

Kingsbury High School

Princes Avenue, Kingsbury, London, NW9 9JR

Inspection dates 16–17 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher sets high expectations for the school community. Senior leaders model professional standards. There is a shared culture of aspiration and ambition for all students to succeed.
- The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, has been above the national average for the last three years.
- Most groups of students, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well.
- Students who are eligible for the pupil premium make good progress from their individual starting points and attain well.
- Students of all abilities make exceptional progress in English.
- Teaching in most subject areas is good, and sometimes outstanding.
- Behaviour is good. Students show respect for each other, staff and the school environment. Students' attendance is high.
- The curriculum provides breadth and balance. It meets the needs of students well, enabling them to make good progress over time in a range of subjects and courses.
- The sixth form is good. Leaders have taken decisive action to improve students' achievement. The school's tracking information shows that attainment at higher grades at A level has risen strongly in 2014.
- Governors are ambitious for the school's success. They know the school's strengths and areas for development well. They use a range of information to ask challenging questions and to hold leaders to account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, leaders do not check that teachers use information about students' achievement to plan sufficiently challenging lessons. As a result, a minority of students make less rapid progress.
- Some aspects of the school's development plans lack precision. This makes it more difficult for leaders to measure the impact of actions on the progress of all groups of students at key checkpoints.
- Not all middle leaders are as skilled at diagnosing what needs to improve in teaching in their subjects.
- Occasionally, teachers' marking does not provide enough detail about how students should improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 44 lessons. They observed teaching and scrutinised students' work. Fourteen lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, groups of students and an external adviser.
- Inspectors met with nine members of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered the views of 56 parents through the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. They evaluated the views of parents collected by the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of 94 members of staff through the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. This included school improvement and development plans, minutes of governing body meetings and external reviews.
- Inspectors evaluated records of students' progress, anonymised performance management records and records of professional development. They scrutinised the single central record, referrals to the local authority, case studies presented by the school, behaviour tracking information and attendance records.

Inspection team

Russell Bennett, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Aileen Thomas	Additional Inspector
Mark Warren	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector
Jennifer Bray	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingsbury High School is much larger than the average-sized secondary school, with a large sixth form. It has two sites.
- Kingsbury High School converted to become an academy school on 1 December 2011. When its predecessor school, Kingsbury High School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school has sixth form partnerships in place with three other Brent secondary schools. No sixth form students are attending courses of study at a partnership school this academic year.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than the national average. The largest ethnic group is of Indian heritage. The next largest group is Black African.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is lower than average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students at the school eligible for the pupil premium funding, which is additional funding for students who are eligible for free school meals or those who are looked after by a local authority, is above the national average.
- The academy uses The Jubilee Academy as an alternative provider. This is used to support only a very small number of students.
- The school works in partnership with The Village School, a secondary special school.
- The school has an on-site specialist resource provision for hearing impaired students, with capacity for 10 students. Currently, five students access this unit.
- The headteacher provides leadership support to Alperton School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that more is outstanding across all subjects, including in the sixth form, by ensuring that:
 - teachers make consistent use of precise, regular assessment information to plan lessons which enable all students to make rapid progress over time, particularly in science
 - all groups of students are given tasks which are sufficiently challenging
 - all strategies used to mark students' work give sufficiently clear advice about how to improve.
- Strengthen leadership and management further, by checking that:
 - all middle leaders have the skills to diagnose what needs to improve in teaching
 - targets and success measures in the school's development plans are precise
 - leaders and governors fully evaluate the impact of teaching on students' achievement consistently, measuring the success of all groups of students at key checkpoints.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher models the high expectations he expects of others. He is resolute in his belief that all the school's students should aspire and achieve. The aim of leaders that the school should be 'the best school for miles around' is shared by all staff. The school's ethos makes a strong contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Ably supported by his deputy and senior leadership team, the headteacher has ensured that high standards have been maintained over time.
- Leaders have imbued the school with the highest expectations of social behaviour. High levels of respect and courtesy between and amongst staff and students are the norm. Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to help students understand and respond to risk. The school's parliament has been effective in demonstrating to students the importance of democracy.
- Senior leaders have clear systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching. There is a school-wide focus on staff working together to meet the 'Kingsbury Expectations', which set out the required standards. As a result, leaders have a clear knowledge of what is working well and what needs to improve. Leaders of faculty areas work in 'triads' and regularly meet with their line managers to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and the progress that students are making. This approach has proved particularly effective in English.
- Middle leaders have benefited from working with senior leaders to improve the quality of teaching. Most are confidently monitoring teaching and achievement in their subject areas. They diagnose what needs to improve and support teachers to develop their skills. However, the impact has not been consistent across all subjects, such as science.
- Leaders provide effective, high-quality support for newly qualified teachers. Training and professional development are well matched to individual teachers' needs.
- The school's development plan sets out the key areas for improvement and is underpinned by more detailed faculty action plans. Although the priorities are appropriately targeted, there is lack of precision in the success criteria for some actions. As a result, it is more difficult for leaders to measure accurately the impact of actions on the achievement of some groups of students at key checkpoints in the year.
- The school's curriculum is a particular strength. It provides a good balance of breadth and depth for students across key stages. Years 7 and 8 follow a Foundation Stage curriculum and then 'graduate' to a pathway matched to their needs in Year 9. This approach, introduced in 2013, has enabled students to make good progress in a range of subjects. There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and clubs to extend and develop students' skills. These include sports leadership, subject support and debating clubs.
- The headteacher has ensured that there are effective procedures in place to manage the performance of staff. Teachers' performance is closely linked to students' achievement. Evidence of staff performance is rigorously scrutinised by the headteacher before decisions are made about pay progression.
- Leaders target students who are underachieving and put effective interventions into place. Students eligible for pupil premium and those with weak literacy skills have made good, and sometimes exceptional, progress as a result of this high-quality support.
- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. The school evaluates how successful it has been in enabling all students to achieve in its self-evaluation 'How are we doing at Kingsbury High?'. This is shared with all members of the school community, as part of a coherent and helpful approach to providing information for parents. Students appreciate this commitment to their collective success. A Year 10 student said, 'Our school is very friendly and we are treated equally.'
- The school has commissioned an external adviser from the local authority. This support has provided some useful and well-focused analysis of the school's performance, which leaders and governors are using to drive necessary improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body brings together an impressive range of skills and experience, including from education, business and the local community. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They provide regular challenge to school leaders and set high expectations for success. They make use of a range of information to assess the performance of the school. They have taken effective action to improve their own skills, including training in the use of achievement information and safer recruitment. They scrutinise information about the quality of teaching and students' achievement in relation to national averages. They carefully analyse information presented to them about students' progress. However, they do not always focus so sharply on the progress different groups of students

