

Ken Stimpson Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110882
Local Authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	356830
Inspection dates	13–14 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Pam Haezewindt HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1023
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bridget Holland
Headteacher	Richard Lord
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2008
School address	Staniland Way Peterborough PE4 6JT
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 30 lessons and 28 teachers. They also observed three assemblies and a tutor group. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at policies and documentation relating to safety, the school's improvement plan, the School Improvement Officer's report, a selection of governing body minutes, students' work in lessons, and that of Year 11 who were absent on work placement. There were 71 parental questionnaires which were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked to answer the following questions in detail.

- Is teaching ensuring consistently good learning and student progress so that the trend towards higher attainment is secure and students' prospects are better?
- Is marking now sufficiently focused on students' improvement?
- Does any poor behaviour impede learning?
- Are students with special educational needs and/or disabilities identified correctly?
- Are students well-rounded individuals with respect for each other, staff and the wider community, and ambitious to do well?

Information about the school

The school is a slightly larger than average, with an average size sixth form which includes students from the Team Peterborough Post 16 Federation. Students are mainly White British with an average number of students coming from minority ethnic backgrounds with English as an additional language. This is a recent increase compared to previous years. A large number of students have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, partly due to the intake of students from other schools in the Peterborough reorganisation in 2007, but the number is decreasing rapidly. Ken Stimpson is a business and enterprise school.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ken Stimpson Community School is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly and has many good features. The school has made several essential changes for the better since the previous inspection, and these demonstrate its good capacity for sustained improvement. Due to good leadership and management, the school's Key Stage 4 examination results improved exponentially in 2010 with 74 of students gaining five or more A*-C grades in their GCSE examinations including 54 which included English and mathematics. This was the result of very robust information gathering of students' progress, and intervention to ensure better outcomes than in previous years. Staff gave their time persistently to these measures, and continue to do so. Students are appreciative of the good support they receive and also the very good facilities in school. The governing body provides excellent challenge to the school. It is realistic in its judgements and knows that the school must prove itself in sustaining and improving its achievements this year and beyond in order to become a good or better school. Its planned involvement in making this happen, with senior leaders, through improving grass roots teaching is laudable. Students develop well personally in almost all aspects, for example in adopting healthy lifestyles. Their behaviour, attendance and punctuality are good, which is an improvement from the previous inspection. Again this is due to more rigorous systems employed more recently and students setting higher standards for themselves.

The quality of teaching has improved this year according to the school's monitoring records, but it remains generally satisfactory in lessons, including in teachers' use of assessment to plan work to meet students' different needs. There is too much inconsistency within most subjects. Marking is helpful in some subjects. It is inconsistent in others with not all students being given good guidance on how to improve to reach their targets. The systems for managing teaching and learning are good and are beginning to have an impact but this has yet to be fully embedded. The curriculum meets students' needs well and contributes to their better attainment, partly because most students enjoy what they study. Similarly, care, guidance and support are helping students to achieve better, particularly through the provision of personal targets which help students, staff and parents to focus on improvement. The business and enterprise specialism contributes well to the curriculum and enhancement opportunities as well as to the wider community and community cohesion.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Endeavour
 - Raise attainment by ensuring that:

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- students make consistently good or better progress in lessons through good teaching and learning
 - teaching meets the needs of all abilities of students, taking into account the excellent information provided on students' progress and needs
 - assessment in lessons is varied and focuses on continuous improvement
 - marking in all subjects gives students clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Up to 40 of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 was well below average in the two years prior to 2010, although there were extenuating circumstances. In 2010, results were at least in line with national averages both for students gaining 5 A* to C grades overall and including English and mathematics. Results improved very sharply due to vigilant monitoring of progress and good student support. Evidence of current outcomes in Key Stage 3 indicates that students are on track to make similarly better progress than previously. The school's recent analysis shows that higher ability students were not attaining as well as they might and the school has put in place measures to tackle this. Other than this, all groups of students are achieving similarly. Progress in the lessons seen was mostly satisfactory. Although students were committed and mostly on task, the quality of teaching and learning did not always sustain good progress. The school has not met its specialist school targets but standards are now rising and the school is aware it must reach the targets set.

