

Warminster Kingdown

Woodcock Road, Warminster, BA12 9DR

Inspection dates

10–11 July 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- All groups of students achieve well and make good progress. Students' attainment at GCSE is getting better year on year.
- Progress in English across the school is outstanding. Students' reading and writing skills are very well developed.
- The school is successfully closing the gaps in performance between students eligible for free school meals and other students.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make equally good progress as others.
- Teaching is usually good or better. Teachers know their subjects well. Most teaching is demanding, exciting and gets the most out of all groups of students.
- The opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across the school are strong.
- Students behave well and feel very safe in lessons and around the school. They have good attitudes to learning and get on well together.
- The headteacher has high expectations of staff and students. She has built effective teams that have taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and to raise students' achievement further.
- Members of the governing body are well informed about the school's work and provide strong support for its leaders.
- The sixth form is good. Students do well in their examinations and make good progress.
- This is a school that continues to make prompt progress on its journey to excellence.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are insufficient numbers of students who are making outstanding progress in their lessons and over time. The proportion of outstanding teaching is not yet high enough and there is a small minority of teaching that requires improvement.
- In some lessons, high ability students are not challenged enough to learn at a quicker pace. Teachers do not always use questions well enough and students are not consistently encouraged to respond to what teachers ask of them when they mark their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons or parts of lessons, including 27 that were seen together with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to students read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled students and those who have special educational needs were learning. Inspectors also visited lessons with senior staff to look at students' progress in mathematics, English, science, and humanities and at learning in a wide range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, three members of the governing body and groups of students.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of its work and examples of students' work.
- Inspectors took note of the 123 responses from parents on the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and students' responses to the school's own recent surveys were considered. Inspectors also analysed 87 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional Inspector
Svetlana Bajic-Raymond	Additional Inspector
Justine Hocking	Additional Inspector
Marion Hobbs	Additional Inspector
Margaret Faull	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingdown School converted to become an academy in August 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was previously inspected by Ofsted in March 2008, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school is larger in size than the average-sized secondary school.
- The very large majority of students are of White British heritage and there is a low proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students that are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for groups of students, including looked-after children, those belonging to families with a parent serving in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- There are currently a very small number of students who are in the care of the local authority and an above-average numbers of students from service families.
- An above-average number of students join or leave the school other than at the usual times.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is low.
- There is a below-average proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- A small number of students spend some of their time studying work-related courses at Trowbridge College or Salisbury College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and further accelerate students' progress in all lessons by:
 - making sure that all students act on the helpful advice and feedback given to them by most teachers
 - ensuring that all teachers make use of questioning in lessons which gets students to think deeply and give full answers
 - making sure that all teachers expect the very best from all their students, especially the more able.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is just below that expected of their age. Below average numbers join the school having gained the highest levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Students' attainment at GCSE is just above average and rising. The school confidently and realistically predicts that over two thirds of students in Year 11 will attain five or more good GCSE passes including English and mathematics in 2013.
- GCSE results in English are rising particularly rapidly. School data show that more than 80 per cent of students in Year 11 are on track to gain grades A* to C in GCSE English in 2013.
- The progress measures of most groups of students over the past two years have been good overall. Detailed information presented by the school provided firm evidence that all groups of students are currently making faster progress in most subjects than in recent years.
- Students' progress in English is outstanding. The proportion of students making and exceeding the expected three levels of progress in English is high compared with the national figure.
- The school is highly successful at improving students' literacy skills. This is evident in most subjects, where many opportunities are provided to promote students' confidence and skills in speaking, listening and reading.
- Catch-up funding is used to provide support for weaker readers in Years 7 and 8, who now read more often and have a better understanding of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This means that they are overcoming their difficulties with certain combinations of letters and are more confident in breaking down words to sound them accurately.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make consistently good and, sometimes, outstanding progress. Teachers and other adults prepare work for these pupils at precisely the right level.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE examinations in mathematics. They have made better than average progress in the last two years and those who achieve the grades of which they are capable in mathematics go on to study statistics in Year 11.
- A small number of students study courses at local colleges of further education. The school keeps close checks on the progress of such students. Most are achieving well and are acquiring the practical and personal skills necessary to gain suitable employment or further training.
- Until recently, there was some difference in the rate of progress made by students supported by the pupil premium and others in Year 11. In 2012 such students known to be entitled to free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and those from service families attained, on average, half a grade lower in English and two thirds of a grade lower in mathematics than did other students.
- School information shows that it now uses its pupil premium funding very effectively to support eligible students. It has provided financial support to enable them to participate in out-of-school activities and courses as well as providing individual help and guidance. This support has effectively reduced the attainment gap between these students and others across all years, so that it is much smaller than that seen nationally.
- The achievement of students in the sixth form is good. Students show great enjoyment in their courses and learn with eagerness and enthusiasm. Most are making good progress in lessons and most are meeting and exceeding their challenging targets.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has many strengths and school records show that it is getting better each year. Teachers expect much of their students and there is a very positive climate that encourages good learning in the school.

