

# Kinetic Academy

Meir Youth Cafe, Sandon Road, Meir, Stoke, Staffordshire, ST3 7DJ

**Inspection dates** 14–16 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good school because

- The quality of teaching is good and matches students' individual needs well, developing their academic skills and meeting their personal, social and emotional needs. As a result, students' achievement and learning are good.
- Students' behaviour is good and demonstrates rapid improvement since joining the school. Relationships in the school are very good. All adults know their students very well and manage behaviour effectively, ensuring students' safety and well-being is paramount.
- Leaders and managers have created an exemplary, positive ethos within the school. Students feel safe and enjoy coming to school. From low levels of attainment and attendance on entry, students are making good progress.
- Outstanding leadership and management have ensured that teaching is good and improving rapidly, as are all other aspects of the school.
- Leaders and managers are highly ambitious in driving and maintaining high standards. They have a very accurate view of the school's strengths and areas that need improving. Improvement plans are already being implemented and improvement is apparent in the aspects that have been addressed.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students are not always clear about how well they are doing in some subjects.
- Occasionally, some students are not provided with sufficient challenge to extend their learning.
- Planned developments to raise the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour have had insufficient time to take full effect.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent schools standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed six lessons taught by three teachers, looked at students' work, met with the headteacher, other leaders, groups of students and spoke informally to staff.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's on-line Parent View questionnaire to be considered. However, parental questionnaires sent out by the school were considered. Responses from student and staff questionnaires were also taken into consideration.
- The inspector looked at the school's documentation including schemes of work, teachers' planning, records of students' progress, monitoring reports of teaching, and school improvement plans. She checked the school's compliance with the regulations for independent schools.

## Inspection team

Shellie Barcroft, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Kinectic Academy is a non-profit making Social Enterprise which registered as an Independent School in October 2013. This is its first inspection.
- The proprietor is also the headteacher.
- The school provides education for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It is registered to admit up to 18 male and female students in the age range of 14 to 16 years. There are currently 14 students on roll, 4 part time and 10 full time. A small number of students has a statement of special educational needs. There are no disabled students.
- Students are placed from mainstream and special schools, either part time or full time because they are at risk of exclusion or have been permanently excluded.
- The school is located in a residential part of Meir, a small town within Stoke-on-Trent. It is based in a two-storey building. The school has its own entrance area and exclusive use of its own premises.
- The school's aims include 'to provide training and education opportunities to a wide range of students, in particular those who would benefit from a flexible and personalised curriculum and those who learn "by doing" and ensure that each student receives a quality education, inclusive support and appropriate guidance, through providing an environment in which they can learn appropriately'.
- The school has no particular religious affiliation.
- The school uses local sports facilities for physical education and games.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - check that students always respond effectively to guidance provided on how to improve their work
  - provide consistently challenging learning opportunities for students of all abilities, including the most able
  - develop high quality questioning skills to extend students' learning.
- Improve the quality of behaviour by developing consistent approaches to the management of students' collaborative work.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding and contribute very positively to the quality of teaching and students' achievement. The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders and managers have established the school successfully in a short period of time since registration and they know the school extremely well. Senior leaders' evaluation of how well the school is doing is accurate and robust. They are well aware of the school's strengths and plan effective actions to bring about significant improvements.
- Leaders and managers are very committed to providing an effective and appropriate range of subjects to match the needs of the students, including developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders have been astute in recognising the development needs in mathematics. Effective actions have been taken and opportunities created to enhance these basic skills.
- Leaders and managers are highly ambitious and committed to maintaining high standards in the school.
- The extremely caring and nurturing ethos enables students to develop trust in all staff quickly and feel safe in school. Previous school leavers continue to drop in for support and guidance. A very positive learning environment has been created in the school, where teaching flourishes and good outcomes for students are achieved.
- Leaders assess the quality of teaching and learning in lessons frequently and accurately and can demonstrate clear examples of improvements. Although teaching is good overall, leaders are well aware of strengths and areas to improve and have started to develop systems to share best practice to ensure teaching can be outstanding. For example, there are clear plans in place to improve the quality of teachers' questioning in order to boost learning. Along with a small number of other planned developments, there has been insufficient time for plans to take full effect.
- Students' progress is systematically reviewed and interventions are put in place to support the needs of all students. Leaders are very proactive in identifying appropriate services to enhance the well-being of their students and have very strong partnerships with relevant agencies involved with the students.
- Physical education takes place offsite and all relevant risk assessments are in place.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through tutorials, in lessons and through daily conversations and reflection time. Leaders recognise that at times students find it difficult to work collaboratively and plans are reviewed regularly to help minimise the difficulty.
- All staff who completed the inspection questionnaire are extremely positive about the school. Morale is very high and staff say they are proud to be part of the school team.
- Very good policies are in place to promote the welfare, health and safety of students. All health and safety regulations are met and the school meets statutory responsibilities for safeguarding, providing high quality care and support for students.
- The school's premises and accommodation are very well maintained. All of the requirements regarding complaints procedures and the provision of information for parents, carers and others are met. Parents and carers are kept informed of their children's progress through reports on a half termly basis and at annual celebration events. The prospectus, website and welcome pack provide a good range of information for everyone.
- Discussions and feedback from stakeholders, including representatives from the local authority, are highly complimentary about the school.
- **The governance of the school**  
Governance is very effective. The school is very well supported by a voluntary committee, the local authority and home schools that place students. Between them, they provide regular monitoring, guidance and support. The board members of the voluntary committee have experience in human resources, health and school leadership matters.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good, enabling them to improve their academic achievement and their personal and social development well.
- Individual case studies show that students make good improvements in their behaviour and attendance, enabling them to continue into further education. One student said, 'This school has helped me manage my behaviours and taught me vital life skills'.
- High staffing ratios provide good levels of support to help students concentrate in lessons and persevere

