

# Kingstone High School

Kingstone, Hereford, HR2 9HJ

**Inspection dates** 2-3 May 2013

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good                        | 2        |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Requires improvement</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good                        | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Requires improvement        | 3        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students, including those on free school meals or those with disabilities or special educational needs, have not made enough progress in English, mathematics and languages by the end of Year 11 to narrow the gap in standards with the national average.
- Teaching requires improvement because although it is improving strongly it has not yet led to consistently good progress.
- Marking of students' work is variable in its quality. Teachers do not always plan work that builds appropriately on what students already understand.
- Leadership at all levels is not sufficiently rigorous in checking teaching, the progress of all groups and the quality of students' work in lessons and over time.
- There is insufficient consistency in how leaders apply policies such as marking.

### The school has the following strengths

- Standards are high in science. Students make good progress in science and in a range of other subjects.
- There are examples of outstanding teaching in the school, including in music and technology.
- Senior leaders have identified strengths and weaknesses and have begun to have an impact on improving teaching.
- Students' behaviour, attitudes and relationships with each other and staff are good.
- Most of the very small number of parents who responded to the survey agree that their children are safe and looked after well.
- Where faculties and departments are well led this leads to good checking of teaching and progress of students in these subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, of which three were jointly observed with either the headteacher or a senior leader. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, members of staff including senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body including the Chair. No external adviser was available to speak to. Some meetings were held jointly with the primary school as this was an aligned inspection of the two federated schools.
- Inspectors took account of 36 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, one email from a parent and 41 responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's own data on students' recent attainment and progress and recent minutes of the governing body and middle leaders' meetings.
- Inspectors also looked at documentation relating to school planning, performance targets for staff, safeguarding, monitoring of racist incidents, the school's monitoring of teaching, behaviour and attendance, and evidence of support for students identified as needing extra help.

## Inspection team

|                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mark Sims, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Roisin Chambers           | Additional Inspector    |
| David Hughes              | Additional Inspector    |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium), is below the national average but rising.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who receive support through school action is below that found nationally. The proportion of these students who receive support through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average. Most students' needs are for specific or moderate learning difficulties and for behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is very low as is the percentage known to speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is federated with the primary school. There is an executive headteacher and joint governing body.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the progress students make in English, mathematics and languages through consistently good teaching that:
  - sets out clearly what the students are expected to learn in the lesson
  - matches activities more closely to students' prior learning , particularly for those eligible for the pupil premium and those with disabilities or special educational needs
  - checks how well students are doing in lessons and provides clear written feedback so that students know how they can improve their work
  - provides a wide range of activities that involves students making choices about their learning and taking responsibility for their work
  - draws on the very best examples of teaching that already exist in the school.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure leaders at all levels:
  - are consistent in applying school policies such as marking
  - judge the quality of teaching by accurately by taking account of the progress all groups of students make and provide feedback to teachers that is sufficiently challenging
  - use data on students' progress consistently to identify quickly any students or groups not making enough progress
  - check that any additional support is making a difference to narrow any gaps in the standards students achieve, particularly for students eligible for the pupil premium or those who have disabilities or special educational needs
  - review the impact of the school's work in raising standards and improving teaching.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Standards, based on five or more GCSE A\* to C grades including English and mathematics, are below average when students leave at the end of Year 11. There has been a small decline in the percentage of students achieving this in recent years as a result of a fall in standards in English. GCSE results in mathematics have improved.
- Standards are below average when students join the school in Year 7. The proportion making the expected levels of progress is broadly in line with the national average although lower in English compared to mathematics. The school's data indicate that students currently in school are on track to improve results in English and mathematics in 2013. This is a consequence of improvements in teaching, including the work to support the least able students in Year 7 in English and mathematics, and changes to the leadership and management of English.
- Students make good progress in science, and based on their best eight GCSE results, do well in many other subjects. The attainment of some students is constrained in part where options do not start until Year 11.
- In the most recent examinations at GCSE students who are eligible for funding from the pupil premium did not do as well as their peers. At the end of Key Stage 4 the average points scores in English and mathematics of the small number of students on free schools meals or looked after is lower than that for other students. Gaps are not yet closing effectively because the impact of spending additional funding is not being evaluated.
- In lessons seen during the inspection most students were making good progress in their learning, but tracking over time indicates that this improvement has been too recent to impact significantly on standards. More able students have been able to make rapid progress in those lessons that have challenged them to do as well as they can, for example in food technology.
- The progress of students with disabilities or special educational needs is in line with their peers nationally so that at their current rate of progress they are not set to narrow the gap in attainment with all students. The very small number of minority ethnic students and those for whom English is an additional language are making similar progress to their peers nationally.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because over time students have not made enough gains in their learning, particularly those eligible for pupil premium funding and those with disabilities or special educational needs.
- Where teaching is best students are inspired to learn. In a GCSE history lesson the combination of music and images motivated students in their group discussions on the Vietnam War. Teachers make clear to students what they will have learnt by the end of the lesson and check their understanding as the lesson proceeds. These good features are lacking in some lessons.
- In music, students had the chance to reflect on their learning as they worked towards personal targets. In these lessons more able students extend their higher thinking skills through challenging questions and prompts.
- Relationships between teachers and students and between different groups of students are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well when students have the opportunity to debate and reflect on moral issues such as abortion and euthanasia.
- Students learn well when they have the chance to check each other's work and consider how well they are doing against National Curriculum levels, for example in a Year 9 geography lesson on farming.
- In other lessons work is pitched at the whole class which limits the progress students can make, especially if too much of the lesson is dominated by the teacher's talking. Teachers do not sufficiently match work to prior learning where there is a wide variety of ability and students' starting points. Questions asked by teachers can be answered by anyone rather than targeted at

different levels of ability.

