

Kingsland School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134759
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	381732
Inspection dates	19–20 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Keith Massett

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

Type of school	Pupil Referral Unit
School category	Pupil Referral Unit
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Des Herlihy
Headteacher	Lynda Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	03 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed 16 teachers. They held meetings with the chair of the management committee, staff, groups of students and a parent, and visited a vocational centre used by students. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analysis of examination results, student records, the school's development plans and a variety of policy and procedural documents. The inspectors analysed 13 questionnaires returned by parents and carers. Analysis of questionnaires from students and staff further informed the inspection.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether teaching and the use of assessment is consistently effective over time in ensuring good and outstanding progress.
- How accurately matched is accreditation to students' needs and the contribution this makes to their future economic well-being and next steps in education, employment or training.
- Whether senior and middle leaders have implemented suitable plans, and taken effective steps to improve attainment and progress and increase attendance.
- The effectiveness of arrangements for students with severe needs and particularly for outreach students.

Information about the school

Kingsland School is a large pupil referral unit, made up of the Pupil Support Centre and the Specialist Learning Centre. It serves the whole of the local authority. The school is experiencing a period of re-organisation and since the last inspection has a new headteacher. It is based on two main sites, with vocational and personal development activities taking place on several other sites. Most students are of White British heritage. Girls make up around one fifth of the students. A very large majority of students are known to be eligible for free school meals and a high number are young offenders. There are currently 12 students who are looked after by the local authority. Forty-two students have a statement of special educational needs. The school has achieved Investor in People status as well as holding a number of awards, including Healthy School status and the Heartbeat award.

The Pupil Support Centre offers provision for up to 180 students in Years 7 to 11 who are either permanently excluded, at risk of exclusion or have a statement of special educational needs for social, emotional and behaviour difficulties.

The Specialist Learning Centre is for students whose circumstances are seen to make them potentially vulnerable in Years 7 to 11. These include girls who are pregnant, young mothers and students with mental health problems. There is a registered nursery on site to enable the young mothers to continue with their education. The nursery is inspected separately and a report can be found on the Ofsted website. The provision also provides on-site and home education for primary and secondary age children who are too ill to attend 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Kingsland School provides a good education for its students. Links with parents, carers and other agencies are first-class and have a positive impact on pupils' development. Care, guidance and support are excellent and this makes a major contribution to the school's success. Students have a thorough knowledge of healthy lifestyles, contribute extremely well to the community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Staff understand the students' needs and ensure they receive individually targeted support and have many opportunities to make the best of their time at Kingsland.

Several aspects of leadership and management are also excellent. Success is achieved through a shared vision to improve which is driven forward by the outstanding leadership of the headteacher who is determined to obtain the highest outcomes for all students. She is supported extremely well by a strong leadership team and the excellent management committee. All leaders now take an increased role in determining the direction and management of the school. While the management systems are still relatively new the impact can be seen in the higher percentage of lessons judged as good and outstanding. Tracking systems and the use of data to support learning are improving and the school has a wealth of information about students' progress. This information is used effectively to support individual learning but as yet is not fully exploited to check on the progress of different groups of students. Nevertheless, self-evaluation is accurate and informs planning effectively. Capacity for further improvement is good.

Behaviour is good and most students learn to manage their behaviour well and their attitudes to school improve quickly. Students say that they feel very safe in this highly supportive environment. The trust developed between students and staff is at the core of the school's success and enables students to address substantial gaps in their education. Teaching is good and effective as staff use their detailed knowledge of the students to plan activities that match not only ability but also interest and experience. Occasionally, teachers do not check on progress closely enough and learning and targets lack sufficient challenge. Opportunities for students to assess their own and other students' work are less well developed. The flexible curriculum provides personally tailored courses that lead to, students making good progress in academic and vocational studies at a variety of levels. Attainment levels are broadly average for the majority of students in some GCSE subjects as well as in a range of other nationally-recognised qualifications. When students leave, an increasing

number remain in education or training, or enter employment. Students at risk of exclusion from local secondary schools receive outstanding support. Students also benefit from experiencing a wide range of enrichment activities and the excellent promotion of community cohesion extends their understanding of the wider world.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and increase attainment and progress further by:
 - ensuring that all staff keep a close eye on students' progress and ensure that tasks and targets are consistently challenging
 - involving students more in assessing their own and other students' work.
- Monitor students' progress even more rigorously by making fuller use of the assessment information which is now available.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Good progress is made, often from very low starting points and achievement is good. Many students demonstrate high levels of emotional and/or social needs, which have often resulted in lengthy periods of absence from mainstream school. As a result, they join the school with significant gaps in their skills and knowledge, and with a negative view about themselves and towards education. The length of time students spend at the school varies, but a large majority of students are successful in closing some of the gaps in their learning. Their attendance rapidly improves and many overcome some of the significant barriers they faced when they started at this school and they leave with GCSE and vocational qualifications.

