

Kings Norton Girls' School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136590
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	395550
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Smith HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	922
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	173
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Parsons
Headteacher	Gill Fox
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2007
School address	Selly Oak Road Birmingham B30 1HW
Telephone number	0121 6751305
Fax number	0121 6752514
Email address	enquirie@kingsnortongirls.bham.sch.uk

Age group	11–19
Inspection date(s)	10–11 May 2012
Inspection number	395550



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Sutton	Additional Inspector
Susan Laffey	Additional Inspector
Simon Mosley	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons mainly in Key Stage 3 and the sixth form. Some observations were joint visits with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors held meetings with staff, students and two members of the governing body. They took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and analysed 117 parent and carer questionnaires, 79 staff questionnaires and 150 pupil questionnaires. They scrutinised assessment records, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body and the school's development plans and evaluations. At the time of the inspection, Year 10 students were taking their end of year examinations and students in Years 11, 12 and 13 were in the last stages of preparation for their external examinations.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. The school converted to academy status in April 2011. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs or supported at school action plus is below average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is average. Students of Indian, Pakistani and mixed White and Black Caribbean heritage are the largest of these groups. The proportion of students who are learning English as an additional language is below average. The school had a survey inspection for continuing professional development in June 2008 and for music in June 2011. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher. The school has achieved a number of awards including the International Schools Award and Arts Mark Gold. It is currently undergoing redesignation for Investors in People status.

Results for 2011 meet the current government floor standard, the minimum expectations set for attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not good because teaching is not good enough to ensure students make good progress and achievement is, therefore, judged satisfactory. The sixth form is good and students respond well to very caring pastoral support and some good teaching to achieve well. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory because although attainment is above average in most subjects, students make satisfactory progress from the time when they start at school. Progress in lessons ranges from outstanding to satisfactory. Except in Year 7, students do not get opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in a coordinated way across all subjects.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Students are polite, courteous and display a generally positive attitude in class. However, in some lessons the behaviour of a small number of pupils is not well managed and, consequently, the work of others is disturbed.
- Teaching is satisfactory: while there is much good and better teaching, a significant proportion remains satisfactory. There are good relationships between staff and students. When teaching is of the highest quality, learning is well matched to the different needs of all students and lessons get off to a purposeful start. When teaching is satisfactory, work is not well matched to the needs of all students, particularly higher attainers, teachers talk for too long before students get down to work and marking is weak.
- The school has responded well to the music inspection. Leaders have used the areas for improvement to identify issues across all subjects. Performance management holds staff to account and has supported the school in increasing the proportion of good teaching. The headteacher has drive and ambition but not all staff are clear about what is expected or agree with management

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

decisions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by ensuring:
 - all students, particularly higher attainers, are consistently challenged in lessons
 - students are motivated and engaged to make good progress in all lessons and across time
 - lessons in all subjects include coordinated opportunities for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills
 - students' behaviour is managed by teachers so that the actions of a few individuals in lessons does not adversely affect the work of the whole group.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that by April 2013, at least 80% of teaching is judged good or better by ensuring:
 - lessons are planned to meet the needs of all students
 - lessons get off to a purposeful start and students get down to their work quickly without having to listen to overlong teacher input
 - assessment, including marking in books, identifies how well students are achieving, gives purposeful advice on how to improve and then allows students time to respond to this advice.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 has been above average for a number of years but fell to broadly average in 2011. Students make satisfactory progress in the majority of subjects. During the inspection, inspectors observed students making mainly good or satisfactory progress in lessons with occasional outstanding progress. The outstanding progress was often in sixth form lessons. For example in biology, students were highly engaged in discussing life and death issues when revising DNA. In lessons where progress was satisfactory, students were not challenged, especially the higher attainers. Limited expectations in these lessons reduced students' progress. Learning was good when lessons met the needs of all students and the pace of learning was quick. For example, in food technology, students responded well when making a new sauce and the teacher facilitated good learning by matching the work and support to individual needs. In lessons, teachers often identify key words and discussion is used well as a precursor to students explaining their work in mathematics. However, this is not consistent and there is no whole school policy to enhance literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects.

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

In 2011 results in mathematics fell. The school has been effective in responding to this dip and ensured results are likely to be back up to previous levels in 2012. A large proportion of students complete a GCSE in a modern foreign language and a humanities subject. Hence, the proportion of students who are successful in meeting the standards for the English Baccalaureate is above average. Students who study three separate sciences reach high standards with over half gaining either a grade A* or A in GCSE examinations. Overall achievement in science is outstanding. Artwork displayed around the school is of a very high standard, particularly some of the three-dimensional ceramics work. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are supported well and often make better progress than their peers. Students from different ethnic backgrounds achieve in line with their fellow students.

Students enter the sixth form with broadly average attainment. They make average progress in Year 12 and then the momentum is increased so that overall they make good progress with their A level subjects. The school had entered all students for A level general studies but has rightly changed this policy, recognising that for some students poor progress in this subject was having a detrimental impact across all subjects. In these, progress was generally good and outstanding in some, for example, psychology. The proportion of students who continue from Year 12 to Year 13 is above average with increasing numbers being accepted to study at highly respected universities.

The great majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires say that their children make good progress at the school. While this is true for sixth form students, disabled students and those with special educational needs and across a variety of subjects, overall inspection evidence indicates progress to be satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Inspectors found that, overall, teaching is satisfactory with some that is good and outstanding. When teaching is at its best, lessons meet the needs of all students and get off to a purposeful start which is maintained so that learning is effective. In these lessons, staff have high expectations and relationships with students are good. In effective question and answer sessions, teachers' questioning and the expectation that students give full answers, including explanations, develop students' understanding. When teaching is satisfactory, work does not challenge all students and is not matched well to individual needs across the ability range within a class. Students often have to listen to overlong teacher expositions before becoming actively engaged in their work. These features combine to limit the progress made in lessons and over time.