- Teaching assistants are productive with the use of their time in lessons, giving useful support to students with targeted questioning, but their role in the classroom is not always clear and at times it is restricted to handing out worksheets.
- The quality of written marking is very variable. At its best students know how they can improve and have the chance to respond to teachers' comments but elsewhere it is very limited or on occasions not done at all.
- Where students achieve their target ahead of schedule there are insufficient procedures in place to give them a revised, challenging target.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Students behave well in lessons and are polite and courteous towards visitors. They work well together in groups and pairs and support each other in their learning. They remain attentive even in lessons that require improvement where teachers talk for too long or the task they are given is unchallenging.
- A large majority of the small number of parents who responded to the online questionnaire said that their child feels safe and well looked after in school and that the school makes sure its students are well behaved.
- Arrangements to manage students' behaviour are thorough and backed up by a good balance of rewards and sanctions. Students confirmed that bullying occurs but is rare. When incidents do happen, they are dealt with effectively. They feel safe in school. They are aware of a range of potential bullying situations including racist and homophobic bullying and what to do if an incident occurs.
- Through the school's pastoral system a 'restorative approach' to bullying and racism is encouraged. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through tutor periods and a personal, social and health education programme which tackles issues such as prejudice and discrimination.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because opportunities for students to take responsibilities for their own learning are at times restricted.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and improving. The school responds appropriately to any attendance concerns at an early stage.
- The school's inclusion centre, 'The Ark', is used very effectively as an alternative to exclusion to support students with behavioural and emotional needs. The number of exclusions has consequently fallen.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- Senior leaders and governors have overseen a smooth transition to the federation of two schools and are highly committed to raising standards for students and improving teaching. An extensive programme of staff training and one-to-one support have led to improvements in teaching but training has not been sufficiently tailored to meet individual or departmental needs, because the checking of the impact of this work sometimes lacks rigour. There is scope to share more widely the best examples of teaching.
- A series of faculty reviews have led to improvements in departments such as physical education and science. Some new leaders have not been in post long enough to see sufficient impact on standards or teaching in their area of responsibility.
- Policies, for example marking, are not consistently applied by leaders, resulting in variability in outcomes across faculties and departments. Departmental improvement plans are also variable in quality because some lack clear, measurable targets, linked to teaching and students' achievement, for judging the success of actions.

- Data are used extensively to track the progress of all groups of learners, although individuals and groups in danger of falling behind are not always identified quickly enough. The focus on students eligible for pupil premium funding has been more recent, however. Consequently the attainment gap is not narrowing sufficiently in English and mathematics. Although money has been spent on additional staffing to support learners, the impact of this has not been fully reviewed.
  - The school's safeguarding procedures meet requirements and all its records are up to date. The school keeps a log of any reported racist incidents which is sent to the local authority but not reported to the governing body.
  - Less than half of those who responded to the staff survey agreed the school is well led and managed. A large majority of the of the small number of parents who responded to the online questionnaire said the school responds well to their concerns but a small minority did not agree and said they would not recommend the school to another parent.
  - The range of courses and subjects on offer is well matched to individual students' needs and interests. These are backed up by extensive series of enrichment activities.
  - There still remain some mismatches between teachers paid at the higher salary rate and the quality of their teaching or leadership. Where leadership was previously weak it has been tackled.
  - Senior and other leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses but external validation has led the school to have a slightly generous view of teaching, particularly the proportion it judges as outstanding. This is because judgements on the quality of teaching are not linked firmly enough to the progress students make in lessons. There is no involvement from the local authority.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors provide challenge and hold senior leaders to account for the school's performance
    - They understand the key priorities to raise standards in English and mathematics
    - Governors check the progress of students but have only recently started to pursue the underperformance of students eligible for pupil premium support. Governors know how much and on what the money is spent and the impact it has had on individuals but not for the group as a whole
    - They recognise there remain some mismatches between teachers' pay and their performance as teachers and leaders. The governing body has taken some difficult leadership decisions but recognises there is more to do.
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## 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

|                                |        |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 137073 |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | N/A    |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 408948 |

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

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Academy converter                     |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                             |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                                 |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                 |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 498                                   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                    |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Jan Baker                             |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Keith Crawford (Executive)            |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 8 July 2009                           |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01981 250224                          |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01981 251132                          |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | office@kingstone-high.hereford.sch.uk |



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