

The Kingsway School

Foxland Road, Gatley, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 4QX

Inspection dates 10–11 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress and achieve well in nearly all subjects. Attainment has improved significantly in recent years and is above average and rising.
- Students who are disabled or with statements of special educational needs, including those with severe learning difficulties, are exceptionally well supported and also achieve well.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Most is good and the proportion that is outstanding is growing securely.
- Teaching of English is of very high quality and results in attainment that is consistently high.
- Students enjoy school. They behave well. They treat each other and the adults working with them with respect.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection.
- The school prepares students well, both academically and personally, for future success.
- Leaders and managers, including a highly effective governing body, have driven the school purposefully forward since the previous inspection. This demonstrates the school's strong capacity to carry on improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough students make progress that is better than expected for achievement to be outstanding.
- A small amount of teaching requires improvement and not enough is yet outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 45 lessons taught by 45 teachers. Four observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. In addition, several shorter observations were carried out with a focus on provision for students with statements of special educational needs, including a number of students with severe learning difficulties.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, groups of teachers and teaching assistants, groups of students, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: information on students' achievement; school records relating to the monitoring of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safety; school policies; minutes of meetings of the governing body; and the school's own summary of its effectiveness.
- Inspectors took account of 56 parental responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as summaries of parental views gathered by the school from questionnaires.

Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Chris Griffin	Additional Inspector
Judith Tolley	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector
Jim Bennetts	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Kingsway School is much larger than most secondary schools. It is housed in two separate buildings joined by a pedestrian underpass.
- The school has resourced provision for 15 students with severe learning difficulties from across the local authority.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is broadly in line with other schools across the country. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- About 25% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, chiefly of Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of students that speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards that set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A small number of students attend part-time vocational courses at Stockport College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching at least good and increase the proportion that is outstanding in order to raise achievement further by:
 - making sure that all teaching uses information on what students already know and understand to set tasks for them that are neither too easy nor too hard
 - ensuring that the highly effective opportunities students have to work things out for themselves, where teaching is outstanding, are spread further
 - ensuring that teaching for less able students is always planned carefully to engage them fully in their learning
 - improving the consistency of the quality of marking to show students clearly how well they are doing and the next steps they need to take to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join Year 7 with attainment that is broadly average.
- In recent years the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE passes at Grade C and above including English and mathematics has risen significantly and is above average.
- Nearly all students make the progress expected of them by the end of Key Stage 4. The proportion of students making better progress than this has grown and compares favourably with national figures.
- In English the proportion of students making better than expected progress is consistently high in comparison with the national picture.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, other students. This demonstrates the school's strong and effective commitment to providing equality of opportunity.
- Students who are disabled or with a statement of special educational needs, including those who have severe learning difficulties, achieve well because of the highly effective support that they receive.
- A few less able students make slower progress than other students because teaching is not always planned well enough to stimulate them and engage them fully in their learning.
- The attainment of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above that of similar students nationally. However, in comparison with other students in the school, students known to be eligible for free school meals attain approximately three quarters of a GCSE grade lower in English and mathematics. School data, supported by inspection evidence, show that effective action taken by the school in recent years is closing the gap securely.
- The school uses Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to provide extra support for lower-attaining students in reading and mathematics. School data show convincingly that these measures accelerate securely the progress that these students make.
- The school enters some students early for GCSE in mathematics. Those who attain higher GCSE grades usefully take a further GCSE in statistics. Others receive extra support to improve their mathematics grades further. Data and inspection evidence show that this is a successful strategy that contributes to the good achievement.
- The progress of students who attend part-time vocational courses at Stockport College is checked meticulously. Nearly all achieve well in gaining relevant qualifications.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection because leaders and managers have stepped up the rigour with which its quality is checked and have provided much more focused staff training.
- Where learning is very rapid as the result of outstanding teaching, lessons move along at a fast pace with high levels of challenge that really make students think deeply. Students relish the challenging work and tackle problems with real determination. They enjoy working on their own and finding things out for themselves, only relying on the teacher to steer them in the right direction when necessary.
- For example, in a Year 9 English lesson using a text by Bill Bryson students were set a range of tasks that matched their abilities. After a brief introduction by the teacher students settled to work with real enthusiasm and enjoyment, knowing exactly what was expected of them. Students' analyses of how skilfully the author uses language to convey his ideas would not have been out of place in a sixth-form tutorial.
- Where teaching is less than outstanding, opportunities for students to work on their own are

more limited and the pace of learning, although usually good, is not as impressive.