- Most lessons consist of a good variety of interesting activities, carefully sequenced to enable students to learn what was intended and make at least good progress. Teachers have good relationships with the class and make judicious use of praise and encouragement to keep students motivated and to boost their self-confidence.
- In the most effective teaching, teachers' use of questions to extend students' understanding is masterly. They use questioning very effectively to help students think about their work and to develop their understanding. For example, they often ask students to explain or justify their answers or to clarify them by giving examples.
- Because lessons are lively and imaginative, students' interests and enthusiasm are captured well. As a result, students put a great deal of effort into their work and keep up good levels of concentration.
- In an outstanding Year 10 English lesson on a speaking and listening challenge activity, the atmosphere was electric as students posed searching questions to challenge their peers in the 'hot seat'. The teacher constantly stepped up the level of challenge by prompting students to pose better than 'why?' questions. His energy and enthusiasm was highly effective at guiding students to find ways of 'tricking' the interviewee.
- Most lessons are purposeful because teachers make it clear to students what they are trying to achieve. Students learn fastest when they are busy and active in lessons, finding things out for themselves or talking about their work with their classmates. They thrive when engaged in practical work, especially when it is placed in a real-life context.
- Teaching is most effective when the work set in lessons helps students of all abilities to do well. Here, students become absorbed in the tasks, relish the challenge and work flat out, putting energy and thought into all they do.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers to ensure that materials are suitably adapted for disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers frequently develop high-powered class discussions by encouraging students to research a topic or idea and then share the result of their research with others.
- Where teaching is not yet outstanding, learning is held back because:
 - questions are not always used as well as they could be to check and probe students' understanding and to prompt them to fully explain their answers
 - teachers do not get the most out of every student in the class because all complete the same tasks, which are not always hard enough for the more able students
 - teachers do not always check to see that students are acting on the advice previously given.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons is good. Students show positive attitudes to learning and are well motivated to succeed.
- Behaviour around the school is good, including at break and lunchtime. Students consistently show respect towards staff and one another. They respond well to the effective systems the school uses to manage behaviour.
- Students have a clear moral understanding of right and wrong and are frequently encouraged to think of others, both in the school and in the wider community, for example by raising funds for various charities.
- Students whose circumstances make them vulnerable, disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported so that they feel secure, and socialise and study confidently with other students.
- Bullying is uncommon. Incidents of racist and homophobic bullying are very rare and the school deals with these effectively. Students know how to identify bullying and where to turn for support when it occurs. The school has worked to protect students when they are online and to

give them clear ways of dealing with cyber-bullying.

- Attendance is broadly average and is improving only slowly for all groups of students. Most students come to school regularly and are punctual.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because students are sometimes passive in lessons and a very small minority occasionally misbehave, which spoils the learning and enjoyment of others.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership at all levels is strong. The headteacher leads the way in driving ambition and has established a shared sense of purpose to raise the aspirations of students and teachers alike.
- She is supported effectively by a senior leadership team and by middle leaders and other staff who are committed to ongoing improvement. Consequently, teamwork is strong, staff morale is high and students' progress is accelerating.
- The senior team checks the quality of teaching rigorously. They use their excellent coaching and mentoring skills to offer constructive advice and training and use their highly effective teachers very well to extend and share good practice. In this way, the quality of teaching and learning is steadily improving.
- The headteacher has ensured that there are secure procedures in place to make sure that teachers are accountable for their performance. Staff are not allowed to be rewarded financially unless they are successful in helping students make at least good progress.
- Students are given challenging academic targets that have raised their ambitions. Leaders at all levels make good use of information on students' progress to check any slowing down. Checks are followed up swiftly with well-thought-out support that helps students to catch up.
- At the time of the inspection, there was no evidence of any discrimination and the school promotes equality for all students vigorously through this sophisticated monitoring and exemplary support.
- The curriculum in the main school and in the sixth form is very well matched to the needs of all students, with broad, balanced and relevant provision for all and strong links to the community and local employers. Vocational education is a particular strength: students who struggle in their other lessons blossom when given the independence and sense of purpose provided by courses in hair and beauty, for example.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent and leads to strong gains in students' interpersonal skills. There are many opportunities for students to develop their appreciation of British and international culture through music, theatre and art, both within the school and through the extensive programme of additional educational visits.
- Leadership is not yet outstanding because the drive of leaders to ensure excellence has not yet resulted in a high enough proportion of outstanding teaching. Consequently, although students' progress is good, too few make rapid progress across all year groups and subjects over time.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body brings a wealth of expertise to the school. Governors take a keen interest in, and have a good understanding of, the way the school works. They check to make sure that the arrangements for safeguarding students meet all current requirements and that the school puts in place the correct procedures if an incident occurs. Governors have a good understanding of the new system for managing teachers' performance and teachers' pay. They closely monitor the school's budget, including the spending of money from the pupil premium, and are active in seeking ways to solve problems. All governors receive regular training. They receive clear information on how well different groups of students achieve to make sure that no group does less well than any others, and compare the results to those achieved in similar schools and nationally. The governing body is effective in holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance.

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	137230
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	412193

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	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1553
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Armstrong
Headteacher	Sara Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01985 215551
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Email address	info@kingdown.wilts.sch.uk

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