In the lessons observed during the inspection, there was good and sometimes outstanding learning. Occasionally, progress was limited by low motivation or poor behaviour, but the majority of students show great satisfaction in completing practical tasks. For example, they were happy to explain how they were making finger joints in design and technology. In another lesson, students were inspired by the use of new technology, highly motivated and able to work independently to create a leaflet. Progress in literacy and numeracy is good, although extended writing remains a challenge for some. Practical and creative skills shown in subjects such as art are often well developed. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by boys and girls, or those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Many students make outstanding progress in learning about themselves and improving their self-esteem. As a result, they increase their interest in learning as they re-engage with education. Behaviour is mostly good and incidents of unacceptable behaviour dealt with calmly but firmly and students say they feel extremely safe. There are many opportunities for students make a positive contribution to the school and the wider community. The pupil forum allows them to develop their voice in shaping future provision in the school and beyond. Students have extensive knowledge and talk about activities to keep fit and stay healthy. Many

access the breakfast club, all take school lunch and they are aware of the healthy options. Students have grown salad crops and vegetables on site, have harvested these and cooked them as part of a healthy diet. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, often from low starting points, is outstanding. Multi-cultural work is well promoted and racism is challenged very effectively. Students increasingly reflect on their own and other people's experiences and develop respect for each other's views.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Strengths of teaching lie in a thorough knowledge of each student and the collaborative approach taken by teachers and other adults, who provide closely tailored support. Strong relationships with students help staff to manage behaviour and encourage them into doing their best. Planning has been a focus of staff development and is now detailed so that learning intentions are clear and lessons are well paced. Some teaching is outstanding. Where it is most successful lessons are well planned, teachers use interactive resources to engage students, precise questioning is used to check understanding and challenge thinking and there is a pace to learning. In satisfactory lessons, the challenge is not always as evident and students are less enthusiastic. Assessment is effective during lessons with teachers providing detailed oral feedback to motivate students and to correct any misunderstanding. Students are becoming more involved in assessing their own learning and being critical in a supportive way of their peers. However, these procedures are not yet used consistently to extend students' understanding of their own learning.

The curriculum is diverse and varied and supports good outcomes for students. It is enriched through excellent partnerships with other agencies so that individualised learning experiences can be offered that reflect students' interests and needs. Many opportunities are provided for students to extend their personal, social, emotional and health skills. These enable them to become self-sufficient when they leave

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

school. Extra-curricular provision is a strength and enrichment activities provide varied opportunities for students. The wide range of courses and activities lead to GCSEs and appropriate external accreditation which support students' future opportunities.

Excellent care is taken to ensure the safeguarding of students and to ensure a safe environment. A strong feature is the outstanding care provided for students who are vulnerable due to their circumstances, including those looked after by the local authority and those supported by outreach services. The outstanding care, support and guidance is recognised and valued by parents and carers. Students respond well to staff and show and say how confident they are in school due to the way it supports them. Teachers and other staff know students exceptionally well and use this to support students' personal and academic development. Students receive high-quality information and support about sex and relationships, drugs and substance misuse. Guidance relating to their future options when they leave the school is also very effective. Staff work well with families and a range of services to support students' learning and overall well-being.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's vision, drive and determination are infectious and supported by all staff. Leaders and managers are highly effective and increasingly empowered to identify areas for improvement and lead on developments. Following a period of change morale is high. Monitoring of teaching and learning is highly effective and findings are used very well to improve provision with rigorous performance management and professional development in place. This is a significant factor in improving teaching that is ensuring students' good academic progress. More robust tracking of students' progress is guiding planning and used to identify priorities although more is yet to be done to fully exploit the available information.

The management committee provides excellent support being rigorous in ensuring that all staff and students are safe and its members discharge statutory duties effectively. Members ensure the unit's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for every student and challenging discrimination is evident in daily practice. They are involved in evaluating the work of the unit and have strong capacity to influence its strategic direction. Members support the continued development of highly effective partnership work as key strategic partners are represented on the management committee.

Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the locality enables the school to make an outstanding contribution to the promotion of community cohesion within the school, the local community and across the Borough. Parents and carers are

extremely well informed and many work in partnership with school to support their children. Regular and effective communication systems are well established to ensure communication with all parents and carers. The school provides good outcomes and ensures good value for money.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Most questionnaires returned were very positive and indicate that parents and carers are very satisfied with the provision at both sites of Kingsland School. Inspectors endorse parents' and carers' views. Positive comments included, 'Thank you is not enough. My child would not have got through her exams if not for Kingsland', and, 'The school has a good ethos, a supportive environment and liaises well with parents.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kingsland 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 13 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 230 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	5	38	7	54	0	0	1	8
The school keeps my child safe	9	69	3	23	1	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	69	3	23	1	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	46	6	46	0	0	1	8
The teaching is good at this school	8	62	4	31	1	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	62	4	31	1	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	6	46	6	46	1	8	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)	7	54	5	38	1	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	62	4	31	1	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	46	6	46	0	0	1	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	62	4	31	1	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	69	3	23	1	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	9	69	3	23	1	8	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



21 September 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Kingsland School, Oldham M35 0DQ

Thank you for the welcome you gave me and the other inspectors when we came to inspect your school. I would like to give my particular thanks to those of you who gave up your time to talk to us or fill in questionnaires.

Kingsland School provides you with a good education. Teachers know you very well and lessons are good overall and sometimes outstanding. Many of you have made very good improvements in your attendance and during my visit your behaviour was mostly good. The care, support and guidance you receive are outstanding because of the excellent involvement of different agencies helping to meet your individual needs. All of this enables you to feel very safe in school and make good progress in lessons. Many of you make an excellent contribution to the school community and are adopting healthy lifestyles.

Talking to you and reading the comments from the questionnaires you filled in, we can see that you appreciate what the staff are doing for you. I am asking the headteacher and staff to do the following things to make sure you get the very best out of your time at Kingsland School.

- Improve teaching further by involving you more in assessing your own work and that of others and checking that all of the tasks you are given are challenging enough.
- Using all of the information available about your progress to check that you are all making as much progress as possible.

You can help by continuing to work hard and by making sure you attend even more regularly. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Keith Massett
Lead Inspector

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