are making during the year, because some aspects of the school's planning lack precise success measures.

- Governors monitor the impact of pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding closely and challenge leaders to account for its impact on students' achievement.
- Governors regularly review statutory policies. They undertake their duties with diligence, including those relating to safeguarding and financial probity. They are fully involved in making decisions about teachers' pay.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. The vast majority behave well in lessons and around the school. Older students provide good role models for younger students, and behaviour improves over time as students progress through the school. Sixth form students take on responsibilities as 'Red Jackets', to support and supervise younger students. The school employs security officers so that students' safety is assured as the students travel between sites.
- Students' attitudes to learning are good. Students show keenness to contribute to lessons and recognise the importance of focusing on learning in order to achieve the best results they can. On rare occasions, when teaching is less than good, students can become distracted and engage in some low-level disruption which hinders more rapid progress.
- Exclusion rates are low. There have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years. The school's careful use of fixed-term exclusion and internal seclusion is effective and has a positive impact on reducing the numbers of repeated incidents. Pastoral leaders intervene to support individuals, and the school can point to clear examples of the success of their approach. Students are clear about what is unacceptable behaviour and express confidence that school staff will tackle it when it occurs.
- Students understand the difference between right and wrong and show respect for others. They value the school's cultural diversity. They are clear that the school is not a place where any form of bullying or discrimination is acceptable. As a result, any such incidents are rare. As one student said, 'This school makes sure that everyone is included.'
- The use of alternative provision has a positive impact on students who access it. The school closely monitors the progress and attendance of any students who attend off-site provision.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students have a well-developed understanding of risks, including those posed by use of the internet. They say that the school responds swiftly if there is an incident in the local community or related to the safety of young people in London. They say that they are given useful advice and guidance in assemblies and during the regular 'drop-down' or 'EXCEL' days about how to keep themselves safe from harm. In the sixth form, students demonstrate a clear awareness of the dangers of radicalisation.
- Attendance is above average and improving over time, including for those groups identified by the school as being at risk of regular absence. Students are quick to explain that the school is thorough in checking up on any missed days.
- Staff at the school are clear about their role in keeping students safe. Leaders ensure that training is provided for staff to keep them up to date about how to identify concerns about students' safety and well-being. Students are confident that they would go to staff should they need help or feel unsafe.
- Most parents and teachers agree that the school manages behaviour well and keeps students safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good, and sometimes outstanding. Good working relationships between students and their teachers are the cornerstone of this. A consistent and rigorous approach to developing students' literacy skills underpins the good progress students make.
- Students make the most rapid gains in their knowledge and skills when teachers have made precise use of assessment information to establish their individual starting points. In a Year 10 English lesson, students made good gains in their understanding of the differences in standard and non-standard English because the teacher asked probing questions targeted at individual students, including the more able. Where teaching is less effective, the same tasks and questions are set for all students. This lack of challenge hinders more rapid progress for some. Leaders are tackling the small amount of teaching which requires improvement through regular monitoring and support.
- Most teachers have high expectations. They plan and deliver lessons which engage students and deepen

their understanding. They adapt their approach in class according to the progress that students are making, and skilfully adjust the level of challenge to extend the most able. Homework is set regularly and rigorously using the school's recently introduced online system 'Show my homework'. Students say that this is useful and that there is 'no escaping' from teachers' expectations that homework is completed to a good standard and returned on time.