Good individual support given to disabled students and those with special educational needs by teaching assistants ensures they are able to engage in lessons. The school has been successful in reducing the dependency of these students upon their support so that they are able to complete tasks for themselves. In some lessons, assessments are used well to identify what a student needs to do to improve and

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

give clear advice on how to bring about those improvements. However, time is not always made available to enable students to respond to this advice. At times, marking in books does not identify how well a student is achieving or give support for them to improve. While the great majority of parents, carers and students say teaching is good, inspectors judged it to be satisfactory.

Teaching allows students to be reflective on spiritual matters; for example, in an art lesson a student was observed sharing with the class how her experience of visiting Auschwitz had influenced her art work. Students gain a good insight into different cultures through the school's strong international links as part of its language specialism. They consider moral aspects, for example sharing insults and compliments using iambic pentameters (a type of verse) during a lesson on Shakespeare. Students gain good social understanding through many good displays around the school including some on the impact of the riots over the summer and through good cooperative work within the specialist area of sport.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is satisfactory. Although behaviour around school is good, with students being polite and courteous to each other and to adults, at times students were observed not fully engaging in their work. The majority of responses from parents, carers and students indicate that behaviour in lessons is good. However, students commented, along with some responses from parents and carers, that lessons were sometimes disturbed by the behaviour of a very small minority of students because teachers did not always challenge inappropriate behaviour.

Just about all students say they feel safe and this is confirmed by responses from parents and carers. Students understand the dangers of substance abuse but they are aware that a number of their peers smoke. Students have received clear advice on how to deal with examples of cyber-bullying, including that from mobile phones and the use of social network sites. The school identifies the few incidents of bullying and supports students when these occur. A major reason why achievement went down in 2011 is the higher proportion of students who had a lot of time off during Year 11. The school has used some of its Pupil Premium funding to provide additional support to families. Consequently, attendance is above average and the proportion of students who are persistently absent has fallen to below average.

Leadership and management

There is a clear strategic direction to the school and the governing body has recently provided greater challenge. Nearly all staff who responded to the questionnaire said they were proud to work at the school. However, responses show that middle leaders do not consistently know what the school is trying to achieve or how they can influence decisions and bring about change. The school works well with the neighbouring boys' school so that a wide variety of A level options are available. The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies key areas of performance, including the quality of teaching, but when it uses these to make overall judgements it is

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

overgenerous with its evaluations. Performance management is well established and used effectively to hold staff and subject leaders to account. Professional development has been used to support the school in increasing the proportion of good teaching, although more needs to be done to ensure teaching is consistently better. The school development plan is detailed and focused upon the areas for improvement based upon secure monitoring and evaluation. There are clear success criteria related to the impact of actions on raising standards by which the plan can be evaluated.

The curriculum is good because it enables students to follow a wide variety of courses at GCSE with many taking a modern foreign language and a humanities subject. Around a third of the students successfully complete a GCSE course in the three separate sciences. In Year 7, students enjoy a humanities course during which they study one aspect in depth over an extended period. Year 7 students also respond well to their skills-based curriculum. Students also enjoy a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, residential experiences and educational visits. While many lessons cover aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, these are not always coordinated or planned for.

In response to the dip in results in 2011, close analysis of data, including by the curriculum and standards committee of the governing body, has identified any underachieving students or groups of students. These are now supported to ensure equality of opportunity. The school rightly recognises the need to improve the achievement of students known to be eligible for free school meals so that it is closer to the achievement for all students. The governing body, along with all staff, ensure all aspects of safeguarding meet current requirements and that the school is as safe as possible.

The school has been successful in improving results in GCSE music so that in 2011 around half the small number of candidates achieved either a grade A* or A. Attendance has risen as a result of the reduction of the proportion of students who have too much time off school. This demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Kings Norton Girls' School, Birmingham, B30 1HW

When I visited your school recently with my colleagues, we met some of you at lunchtime and talked to others during lessons and at break. Thank you very much for your help and cooperation. We were impressed with your courtesy and manners and how well you get on with each other. Attendance has improved. Well done to those of you who have helped this improvement by not missing school for holidays. These are some of the reasons why your school has been judged satisfactory.

Our observations showed that achievement is satisfactory and the school has responded to last year's results to make sure you are able to achieve better in GCSE examinations this summer. We found that the sixth form is good because you achieve well in your A level courses. You follow a good curriculum which helps prepare you for your next phase of education or the world of work. Recent changes in Year 7 give you good opportunities to develop your skills and to study humanities subjects in detail over a longer period. However, we have asked your school to make sure all lessons are challenging, particularly for those of you who arrive at school with above average attainment, and that all subjects consider how you can improve your literacy and numeracy skills. We observed 42 lessons and saw that you enjoy some interesting teaching but we judged that teaching is satisfactory. We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching so that you are always challenged fully, that the work is well matched to your abilities and that you get down to your work quickly at the start of lessons. We have also asked the school to make sure your books are marked well and show you how to improve and that you are given time to respond to your teachers' comments. You can help by making sure that you all behave well in lessons and do not disturb the learning of others.

Staff care for you very well which is why a very large majority of you who filled in the student questionnaire said that you enjoy the school and feel safe. Your headteacher and senior leaders have identified what needs to be done to improve the school. They are supported by staff and members of the governing body.

We wish you well at school and hope you carry on helping it to get even better.

Yours sincerely
Michael Smith
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.**