

Kingsmead School

Bridge Street, Derby, DE1 3LB

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Since the last inspection, the progress made by students from their starting points on entry to the school has been inconsistent. Some students have made too little progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Students' attendance, though improving, is low. Although the large majority of students behave well in and around the school, behaviour requires improvement because incidents happen and result in a high level of fixed-term exclusions.
- Teaching requires improvement because not enough is good or better. Work given to students is sometimes too easy or too hard, and some do not make as rapid progress as they could because of this.
- Although there has been good progress in gathering and analysing data, this is not consistently used to set challenging targets and to plan and deliver lessons in all subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- Vocational subjects, such as engineering and hair and beauty, are well taught. Students are well motivated and make good progress in these subjects. Most develop good skills and gain the qualifications linked to these.
- Good leadership by the governors, the headteacher and the senior leadership team has improved systems for checking on progress and holding subject leaders and teachers to account. This is already improving standards. Greater proportions of teaching and progress are now good, and students are achieving more qualifications.
- Students feel safe in school. Most improve their behaviour and re-engage well with learning. The good curriculum provides them with relevant skills and sets them up well for next steps. Almost all students go on to education, training or employment on leaving the school.
- The school 'never gives up' on students and works very well with parents and partner agencies to re-engage students within education. A strong personal, social, emotional and health education programme and good relationships with staff successfully bolster students' self-esteem and reflect the strong ethos of care and concern for each individual.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons involving 20 teachers. The large majority of these were observed in conjunction with the headteacher or members of the senior leadership team. The linked pupil referral unit was also inspected at the same time as this special school. Lessons observed usually involved students from both this school and the pupil referral unit, unless pupils were being taught individually.
- Inspectors visited all six sites at which students from the school are educated. They also visited two sites on which alternative provision is provided for students from the school and other schools within the City of Derby.
- Discussions were held with the leadership team, school staff, members of the school's governing body, local authority representatives and students.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation about the school's work including the school's own evaluation of its work, the ways in which it monitors students' progress and how targets are set for teachers. They also scrutinised the school's policies including those relating to child protection, safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors examined student records and explored individual case studies. They took account of 60 staff questionnaires. Inspectors spoke by telephone and at the school with a group of parents to find out more about their views of the school. Too few responses were made to the on-line questionnaire Parent View for these results to be analysed

Inspection team

Susan Lewis, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Emma Merva

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingsmead School is a small special school that forms part of a larger integrated provision for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Students from the special school are taught alongside those from the pupil referral unit on six sites.
- The two provisions function as one, sharing the same teaching staff, administrative staff, senior leadership team and governing body. Some of the special school students have been on the pupil referral unit's roll before joining the special school roll.
- Since the last inspection the special school roll has expanded considerably. The school and local authority are in the process of applying to the Department of Education for an increase in numbers to 80 students.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs. An increasing proportion has learning needs in addition to their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. These include moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and attention deficit and hyperactive disorders.
- Almost all students entering the school have been permanently excluded from mainstream and special schools. Most have had a very disrupted education and have missed considerable schooling. A small but increasing number of students enter the school in Year 7. Most students arrive at any point during their secondary education, sometimes as late as Year 11.
- Almost all students are boys. Very few are from ethnic minority backgrounds and none speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority or from service families) is very high.
- The school and pupil referral unit manage access to a range of alternative providers through a service called Junction 16 for its own students and a group of schools in the city of Derby. Two of these provisions, Kingsmead Multi-sports and Kingsmead Hair and Beauty, are owned and managed by the Kingsmead School. Other alternative providers used include The YMCA, Baby J, Engineered Learning, Access Training, Highfields Happy Hens and Ozbox.
- Students are taught in small groups no larger than eight students and often in much smaller groups or individually, according to need.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is at least good and often outstanding by ensuring that:
 - teachers take full account of data held about students' levels, including those in literacy and numeracy, when setting targets for students
 - teachers plan and teach their lessons using this information so that the work is not too easy
 - students know their current levels and the next steps they need to take to achieve these because marking and verbal feedback in lessons makes this clear
 - students have more opportunities to write at length in subjects.
- Improve achievement so that all students make expected or better progress from their starting points on entry in English and mathematics.
- Work with the local authority and other agencies so that attendance and behaviour continues to improve, including reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- When students enter the school, almost all have fallen further behind from their already low levels of achievement in Year 6 because of their disrupted education. Although individual students make good and sometimes exceptional progress from their starting points on entry, achievement overall requires improvement. This is because some students do not make enough progress in English and mathematics.
- Student achievement has improved since the last inspection in terms of the number of GCSEs or other qualifications taken and achieved by all. Attainment and progress varies because of the wide ranging differences in starting points and learning needs in each year group. In addition, some students arrive in the school very late in their education and do not attend regularly enough. Students who do attend regularly often make good progress in their learning and personal development.
- Students who are eligible for the pupil premium make slightly slower progress than non-pupil premium students. This is due to the variability in starting points, disruption to schooling and lower attendance for this group. The numbers of those not entitled to the pupil premium are small and vary from year to year, as does the size of any gap between pupil premium students and others.
- Recent evaluations show pupil premium students' progress in reading and spelling to be accelerating and the gap narrowing, for example by almost six months in reading age in a term, as a result of targeted work. This is because the introduction of new assessment procedures when students enter the school and careful use of small group and one-to-one support. This is leading to work and teaching being much more carefully tailored towards students' needs.
- Students' progress improves because the school successfully re-engages them with learning. The school rightly prioritises 'turning around' behaviour and attitudes to learning, and sees these and student self-esteem as pivotal to improving achievement. Good strides are made in personal, social and health education by students who listen and cooperate increasingly well as they spend longer in the school.
- Students who have additional learning needs make similar progress to their classmates and improve their social and communication skills well. Not all of these needs have been identified prior to entry, but the school is quick to identify such needs and to put resources into place to enable them to be addressed.
- Achievement across the range of vocational courses provided and on those studied with alternative providers is good. This is because students are very carefully matched to courses in which they are interested and can achieve. Students are rightly proud of their achievements in these courses, and respond very well to the coaching and skills support available to them. They successfully use and apply their literacy and numeracy skills well, for example in a hair and beauty course or as they make objects in design and technology.
- The school has prioritised improving progress in reading and mathematics and has put programmes into place to address these are bringing about success. However, some students do not achieve as high a grade as they could in other GCSE subjects because their writing skills hold them back. The school's development planning has already identified the need to focus further on these.