Students report that they feel safe and know who to go to if there are problems. Parents also feel strongly that their children are safe in school. Students talk articulately about maintaining healthy lifestyles. They take a good amount of exercise and have a voice in influencing school kitchen menus. It is clear that many maintain a healthy diet: 'I can't remember when I last ate chocolate', and that their families were involved in supporting this in liaison with the school: 'My mum threw the frying pan out and we eat nothing fried now.' Students contribute well to the school community, and contribution to the wider community is growing beyond events to raise money for charities to, for example, growing a local apple orchard and helping a school in Malawi. Students are well prepared for life after school and are ambitious to do well. They have good information and communication technology skills and a good awareness of life skills, such as banking and finance, essential for adult life. The specialism contributes well to economic well-being. Students' social and moral development is good and social and emotional aspects of learning are being built into tutor time. Cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory, with little beyond provision in subjects.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ 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?

There are good working relationships between students and staff. Where teaching is good, planning identifies the needs of all learners and this is carried through to the lesson. A range of learning opportunities including paired, group and individual work and varied strategies are used to engage learners. Problem-solving activities and risk taking also feature strongly. There is good teacher support during activities and teaching assistants ensure the good progress of students who are learning English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers are adept at assessing learning through whole-class discussions midway through the lesson, and through student self-assessment, reshaping the lesson if need be. Lessons which are satisfactory are often characterised by didactic teaching where students become bored. Not all are challenged to do well, and some struggle to achieve the learning objectives because of insufficient support. Too few of these lessons enable students to respond with extended answers or engage in self or peer assessment. Not all students can discuss their targets and how to improve. Marking remains inconsistent in supporting students to do better.

The content of the Key Stage 4 curriculum has been developed to include more vocational options and students receive targeted guidance in Year 9 at a meeting with staff and parents to help them in choosing the most appropriate pathways. The business and enterprise specialism has enhanced the Year 9 curriculum well introducing a course

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leading to certification in enterprise and employability. The curriculum has been successfully enhanced through the Team Peterborough 14-19 initiative: coordinated timetabling between all schools has enabled students to choose from a very wide range of 14 - 19 courses including Diplomas. An excellent quality assurance system across schools monitors students' progress. The flexibility of this initiative has had a positive effect on attendance. Developments are underway to improve the take-up of languages. There is an extensive range of enhancement activities both during and after school which are well attended.

Individual care and attention for students is at the heart of what the school does and, as a result, potential problems are quickly identified. Tailor-made support systems ensure as much as possible is done to enable students to concentrate on their work. Good use is made of monitoring and tracking information to identify those students who need extra support. There is an extensive network of careers guidance and partnerships with the Careers Service are strong. Systems for helping new students to settle are thorough and are constantly improved and refined based upon what is working well and what else could be done. Year 7 students and their families confirm that this is an area of strength. Hard work and persistence are paying off in the area of student attendance. More stringent monitoring, increased rewards and a proactive approach mean that attendance is rising and the number of persistent absences has reduced to below national averages. Similarly, a renewed impetus on behaviour promotion and a new recording method, incorporating students' views, is seeing incidents of good behaviour much increased.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior and middle leaders, along with the governing body, are united in their desire to drive forward improvement and embed ambition to ensure students do as well as they possibly can, aspire to high achievement and leave school prepared to achieve their ambitions. The governing body is extremely knowledgeable about the school, constantly challenges outcomes and exceptionally active in promoting improvement. Staff appreciate their supportive presence in the staffroom on Fridays. The restructuring of and reduction in the senior leadership team, along with more recent appointments and a clearer definition of roles and responsibilities, are supporting this drive. The rise in attainment in 2010 is testament to the focused approach taken to tracking students' progress and improving intervention. Alongside the latter has been the drive to improve behaviour and attendance, without which students would not consistently access learning. Leaders have taken forward the need to improve teaching and learning with systems such as the school improvement group. This group meets regularly to support improvements identified in

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teaching through monitoring lessons and fortnightly work scrutiny and publishing the 'Lesson Toolbox' which exemplifies successful teaching strategies used within the school and which are shared. It is also targeting more individualised professional development in-house; aligning performance management targets better to student outcomes; and participating in a collaborative monitoring programme with other schools to arrive at secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning.