- Teachers know their subjects well. Most use information about students' progress and abilities to plan activities that are matched closely to students' needs. Occasionally, however, tasks are set that are too difficult for some students and too easy for others. This acts as a brake on accelerating progress at a faster pace.
- Teaching in a few sets for less able students requires improvement because planning does not always take full account of their particular needs. Consequently, students are not always fully engaged in their learning and lose some concentration.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support in lessons for disabled students, those with a statement of special educational needs and less able students.
- The resourced support provided for students with severe learning difficulties is of excellent quality.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent. While some is of exemplary quality, especially in English, in some subjects it does not give students a clear enough explanation of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve their work.
- Literacy skills are taught exceptionally well, with the result that students make very rapid progress in reading and writing. Numeracy is also taught well, with the result that students have a sure grasp of basic mathematical skills that they are able to apply to real-life situations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students enjoy school. They behave well around school and in the vast majority of lessons. They get on well together. Students with severe learning difficulties are treated with unerring respect and are encouraged to play a full part in school life.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning in the vast majority of lessons. Occasionally however, when teaching fails to stimulate students' interest, a lack of concentration leads to some off-task chatter and this slows progress.
- While students say that bullying of any kind is very rare, a few parents express some concerns about bullying in the school. Inspectors looked carefully at recorded incidents of bullying in recent years and found that, while some incidents of bullying have taken place, their number is not excessive and that the school has taken appropriate action to deal with them.
- Students say that they feel safe in school. Students move purposefully and act responsibly when moving between buildings. Staff supervise meticulously the pedestrian crossing and the pedestrian underpass that join the separate buildings in order to ensure students' safety.
- Students talk knowledgeably about what constitutes unsafe situations and how to deal with them or avoid them. They understand fully the dangers posed by inappropriate use of the internet and social networking sites.
- In recent years attendance has improved and is now broadly average.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection leaders and managers have taken robust action to improve the quality of teaching and to set higher expectations. Targets for students' attainment and progress have been made more demanding and procedures to track students' progress towards them have been tightened. These actions have raised aspirations all round and have resulted in a significant improvement in students' achievement.
- The use of performance management has also been made more rigorous in order to hold staff more rigorously to account for students' progress and the quality of teaching. The headteacher and the governing body make the right decisions about the progress of teachers up the salary scale on the basis of the quality of their teaching and students' progress in their classes.

- Teamwork is strong in pursuit of making the school better. Middle leaders feel more secure in knowing what is expected of them, as do other leaders and teachers.
- Provision for students who are disabled or with a statement of special educational needs, including students with severe learning difficulties, is expertly led and managed. The good achievement of these students demonstrates the school's strong and effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- The curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of students. It helps them develop their skills effectively and prepares them well for life in a diverse society. There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities that are extremely popular and well attended and that make a strong contribution to students' personal development and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Nearly all parents are supportive of the school and would recommend it to other prospective parents.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding students are fully in place and give no cause for concern. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the behaviour and safety of students when attending off-site provision.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this good and improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body holds the school rigorously to account. It uses information about the school's performance astutely to compare its effectiveness with other schools, both locally and nationally, to identify where it could do better. The governing body knows the quality of teaching and has fully supported senior leaders in the push to improve its quality since the previous inspection. The governing body fully understands the operation of performance management in the school and monitors closely its links with salary progression. The governing body has a firm grasp on the school's finances including the effective allocation of pupil premium funding to close the gap in attainment between students that are supported by it and those who are not. Governors take part regularly in training provided by the local authority so that they keep abreast of developments and hold the school to account for its effectiveness.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106141
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	412808

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,468
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Roberts
Headteacher	Michael Gledhill
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2010
Telephone number	0161 428 7706
Fax number	0161 491 4335
Email address	headteacher@kingsway.stockport.sch.uk

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