

# King Edward VI School

Upper St John Street, Lichfield, WS14 9EE

**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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. The proportion of students achieving five GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is consistently above average.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. There are examples of outstanding teaching across a number of subjects, including English, mathematics and art.
- Attendance is above average because students value what the school offers them. Students' positive attitudes are reflected in their good behaviour.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong as a result of the outstanding range of visits, activities and opportunities which the school provides.
- The sixth form is good and students achieve well because teaching is at least good and often outstanding. Students make excellent progress on a wide range of courses and are well prepared for their futures.
- Strong subject leadership is making a difference to students' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The governing body has a realistic understanding of the school's performance and actively seeks to develop its skills in order to better support school leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The achievement of students supported by the pupil premium is rising but it is not as good as that of other students.
- Marking is not yet consistently good across all subject areas.
- Appropriate homework tasks are not always set.
- Students do not make as much progress in modern foreign languages as they do in other subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors undertook a thorough work scrutiny that examined students' progress in science and languages across several year groups.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and subject leaders, groups of students, the Chair and members of the Governing Body, and spoke with an external consultant who supports the school's work.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 190 parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire. They analysed the results of the 54 replies to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at the school's data on students' progress, lesson plans, minutes of meetings and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. They also reviewed the school's checks on how well it is doing and school improvement plans.

## Inspection team

Lisa Fraser, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Timothy McGuire	Additional Inspector
Bob Roberts	Additional Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Additional Inspector
Richard White	Additional Inspector
	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most secondary schools.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium provides additional funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority and those with a parent in the armed services.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Twenty-seven students in Years 10 and 11 attend off-site alternative provision for part of their learning at The Bridge Centre in Lichfield and Lichfield and Burntwood Vocational Centre.
- The school works in partnership with Chase Terrace Technology College, Erasmus Darwin Academy, The Friary School and Nether Stowe High School to offer a broad range of courses in the sixth form.
- At the time of the inspection, the acting headteacher had been in post for 8 weeks.
- An executive headteacher from The Long Eaton School, Derbyshire, currently supports the school for two days per week.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching across all subjects by making sure that:
  - the best practice in marking which exists in some subjects is shared more widely across the school
  - appropriate homework is set at the right level for most students.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by making sure that:
  - achievement improves in modern foreign languages by ensuring that teaching focuses on developing the skills students will need to be successful in their GCSE examination
  - leaders focus closely on the progress of students supported by the pupil premium so that gaps in their attainment compared to their classmates close more quickly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with skills in reading, writing and mathematics which are well above the national average. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of students achieving five passes at GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, is consistently well above average. Higher numbers of students make better progress than expected nationally in both English and mathematics. This indicates that students are making good progress.
- Within these results there are significant successes: students' achievement in art, geography and religious education all exceed national averages. In 2013, over a third of Year 11 students entered for GCSE English attained an A\* or A grade pass. Above-average numbers of students also attained the top grades in mathematics and business studies. Students are not entered early for GCSE examinations.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are making good progress. Students supported through school action are making particularly good progress because leaders identify their needs early and arrange extra support for their numeracy and literacy.
- Year 7 catch-up funding has been used to fund initiatives such as additional help from teachers, teaching assistants and 'reading buddies'. As a result, a significant number of students made one sub-level progress in just two months, which represents accelerated progress.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as their peers.
- Gaps in attainment between students supported by the student premium and their classmates remain but are reducing over time. Additional funding is spent on a range of initiatives including one-to-one support and mentoring, careers support and extra breakfast and holiday sessions. Current school information indicates that Year 10 students eligible for the pupil premium are still over a grade behind their peers in English and around a grade behind in mathematics.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Students' progress at AS level is well above average and results in health and social care, business studies and art are excellent. Students are well-prepared for the next stage in their learning because a third of sixth formers go on to study at top universities. Students who choose not to go on to university receive high-quality careers advice.
- Students make good progress in science subjects at A-level but in 2013 students' attainment in GCSE sciences dipped. Leaders are confident that students will make better rates of progress this year with more stable staffing in the department. Progress information suggests that boys achieve less well over time but inspectors observed boys' good progress in lessons. However, in modern foreign languages, students are not yet making the same good rates of progress as they are in other subjects. This is because teaching over time does not prepare students well enough for the demands of the GCSE examination.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students study off-site for part of their learning with other providers. Their attendance and progress is monitored closely by school leaders to ensure they achieve well.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- The quality of teaching is good over time with some examples of outstanding teaching across a number of subjects, including English, mathematics and art.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge, high expectations and a thorough awareness of examination requirements. Students rise to the challenges their teachers set. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson the most-able students produced work of the highest standard as a result of the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and the skilful way in which she enabled students to understand how to access the top grades.
- Relationships between students and teachers are excellent. Students enjoy discussing their ideas and co-operate particularly well together. Teachers use questioning well to probe students for more detailed answers and to check their understanding. For example, students in a Year 12 English lesson made outstanding progress as a result of the teacher's searching questioning which encouraged their thoughtful and reflective responses.
- Teaching assistants are linked to particular subjects and give good support to disabled students and those with special educational needs in lessons.
- Marking is good across most but not all subjects. In most subjects, students receive clear advice on what they need to do to improve but they are not always expected to respond to this feedback.
- In the sixth form, teaching is never less than good and often outstanding. For example, in a Year 12 art lesson students made outstanding progress because they were clearly enjoying their work and benefiting from the teacher's expert advice and guidance. Sixth formers value the extra support and guidance that teachers also give outside of lessons and after school.
- Senior leaders recognise the concerns of a minority of parents around the quality and quantity of homework set. However, the recently launched initiative to ensure homework is always set at the right level for students has not yet made a difference.