The quality of teaching**requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because not all teachers use the information available about students to plan their lessons and make sure that the work in groups is well matched to students' needs. This means that students of different abilities may be given the same work to do. As a result, some students do not acquire new learning or skills as quickly as they could.
- Teachers do not always clearly explain to students about what they are doing and why. In these lessons, students complete work but do not remember key facts or ideas because the teaching has not highlighted the most important things for them to learn.
- Teaching assistants are used well in lessons and generally make a good contribution to students' learning, helping to explain and extend ideas and language. Occasionally, they are not clear enough about the aims of a lesson. As a result, their contributions take students a little off track rather than keeping them focused on the most important things to learn.
- The new assessments on entry are resulting in a better identification of students' needs and gaps in learning. One-to-one and very small group teaching is used well to improve students' involvement in lessons and to meet a particular need, such as enriching their language experience or where students have specific special educational needs.
- Reading is a whole-school focus and is well provided for in lessons. Students are encouraged to read texts out loud, and sound out words and spellings for themselves. Teachers are quick to praise students when they use appropriate terms or read difficult words and phrases. Students noticeably try to use these skills in their alternative provision and vocational courses, but are not so confident in using their writing skills in different subjects. Work scrutiny and lessons observed revealed less consistent support for students' writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Mathematics teaching has improved since the last inspection because of better staff training and subject knowledge. Good teaching on Pythagoras' theorem enabled students to successfully understand and use the formula, and apply squared numbers in a range of mathematical problems.
- In a Year 10 English lesson, excellent questioning and relationships led to outstanding gains in understanding of text and use of language. A very positive climate for learning was established in which students listened to each other and built on each other's ideas further.
- Although there were some good examples of marking seen during the inspection, most marking is brief and often does not identify what it is that is good about a piece of work. There is rarely an indication of what level the work is at, or what would lift it to the next level or grade. This means that students are unclear about their targets and levels, and what they need to do to improve. They miss opportunities to challenge themselves to achieve even more.
- Very careful planning, coaching and modelling by staff led to outstanding learning in a lesson in the hair and beauty alternative provision. In an environment that was nurturing and supportive, students made outstanding progress because of the very high expectations of staff and motivation of students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**requires improvement**

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Although many have positive attitudes to

school and learn to manage their own behaviour more effectively, some do not. These students either do not attend regularly or sometimes struggle to keep their behaviour or their language under control. There are too many incidents recorded which lead to fixed-term exclusions. Despite dropping in 2012 these have risen slightly this year, partly linked to the increase in school numbers.