The school's engagement with parents is good: attendance at parents' meetings is high and there are numerous ways in which contact is made, information given and views are sought, including the parents'/carers' forum which meets regularly. The school forges many partnerships beyond school which benefit students and staff. The school strives well to promote equal opportunity, analysing outcomes to ensure any underachievement is dealt with; students reported no issues. Safeguarding meets the standards required with the school consistently following local authority advice and students feel safe. The school does much to promote community cohesion and understands well this aspect of the school's development. The business and enterprise specialism supports well this aspect, including working with local primary schools and a community focus group which promotes charitable endeavours across the wider community. The school has not formally evaluated the impact of this activity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Sixth form

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Results showed significant improvement in 2010. Students gained above average results in their examinations. There were no discernable differences in the progress of different groups or subjects. Almost every student who began courses in the sixth form completed them. Any absence is promptly followed up. Most teaching observed was good and students take responsibility for their

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own learning. There is good monitoring of progress and continuous assessment. As a result, students are secure in knowing how well they are doing and what to do better to improve. Students' voice is strong and they make a good contribution to the school community. The Team Peterborough Federation means that students have an exceptionally wide choice of courses and there is good support and guidance to ensure opportune choices are made. There is a range of enrichment activities but the school could provide more opportunities to stimulate the intellectual side of sixth form life. Students are well cared for and value the help and support they receive from staff. Leadership and management have a clear vision of how to improve the sixth form and the head of the sixth form has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to make further improvement, for example, to ensure yet more rigorous target setting and monitoring.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a below average response rate to questionnaires. Those parents and carers who responded were mostly very positive. The very large majority indicated that their children enjoy school, it keeps them safe and meets their children's needs. A few parents and carers expressed concern about how they were kept informed about their children's progress and whether the school takes account of their suggestions. Inspectors found that there were good systems in place for communications with parents, both academic and for seeking parents' views, and that action was taken on suggestions made. Some parents and carers were concerned about the way the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. However, the systems to do so are robust and employed systematically. Behaviour during the inspection was good. One parent wrote that her concerns about behaviour and interaction between herself and the school had been 'drastically changed for the better' more recently and her children were 'extremely happy and progressing well'. There were several comments of this nature and of how supportive the school is to students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Another parent wrote: 'My daughter enjoys every minute of being at Ken Stimpson.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ken Stimpson Community 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1023 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	34	44	62	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	33	46	35	49	3	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	30	37	52	9	13	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	30	44	62	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	15	21	49	69	3	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	27	37	52	9	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	12	17	46	65	7	10	0	0
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)	18	25	45	63	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	24	47	66	2	3	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	21	44	62	9	13	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	24	38	54	8	11	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	25	35	42	59	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	39	39	55	4	6	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



15 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Ken Stimpson Community School, Peterborough, PE4 6JT

On behalf of the inspection team which visited your school recently, I should like to thank you for receiving us so well, talking to us, and directing us to different parts of the school. Thank you also to those of you who filled in the questionnaire.

In 2010, results at the end of Key Stage 4 improved very well and there is evidence they could continue to do so. We would like you to continue to work hard with staff to make sure this happens on a year-on-year basis so you have the best possible opportunities in the future to achieve your ambitions. Because results are currently average and overall progress in lessons is satisfactory, we have judged your school satisfactory.

We found that your school has many good features and that your sixth form is good. The school helps you to develop well personally and gives you good care, support and guidance in order to do so. Your behaviour and attendance are now good, and this helps you to attain better standards. Your school provides you with a good curriculum with a broad choice of subjects in Key Stage 4 as well as a course in Enterprise and Employability in Year 9. It is led and managed well, and the governing body takes an exceptionally keen interest in your achievement and well-being. With the leaders of the school, they are looking to improve them still further.

We have asked your school to raise attainment by ensuring that:

- you make consistently good or better progress in lessons through good teaching and learning
- teaching meets the needs of all of you, taking into account the excellent information provided to staff on your progress
- assessment in lessons is varied and focuses on continuous improvement
- marking in all subjects gives you clear guidance on what you need to do to improve.

My very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Pam Haezwindt

Her Majesty's Inspector

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