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

- The behaviour of students is good. Students have very positive attitudes to learning as a result of the school's positive values. Students' good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, contributes to the exceptionally calm and orderly environment. In lessons students participate enthusiastically and are keen to do well.
- Attendance is excellent because students are happy and value what the school offers them. House competitions and the school's rewards system motivate students. Both persistent absence and fixed-term exclusions are well below average. Permanent exclusions are very rare. Students speak positively about 'Gazebo house', the school's behaviour support unit, which also helps them deal with difficult moments in life, such as bereavement.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students understand bullying in all its forms and identify that bullying is not a serious issue at the school because they are confident that, 'there's always someone to turn to', and a member of staff will be on hand to help them sort out any problems. Many staff are trained counsellors. Students have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and say they feel safe in school.

- Attendance in the sixth form is excellent. Sixth formers are positive role models and integrate fully into school life, often supporting the learning of younger students. Students in Year 11 also help younger students with their reading once a week.
- Senior leaders, with the support of form tutors and in assemblies, are tackling rigorously the few occasions when younger students are less than kind to each other. This is what is preventing behaviour from being outstanding.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Senior leaders have created a school where both students and staff feel happy and secure. Leadership at all levels, including subject leadership in English and mathematics, leadership of special educational needs and leadership of the sixth form, is strong and is making a difference to students' achievement. As a result, students have exceptionally positive attitudes to learning, and standards are rising.
- Systems for checking the quality of teaching are good and improving. Annual departmental reviews are now much sharper in identifying areas that teachers need to work on. Assessments of teachers' performance are used to inform decisions around pay and reward good performance. Difficult decisions have been taken by senior leaders to make sure that any teaching which is less than good is eradicated.
- With support from governors, new systems for tracking students' attainment have recently been introduced which are intended to give parents much clearer information about their child's progress. Senior leaders are now more closely tracking the progress of students who are supported by the pupil premium to make sure that their attainment matches that of other students. However, this work is at an early stage.
- The range of subjects on offer is broad. At Key Stage 4, students mainly study GCSEs but can also choose from some work-related courses when selecting their options. Good partnership working with other schools enhances the range and quality of learning opportunities in the sixth form. 'Curriculum enhancement days' which take place four times a year give students the opportunity to learn outside the classroom. For example, Year 8 students improve their understanding of cultures which may be different to their own by visiting different places of worship.
- Senior leaders are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and make sure that all subject departments actively seek to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students speak enthusiastically about the outstanding number of opportunities on offer, including school productions, the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and after-school sporting activities. Students regularly raise money for charities and some students help out at the on-site Saxon Hill special school.
- Recent changes of leadership have presented school leaders with the opportunity to review aspects of the school's work, particularly plans for improvement, which do not always make it easy to measure how successful leaders have been.
- The school maintains a good relationship with the local authority but receives little additional support. School leaders have recently linked to a number of other successful schools so that they can learn from the very best. External support from an experienced educational consultant is used to validate senior leaders' assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

- Safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are fully trained and knowledgeable about risk assessment and child-protection issues. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the behaviour and safety of students when attending off-site provision.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have high expectations and a realistic understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses. Since the previous inspection, the governing body has been actively involved in tackling underperformance and has had a direct impact in the school’s improving tracking systems. Governors know about the quality of teaching, performance management and what the school is doing to reward good teaching. They have a detailed understanding of published performance information and are keenly determined to reduce the gap in achievement for students eligible for the pupil premium still further. The governing body is committed to supporting the school by attending appropriate training, most recently in a session delivered by a national leader for governance. Governors have made good use of an external consultant to enhance their understanding of senior leaders’ work.

## 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>	124408
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	431138

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1369
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	321
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Cartwright
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Rutherford (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 255714
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 418118
<b>Email address</b>	office@kingedwardvi-lichfield.staffs.sch.uk

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