- Students' attitudes in lessons are generally respectful, and relationships with each other and with staff are strong. Some students say that they get on better at this school because 'we are all in the same boat and we know the staff care'. Staff manage students' behaviour well and no poor behaviour was seen during the inspection. However, where teaching was weaker students occasionally became inattentive and silly, and staff did not deal with this promptly enough.
- At lunchtime students join in sports and leisure games, getting on well together and taking care to clear up after they have eaten their sandwiches or lunch. They chat readily to staff and encourage each other as they play table tennis.
- Students behave very well when at their alternative provision, for example listening attentively as the safety risks are explained in engineering. They value being exposed to the 'world of work' and are very motivated to complete their tasks, taking great care as they do so. A few do find it difficult to attend even these provisions. The school is working hard with families and other agencies to find different ways of getting these young people into school more regularly and to improve attendance. Although attendance is low, it has improved by over 10% since the last inspection.
- The school's work to keep students safe is good. The school has very strong systems in place to check on students' attendance and to keep them safe. This includes a 52-week service to support vulnerable students and their families.
- An ethos of care and concern for the individual permeates everything that the school does. Good attention is paid to risk assessments and to health and safety in lessons. A good personal, social, health and education programme effectively supports students' good understanding of how to keep themselves safe out of school. Students know about different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and the dangers of social networking sites.
- Students and parents who talked with inspectors indicated that inappropriate behaviour and language in regard to racism, gender identity and sexual orientation were not issues. Students' grasp of the nature of prejudice, and the open ways in which the school encourages discussion of these and racist issues, was evident later that afternoon in an outstanding English lesson relating to the American Dream.
- Parents spoken with during the inspection praised the ways in which their children were kept safe and the school's work in helping students become so much better disposed to listening and learning.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership by the headteacher and her senior leadership team means that this is a school that is rapidly improving. Much has been put in place since the last inspection. The roles of subject leaders and the site leaders have been strengthened. All are highly focused on promoting the learning and well-being of all students, and improving teaching further.
- Leaders, including governors, know the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. Self-

evaluation is accurate. The school now analyses its data well to identify where achievement might be less secure and puts into place additional support for students, including those in receipt of the pupil premium.

- Information is gathered about students' progress regularly and targets adjusted. These are challenging targets that reflect the leadership team's determination to help students make up lost ground. More students are now making at least expected progress and fewer make less than expected progress, although this is not consistent in all year groups.
- Subject leaders are held responsible for standards in their subjects and report regularly to the governing body. Their work is driving up achievement and teaching in mathematics and English.
- The management of teachers' performance is robust. It is carefully tied into pay progression. Teachers and other teaching staff are pleased with the ways in which support and training is enabling them to improve their teaching and students' learning.
- Parents are very positive about the school, one saying it gave '150%' to their child and family, and that their child now had a future. The school makes appropriate work experience and careers advice available to students, including post-16 support, that helps ensure that students make a smooth transition into the next stage of their life. The proportion of students who do not go into training, education or work has reduced considerably since the last inspection and is now less than 9%.
- Strong partnership working with other organisations such as the police, the youth offending team, social care and education welfare officers all help students to take responsibility for their actions and keep them as safe as possible. The availability of an assistant headteacher during holiday periods means that the school can and does support its most vulnerable students and their families and carers throughout the year.
- The integrated provision with The Kingsmead School pupil referral unit ensures a continuum of provision is available for students who are not able to return to mainstream school. It secures a context in which a wide range of courses can be offered. The curriculum is broad, relevant and has a good emphasis on key skills and preparation for working life. Independent advice is available to students. Opportunities for enrichment through clubs, visits and options are good. These, plus the strong personal social and health education programme, all ensure that students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good.
- The local authority has provided effective support to both governors and the headteacher, including training, additional financial support as numbers grew and support from a school improvement partner.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very knowledgeable about the work of the school and what it now needs to do to improve. They bring a wide range of skills to their work and have had considerable training. They hold the school to account well and challenge the leadership robustly about the data relating to students' achievements.
 - Governors check carefully on how the quality of teaching is improving. They understand how teachers' pay should be related to their performance and question carefully when such rewards are being considered.
 - Governors have ensured that the school meets its statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and in checking that no groups of students are disadvantaged within the school.

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	135345
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	430683

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	51
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Fletcher
Headteacher	Sue Bradley
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2012
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