

King Charles I Secondary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135060
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381795
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Rashida Sharif HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
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	1250
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Neal
Headteacher	Tim Gulliver
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2009
School address	Hill Grove House Comberton Road Kidderminster DY10 1XA
Telephone number	01562 512880
Fax number	01562 512881
Email address	office@kingcharles1.worcs.sch.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection date(s)	12–13 October 2011
Inspection number	381795

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. In total there were 51 lesson observations, some of which were undertaken jointly with senior leaders; 48 teachers were seen teaching, including those in the communication centre. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the documentation relating to the safeguarding of students, the progress that different groups of students make in their learning and their wider participation in the life of the school. Inspectors met with senior leaders, groups of students, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors analysed 299 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and others returned by staff and a sample of over 300 students.

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

- Are teaching and assessment sufficiently flexible and challenging in order to stretch students of all abilities, including those in the communication centre?
- To what extent do the school's curriculum and support services meet the needs of all students and enable them to achieve their potential?
- How effective are leadership and management at all levels in driving whole-school improvement?

Information about the school

King Charles I is larger than the average secondary school, and has a large sixth form. The school is based on a split site. Students in Years 7 and 8 are based in the lower school site and students in Years 9 to 13 are on the upper school site. The great majority of the students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The school has specially resourced provision in a communication centre, which has a base in both sites, for up to 34 students with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder and severe language challenges. These students also attend some mainstream classes and are supported by a team of trained support staff.

The school was re-designated as a specialist science school in 2009. It has a number of awards including Investors in People, Eco and Healthy School status.

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

King Charles 1 is a good school that puts students at the heart of everything it does. The headteacher and the senior leadership team ensure that there is a strong focus on high expectations and on raising achievement. This is particularly evident at Key Stage 4, where students make good progress in their learning. Steadily increasing attainment at Key Stage 4 has been a feature of the school since its last inspection, when it was deemed to provide a satisfactory education for all students. There are tangible improvements right across the school. Students are proud of their school and feel safe and well cared for. The school is held in high regard by parents and carers. As one wrote: 'I believe that if I have any concerns the school would deal with them appropriately.'

Students' attitudes to learning and their behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, are good and this contributes to the good progress all groups make in their learning, including those in the communication centre. The school's good curriculum and systems of care, guidance and support contribute to the promotion of positive personal as well as academic outcomes for students. This is particularly evident in the extent to which students feel safe and adopt healthy lifestyles. The school's specialist science status enhances the curriculum and good partnership links help to promote good learning and well-being.

Teaching is good and the use of assessment to support learning is satisfactory. An increasing proportion of lessons are good or outstanding and there are some common strengths, such as strong subject knowledge and imaginative use of information and communication technology. Not all teaching meets the varying needs of students sufficiently well because lessons sometimes are insufficiently challenging. Similarly, not all questioning encourages students to think and develop their understanding. Students enjoy working in groups and demonstrate the ability to be independent in their learning when given the opportunity.

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. It is beginning to benefit from a renewed focus on improving students' outcomes and provision. Standards have fluctuated since the school was last inspected but students make satisfactory progress.

The school's accurate self-evaluation and the success of its actions to improve outcomes indicate that the school has a good capacity to continue to improve. Attendance and the proportion of students achieving five or more A* to C grades at

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

GCSE are now above national averages. The tracking and monitoring of teaching, learning and students' performance are rigorous. The headteacher and his senior leadership team, supported by the governing body, provide strong and purposeful leadership with ambitious and well-focused plans for the future. However, there is variation in the impact that middle leaders have on achievement. This is due to inconsistencies in their monitoring of teaching and learning and their use of assessment. Consequently, challenging targets for improvement are not consistently set for all subjects.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all teaching is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - all work is regularly and consistently marked in a way that clearly shows students what they need to do improve
 - all teachers apply the school's assessment procedures consistently
 - teachers use students' responses to questions to develop key teaching points and draw others into discussion.

- Remove the variations in performance between subjects by ensuring that middle leaders:
 - secure more consistent use of best practice
 - regularly review and evaluate the work of their department, particularly the quality of teaching and learning
 - set appropriately challenging targets for improvement and hold staff to account.

