

Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy

Jermyn Street, Sleaford, NG34 7RS

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement in English and mathematics is outstanding.
- All groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, make at least good progress in their learning.
- Teaching is good with a significant proportion that is outstanding. Senior leaders have been effective in improving teaching, which is well supported by the professional development of teachers.
- High quality relationships between students and with their teachers contribute strongly to learning and progress.
- Students are very keen to learn. Their outstanding attitudes to learning and behaviour are a key factor in their high achievement.
- Students feel safe and bullying is rare.
- Exclusions are very low and attendance is well above average.
- Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the school.
- Governors know the school exceptionally well. They challenge and support the school to maintain its strengths and make improvements.
- The sixth form is good and improving rapidly and consequently, students achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to ensure that students make outstanding progress across all subjects.
- Written feedback to students does not provide them with sufficient guidance on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Opportunities for students to extend their literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects are underdeveloped.
- The rigour with which subject leaders monitor and evaluate their areas of responsibility is inconsistent.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 38 parts of lessons, of which four were joint observations carried out with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, groups of students, and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, performance data, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and they looked at samples of students' work. The school's central record of checks on staff was also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took into account the responses of 98 parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views of three parents who communicated directly with inspectors by letter or telephone. They also considered the views of staff, including those expressed in 52 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Nigel Boyd, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Sally-Ann Harding

Additional Inspector

Hermione Horn

Additional Inspector

Timothy Pank

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kesteven and Sleaford High School Selective Academy converted to become an academy on 1 November 2011. When its predecessor school, Kesteven and Sleaford High School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2007, it was judged to be outstanding in its overall effectiveness.
- The main school takes girls only and selects students in the locality in the top 25% of the ability range. The sixth form is co-educational, with a small number of boys attending.
- The school is smaller than the average sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for children in care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is much lower than average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average.
- 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 for its students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching and raise students' achievement by:
 - ensuring that teachers' marking consistently makes clear to students how they can improve their work and that students are given opportunities to respond to their teachers' comments
 - providing opportunities for students to develop their literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects
 - improving target-setting for individual students so they have shorter term target grades to aim for.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the criteria by which the school judges its success in reaching its improvement targets are more precise, so enabling leaders to judge impact more accurately
 - ensuring greater consistency in the way subject leaders monitor the effectiveness of their departments.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school with levels of attainment which are well above national averages. By the end of Year 11, the very large majority of students gain five or more good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics. Students' attainment by the end of Year 11 is significantly above national averages. Students' results represent good progress from when they join the school.
- Detailed information provided by the school and recent modular examination results strongly indicate that the current Year 11 is on track to gain improved GCSE results and make even better progress than last year.
- Students make outstanding progress in English and mathematics, as shown by the high proportions of students who make good or better progress in these subjects.
- Students make good or better progress in most other subjects. In subjects where achievement requires improvement, the school has made a determined effort to raise standards and there is clear evidence to show that improvements are being made. For example, students studying German are now making much better progress than previously.
- Students are not entered early for examinations.
- Pupil premium funding is being used in a range of ways to support eligible students, including specific targeted support for learning as well as supporting enrichment activities. The school's data shows that eligible students have benefited from this extra support and are making similar progress to their peers. The gap in attainment is equivalent to one quarter of a GCSE grade in English and is negligible in mathematics. Data for 2013 confirms that students entitled to this support are expected to achieve similar average point scores in English and mathematics GCSEs as their peers.
- The school does not have any students entitled to the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The very small number of disabled students and those with special educational needs are achieving as well as their peers and some are making excellent progress. This is because they receive good individual support.
- Students read and write very well. They are confident in their use of literacy and very articulate.
- Students' performance is carefully monitored so that any underperformance is identified early and targeted interventions help them make better progress.
- The sixth form provides a variety of academic courses which are well suited to the needs of students and their attainment is rising rapidly. Students are making good progress from their starting points on entry to the sixth form.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good, with a significant proportion that is outstanding.

