the school where necessary, especially on curriculum and finance, and are meticulous in ensuring that all necessary safeguarding arrangements are in place.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from almost half of parents and carers. Analysis of responses indicates that a very large majority are happy with all aspects of the education that the school provides. A few parents and carers have concerns about behaviour. Inspectors recognise that there are a few incidents of poor behaviour but judge that behaviour both in lessons and around the site is good overall. Similarly, a few parents and carers are concerned that their children are not sufficiently helped to lead a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors did not find evidence to endorse this view and note that the school holds the Healthy Schools Award. The wide range of physical education activities offers opportunities for everyone to take regular exercise. Dining arrangements are well organised and offer a good range of healthy food.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King James's School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 406 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 878 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	141	37	242	63	11	3	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	117	31	250	65	22	6	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	143	37	219	57	13	3	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	106	28	248	65	13	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	26	276	72	8	2	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	85	22	251	66	32	8	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	19	255	67	47	12	3	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	89	23	247	65	17	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	94	25	261	68	17	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	102	27	218	57	44	12	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	64	17	258	68	35	9	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	131	34	224	59	19	5	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	148	39	218	57	10	3	1	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in the Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



30 September 2009

Dear Students

**Inspection of King James's School, Huddersfield, HD4 6SG**

As you know, we have just finished inspecting your school and I am writing to tell you about our findings. First of all, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for talking to us about how you feel about your school. As a result of the inspection, I judged yours to be a good and improving school. I was particularly impressed by the friendly atmosphere around school and by the mature attitudes of Year 11 as they prepared for their mock interviews. The teaching you receive is good and this, together with your positive attitudes and hard work, enables you to learn quickly and achieve well. Your examination results in Year 11 are above the national average and getting better every year.

The headteacher and other leaders are constantly working to make things better for you, so there is now a good range of subjects and courses to meet everyone's needs. You told us how much you value the wide range of extra-curricular activities. I agree with your view that you are very well cared for in school and that there is always someone to help if you have a problem. The school's arrangements to keep you safe are outstanding.

However, even in a good school there are things that could be improved. The time you have with tutors is often not as well used as it might be to give you a chance to consider and discuss topics that are not generally covered in lessons. Similarly, I have asked the school to give you more opportunities to make links with other communities in this country and in other parts of the world. Some of you told inspectors that, although teachers give you good spoken feedback on how you could improve your work, it would be helpful if more of the comments were written down so that you could refer back to them. I agree with this suggestion and have asked teachers to provide more written feedback. In return, I hope you will make sure that you act on their advice and suggestions.

I wish you and the school all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christine Harrison

Lead inspector

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