- Improve overall achievement in the sixth form by:
 - embedding robust systems to track and monitor students' progress
 - monitoring closely actions required for further improvement so they happen within specific timescales.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students enter the school with attainment which is broadly average. Since the previous inspection, there has been a gradual improvement in the percentage of students obtaining five GCSE grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, which was above average in 2010 and rose further to 61% in the unvalidated data for 2011. The good support that students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive, particularly those in the communication centre, enables them to make good progress and achieve well. Students have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well.

Students say they feel safe at the school at all times. Groups representing a wide range of students are entirely confident that issues they raise will be dealt with

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

promptly and effectively. Permanent exclusions are rare and the proportion of fixed-term exclusions is low. Similarly, the number of recorded incidents of racism, harassment and bullying is low. The provision of healthy school meals is good although some students do not always take up the healthy options. Students move round the school sensibly. They are polite, considerate and show respect for all members of the school community and any visitors to their school. Good behaviour is a feature of most lessons, and often makes a strong contribution to their success; disruptions are rare, and the systems for dealing with any that do arise are clear and well understood. Persistent absence has decreased in the past three years due to a range of new measures, including governors’ panels.

The school is a harmonious and cohesive community and students readily take on roles of responsibility as citizens within the school and the local community. The school offers an impressive range of extra-curricular activities which are attended by an equally impressive number of students of all ages. Artistic, theatrical and musical opportunities make a good contribution to students’ emotional development and well-being, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All these experiences enable students to demonstrate a range of skills, attitudes and competencies that prepare them well for their future working lives.

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	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	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers demonstrate strong subject expertise. Students are unanimously supportive of their teachers, and relationships are extremely good in lessons. Over three

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

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

quarters of lessons seen by inspectors were judged to be good, with examples of outstanding practice; none was unsatisfactory. Support staff linked permanently to individual students from the communication centre also play an active role in helping to improve overall achievement, particularly of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where teaching is good or better, learning is planned and resourced well to match the needs and abilities of individual students and to enable them to work independently. The pace is brisk and effective questioning techniques are used to shape, challenge and stretch students’ thinking. Literacy is well developed in these lessons, with students fully utilising a range of technical and subject-specific vocabulary to support the development and presentation of their work. These features enable students to make rapid progress. Students say they enjoy their learning and are eager to do well in lessons, especially when they are actively involved. For example, in a drama lesson students took on the roles of writers, directors and producers as well as critical friends, using dramatic licence to improve each other’s work.

Where teaching is less successful, teachers give over-lengthy expositions and do not always build on the responses of students to develop key teaching points or to engage other students in discussions. Planning lacks sufficient detail and focuses more on what the teacher will do than what the students will learn. In these lessons, teachers do not use available assessment data effectively to plan for the needs of different groups, and as a result, lessons lack challenge and pace.

The curriculum is regularly reviewed to meet students’ different and changing needs. The school uses its specialist science status to strengthen the curriculum well; partnerships established through the vocational courses benefit all curriculum areas. The wide range of extra-curricular activities further enhances and broadens students’ experiences and interests.

The attention given to students’ individual, personal, social and academic needs is a strength of the school which provides very good support for the students whose circumstances make them most vulnerable, and makes good use of the communication centre and other agencies as and when required. All aspects of students’ development are carefully monitored to ensure that required interventions are swift and effective. Students, parents and carers as well as teachers all describe examples of how the school has improved the life chances of many individuals, particularly those whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. The school balances well the setting of high expectations with the provision of good-quality support, both academic and pastoral.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where	2

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

relevant, through partnerships	
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The strength of the leadership provided by the headteacher, ably supported by the senior leadership team and governing body, is a key element in the school’s improvement and its many good features. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school which puts the needs of all students at the heart of its inclusive approach. Students are valued, and those with particular needs are nurtured well. Staff at all levels share a passionate belief in improving the life chances of all the students. This is clearly recognised by the students and their parents and carers, who appreciate the strong and positive school ethos that promotes equal opportunities well, in relation to academic success as well as personal and social development. The school is rigorous in its monitoring of teaching, which is regular and accurate. Where middle leadership is good, it has driven forward improvement, for example in English and mathematics. However, many of the subject self-evaluations are at early stages of development and are not always sharply focused on what students need to do to improve further. The good practice that exists is not always shared or built upon consistently by all staff.