- Students, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress over time because they are given effective support by skilled adults. Students with hearing impairments who access the resource base benefit from the additional specialist support they receive.
- Most teachers mark work regularly over time and give students precise guidance which helps them to improve their work. As a result, students are clear about what they need to do to develop their knowledge and skills. However, some inconsistencies remain and a small proportion of students' work is marked less helpfully.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this to ensure that students make good progress over time.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- From low starting points, most groups of students attain above or in line with national averages. The proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, has been consistently above national averages, significantly so in 2013. The school's tracking data demonstrate that, while the gains in 2014 have not been as strong as the previous year, high standards have been maintained in most subjects.
- Students attain well in modern foreign languages. Actions taken by leaders have improved outcomes in a range of subjects, including geography. Attainment in science over time has been lower than in other subjects. Leaders' analysis of 2014 GCSE results shows that attainment in core and additional science has improved, although outcomes are still not as strong as they should be.
- Students, including those eligible for the pupil premium, make exceptional progress from their individual starting points in English. Students have also made good progress in mathematics over time.
- Students who are eligible for the pupil premium achieve well. In 2013 their attainment at GCSE in English and mathematics was above all students nationally. In 2013, the gap between students eligible for the pupil premium and other students at the school was about half a grade below in English. The school's tracking information for 2014 shows that this gap has narrowed further. The school's analysis of 2014 GCSE results shows that achievement in mathematics is lower than in the previous year. Students eligible for the pupil premium achieved almost a grade below other students at the school.
- Attainment in mathematics has been significantly above national averages since the last inspection. However, outcomes in mathematics declined in 2014 when leaders ceased to enter students early for GCSE examinations. Leaders have acted quickly to analyse this drop and put into place rigorous checks on the quality of teaching, to ensure that students' mathematical skills are strengthened. The school's tracking information and a scrutiny of students' books indicate that this is enabling students to make better progress.
- The most able students make good progress and achieve well over time across many subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The great majority of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points. The school's tracking information shows that where gaps exist between groups they are closing across year groups and subjects.
- Students receive effective support to enable them to develop their reading, writing and communication skills. The school has rigorous and effective support in place for students who struggle with basic skills when they join the school in Year 7. Students make rapid gains as a result of this additional help. The gap between the progress made by these students and others narrows quickly.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress over time from their individual starting points. They make particularly strong gains in English. Leaders' tracking and interventions for these students ensure that they make good gains over time, demonstrating their strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- Regular 'EXCEL' teaching days take place which deepen students' understanding and knowledge. These are carefully planned to target areas which will enable students to make more secure and rapid progress.

The sixth form provision**is good**

- Students in the sixth form benefit from high-quality advice and guidance. This enables them to follow individual study programmes which are best suited to their needs and abilities. As one Year 12 student commented, 'We are given really clear guidance. Staff take us down every possible pathway, so that we can make the right choice for our future.' Students are very well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.
- Retention rates are well above the national average. Almost all students progress from Year 11 to study in the sixth form, and continue through from Year 12 to Year 13. There is a rich and varied range of non-qualification activities which students participate in actively.
- The proportion of students who proceed into higher education, including Russell Group universities, is above national averages. The proportion of students who do not enter education, employment or training is well below national rates.
- Students have a well-developed sense of risk. They receive effective support from school staff and understand the importance of keeping themselves safe.
- In 2013–2014, the school achieved a much higher level of success in enabling students who had not secured a grade C in English or mathematics to do so. This was as a result of high-quality, effective teaching and support.
- Students made good progress in vocational subjects in 2013. Although progress was less strong across academic subjects, leaders' analysis of tracking information for 2014 and a scrutiny of students' work and progress in lessons indicate that students are making good progress from their individual starting points.
- Standards of attainment for most students are at least in line with national rates. There is some variability in outcomes across different subjects. Students make very strong gains on vocational courses. The school's tracking information shows that the proportion of students achieving higher grades at A level rose strongly in 2014.
- Leaders have increased the rigour with which they monitor the quality of teaching and students' achievement as they recognised that progress in 2013 was not as strong as it should be across all subjects. There are now many more checks in place. However, leaders do not always check closely enough on the progress being made by different groups of students at key checkpoints in the year.

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	137685
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	448181

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy Converter
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	2,007
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Georgina Bondzi-Simpson
Headteacher	Jeremy Waxman OBE
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8204 9814
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