- A key factor in the quality and success of many lessons is the excellent relationships that students share with each other and their teachers. Students are clearly well motivated and cooperate with each other and adults. They recognise that their teachers want them to succeed and give their time freely to help students do so.
- In the majority of lessons teachers have strong subject knowledge and they plan lessons well so that learning moves at a good pace. Work takes account of the individual needs of students so that they are appropriately challenged. In these lessons teachers have high expectations for students' work and behaviour.
- In the best lessons, teachers' highly effective use of open-ended questioning challenges and probes students' understanding, leading them to make rapid gains in their learning. Teachers plan and provide a range of activities for students to share and discuss new ideas. Where students are given opportunities to speak and listen in pairs and groups, they are able to articulate ideas and explanations exceptionally well.
- Where teaching is not as strong, lessons suffer from a slow pace. At times, teachers spend too long introducing lessons, or explaining the task when students already understand it. In these lessons, students would benefit from more time to practise, share and consolidate what they are learning.
- In some lessons, planned activities are not linked to expected outcomes or success criteria and, consequently, students are not clear about the purpose of what they are doing and what they need to do to complete activities at a level appropriate to their ability.
- Key skills are supported very well in English and mathematics lessons but opportunities to extend students' literacy and numeracy skills across other subjects are sometimes missed, for example with the teacher reading a long section of text to the class, or insufficient emphasis being placed on subject-specific terminology.
- Regular marking provides students with helpful feedback on their work, but they are not consistently provided with guidance on how to improve or with opportunities to respond to their teachers' comments.
- Students know their longer-term target levels and grades but are sometimes unclear about shorter-term progression steps.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and rapidly improving, so students are making accelerated progress. Teachers create a positive climate for learning in which students gain confidence and develop well as independent learners. Expectations are high, planning is good, and assessment regular and informative.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school. Students get on well with each other and are considerate, courteous and polite at all times. Consequently, the school is a very friendly and welcoming place for staff, students and visitors.
- Students have outstanding attitudes to learning. There is virtually no misbehaviour in lessons and on the rare occasion when incidents occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively so that the learning of other students is not affected. Students' comments and school records confirm that this is typical of behaviour at all times.

- Attendance levels are high and exclusion levels are extremely low, when compared to the national averages. This is because students enjoy coming to school and value what the school offers them. Students are punctual to school and to lessons.
- A large majority of parents and carers say their child feels safe at school and is well looked after. Students strongly agree and say they feel safe and secure. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the different forms that bullying can take. Bullying is extremely rare and staff deal with bullying quickly and effectively when incidents do occur.
- Students are keen to take on responsibility and are given numerous opportunities to do so. For example, they are involved in school performances, lead school assemblies, participate in staff selection panels, show visitors around and raise funds for charity.
- Sixth form students are excellent role models to the younger students and make a significant contribution to the harmonious ethos of the school. They behave impeccably and support younger students in a range of ways, including acting as mentors. Sixth form students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders, managers and governors have high expectations and ambition for the school. Self-evaluation is robust and leaders are clear about how to make further improvements.
- School improvement targets are appropriately challenging. However, the criteria by which the school judges its success in reaching its targets are not precise enough to enable all leaders to judge impact accurately.
- Senior leaders monitor teaching regularly and accurately. However, systems used by subject leaders to monitor and evaluate what happens in their subject areas are inconsistent, some being less robust than others.
- The management of teachers' performance is now more rigorous and senior leaders are not afraid to tackle underperformance. Teachers' career progression is linked closely to the school's priorities and the achievement of students.
- Good processes are in place to help raise the quality of teaching and the school places great emphasis on the importance of relevant professional development to improve teaching and raise achievement further. The recent 'outstanding teacher programme' has developed the skills of a key group of teachers who are, in turn, using what they have learnt to help support other colleagues in the school.
- Parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were very positive and they have confidence in the school, especially in terms of progress, safety and behaviour. A significant majority of parents say their children are happy at school and would recommend the school to other families.
- The curriculum is carefully tailored to the needs of students. The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities on offer to the students is extensive, which students value and, consequently, there are high levels of participation.
- Assemblies, tutor time and the personal, social and health education programmes all contribute

well to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school successfully creates a cohesive culture and ensures equality of opportunity for all students.

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and staff have received suitable training in both safeguarding and child protection.
- The school does not currently receive any significant external challenge or support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a strong vision for the school. Governors ask challenging questions and set challenging targets for the school. They have a secure grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are aware of the quality of teaching in the school. For example, they know which subjects did not secure good progress and what is happening to improve teaching and raise standards in those areas. Governors are fully involved in decisions about teachers' career progression and know how underperformance is tackled. The governing body is experienced in managing finances. Governors ensure that resources are used well to support students in receipt of additional funding through the pupil premium, and understand the impact this has had on improving their results.

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	137667
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	419854

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	825
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Baker
Headteacher	Craig Booker
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01529 414044
Fax number	01529 414928
Email address	Enquiries@kshssa.co.uk

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