with work that becomes challenging.

- Students' attendance is improving well over time. Previous school-refusers now have much better attendance. The school has robust systems in place, which immediately follow up any students who are absent, ensuring their safety as well as ensuring that non-attendance does not affect their learning.
- The day-to-day management of behaviour by all adults is good. All adults know the students very well and immediately respond to any potential disruption, ensuring learning is rarely disrupted. School documentation confirms misbehaviour and exclusions are reducing over time.
- There is a very positive atmosphere in school and students are respectful towards the school environment. Students mostly take pride in their work, have high aspirations and want to achieve well. Each student is allocated a mentor who they meet with weekly to review their progress and set targets.
- Students generally conduct themselves well throughout the day, attend regularly and have good attitudes. Leaders recognise that punctuality of some students is not as good as it could be. Agreed actions have been implemented and improvements are being made.
- Staff model very high standards of behaviour. The school has an effective system of rewards and sanctions, promoting high levels of effort and behaviour in class. Students can earn reward points. These are converted to money and given to a charity of the students' choice.
- Although promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, relationships between the students are not always as good as they could be, leading to some disruptive behaviour at times. Staff manage this effectively and students are quick to reflect and apologise. However, leaders recognise that adults do not always use consistent approaches in managing students' collaborative work. As a result, students do not always work together as well as possible.
- Students develop their confidence very well and feel that they are given opportunities to contribute to making changes in the school. Student voice and daily reflection time, allow students and staff to reflect on the day and discuss positives and what could be better.
- Students learn about different public services and British institutions. Planning ensures that a balanced account of political views and issues is presented to the students while in school and when taking part in extra-curricular activities and visits.
- Students develop their self-esteem very well. Many enrichment opportunities are on offer including visits to theatres, art galleries, cinemas and theme parks. Students also have the opportunity to celebrate their achievements at events and to display their work around the school.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good, based on rigorous procedures which are clear and robust. Students say they are happy to discuss any issues they have with adults. Students say that bullying is rare and school records confirm this. Students say that they enjoy coming to this school and they behave themselves much better than in previous placements. Students could not think how the school could be improved.
- The school pays careful attention to the safe recruitment of staff and all staff members are trained to the required levels in child protection. Arrangements for meeting all required aspects of health and safety are robust, including routine checks on fire safety equipment and procedures.
- Scrutiny of work and observations indicated students are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example from bullying and when using computers. Students told the inspector they are happy and feel safe at school. Outside speakers regularly visit to give advice and guidance on safety aspects.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- When students join the school, their basic skills in key areas of learning are assessed, including through the use of information available from previous schools. Assessment is accurate and the information collected is used to inform planning and to challenge students of all abilities to help them to achieve well. Work is moderated between the school and identified home schools to ensure assessment is accurate.
- The quality of teaching is good. There is a consistent approach to planning, well matched to the individual needs of the students to ensure that students make good progress and achieve well over their time in school.
- Basic skills in literacy, reading and mathematics are generally taught well.
- In the majority of teaching, the staff have high expectations and students are enthusiastic about learning. Although questioning is effective, students are not always challenged fully by better, more skilful questioning.
- Teachers mark books regularly according to school policy. Scrutiny of students' work in books is mostly informative, providing guidance of how to improve with an opportunity for students to respond. However, this is not consistent across all subjects. Occasionally, marking is too brief and comments lack the detail to