The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has been influential in determining its strategic direction. It plays an increasingly active role in the development of the school and has a good knowledge and understanding of what needs to improve. It is well organised and ensures that the school meets all statutory requirements, including clear policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, which follow recommended good practice. It manages the school’s finances well.

The school promotes community cohesion well. It has strong links with the local community and well-established national and international links which it uses to enrich students’ knowledge and understanding of the wider world. The international links with a number of countries, for example India, China and Ecuador, broaden students’ horizons and extend their global awareness.

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	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2

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

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	2

Sixth form

Students make satisfactory progress and demonstrate sensible, mature attitudes to their learning. There is, however, some variation in performance between groups of students and subjects. Students make good use of opportunities to contribute to the school and the local community through a range of roles, including running extra-curricular sports and other activities and supporting pupils in local primary schools.

Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory. Some of the best lessons provide a good level of challenge to students through high-quality dialogue facilitated by probing questioning and strongly developed skills of critical thinking. For example, in an English lesson, the teacher skilfully encouraged students to assess critically each other’s performances when reading scenes from a play. There are limited opportunities for independent learning, particularly in Year 12, and students do not always have sufficient focus on what to do to further improve their work. The school offers an increasingly broad range of courses, including vocational courses. However, not all are suited to the needs of the students or support their future aspirations. Leaders and managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the sixth form and now have clear plans for improvement, integral to the whole-school development processes, with a stronger focus on improving students’ outcomes. Appropriate tracking systems are beginning to help to monitor individual students’ progress and target any underperformance; however, these are not fully embedded.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Responses to the parental questionnaire indicate that parents and carers are very positive about the extent to which the school keeps their children safe. A very large majority of the parents and carers who responded are happy with their children’s

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

experiences of the school. Many praised specific aspects of its work and have confidence in teachers and in the leadership and management of the school. Parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school, feel safe, and are well cared for. A small minority raised issues about the support for their children, homework and healthy lifestyles. The team judged these aspects to be good. The lead inspector discussed these and the few individual concerns raised with the school, anonymously, to inform the improvement process.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King Charles I Secondary 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 299 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1250 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	95	32	180	60	21	7	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	108	36	183	61	5	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	101	34	170	57	18	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	96	32	169	57	17	6	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	86	29	188	63	13	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	91	30	164	55	30	10	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	18	202	68	32	11	1	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)	92	31	170	57	10	3	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	84	28	185	62	14	5	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	81	27	169	57	25	8	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	20	173	58	30	10	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	86	29	184	62	10	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	115	38	164	55	8	3	2	1

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 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.



14 October 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of King Charles I Secondary School, Kidderminster, DY10 1XA

Thank you for making the inspection team so welcome when we recently visited your school. We all very much enjoyed talking with you and you helped us to find out about the school, which you said you were proud of. Inspectors judged it to be a good school. You make good progress in your learning because you are well behaved in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. Good quality teaching and a good curriculum contribute significantly to this. You receive good care, guidance and support. You told us that you feel safe and are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle as a result of the focus on physical activity and the healthy food provided in the canteen. However, as reflected in your questionnaires, some of you felt that not everyone had good healthy eating habits.

To improve the school even more, we have asked the headteacher, his leadership team and the governing body to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that your work is regularly and consistently marked and tells you what it is that you need to do to improve; for teachers to use the assessment policy consistently and use your responses to questions to develop key teaching points and draw others into discussions. We have also asked them to make sure all subjects are equally good by sharing good practice and regularly reviewing and evaluating the work of each department, particularly the quality of teaching and learning. We have asked for the sixth form to be improved by making sure that there are robust systems to track and monitor your progress, and also the progress made towards improvement targets.

You can all help your school to improve further by attending regularly, by really taking an interest in, and getting involved with, the learning activities your teachers set you, and by working as hard as you can. We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**