enable students to judge for themselves how well they are doing. As a result, students are not always clear about how well they are doing in some subjects.

- The subjects on offer continue to increase and develop, contributing well to students' personal development. Students experience a range of subjects and a thorough personal, social and health education, which supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Teachers and their assistants have created a very positive learning environment and the use of learning support in class is very effective. All staff involved in the teaching and support roles are well trained and have a good knowledge of the subjects and the needs of all individuals. This enables all students to make progress in each lesson.
- Checking of the quality of teaching and learning, and clear feedback to teachers from leaders and managers, are very good. Teachers meet weekly to discuss teaching and learning, reviewing strengths and systems to drive improvement effectively.
- Classrooms are clean, tidy and adequately resourced. The very positive climate in classrooms ensures students feel confident and are happy to ask questions if they do not understand the work.
- Provision for careers guidance, including work experience opportunities and college placements are good.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The achievement of students is good. Many students arrive at the school with below average levels of attainment for their age, and poor attendance. As a result of good teaching and effective management of behaviour they begin to make up lost ground and improve their performance.
- All groups of students achieve equally well, including the most able.
- On admission, the school works in partnership with students, parents and carers, home schools and the local authority to devise robust individual learning plans. The school has high expectations and sets targets accordingly, using all relevant information and assessments.
- The school ensures that all staff are fully aware of students' individual learning plans and they are integrated effectively in to lessons.
- All staff are highly committed and passionate in driving achievement for all the students. This, together with good teaching, usually secures students' confidence and engagement in their learning.
- Students make good progress in closing the gaps from their starting points, including those with a statement of special educational needs.
- In a short period of time, the school has secured good achievement and improvements in students' personal development. For example, one student sat a psychology exam early and achieved a high grade.
- Students of all abilities achieve qualifications broadly in line with their ability. The school recognises the importance of students gaining competencies in English and mathematics, and encourages all of its students to gain functional skills qualifications in these subjects, and also in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Most students have achieved foundation level GCSE qualifications in English and mathematics, with a small percentage attaining higher level GCSE grades. Students also achieved level 1 and 2 accreditation, including science. As a result, all students acquire a positive transition placement into further education, training or apprenticeships.
- The school ensures that the subjects offered promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination well. More recently, the school has been able to offer a wider variety of vocational subjects including child development, psychology, business studies and product design.
- Once exams have finished, students have the opportunity to complete a first aid qualification.
- Reading is encouraged daily, with one-to-one support when necessary. Students visit the library and a variety of reading material is on offer within school. Students regularly work on computers and gain skills in ICT, supporting the further acquisition of reading skills.
- Staff work very well with other professionals, including the local authority's special educational needs team and therapists.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140330
<b>Inspection number</b>	447298
<b>DfE registration number</b>	861/6011

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	14
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	4
<b>Proprietor</b>	Nicki Tomlinson
<b>Chair</b>	N/A
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicki Tomlinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2013
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£14,040
<b>Telephone number</b>	01782 333344
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