

King's Mill School

Victoria Road , Driffield, East Riding of Yorkshire , YO25 6UG

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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
Early years provision		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Adequate	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and senior leaders have continued to build upon the good standards identified in the previous inspection report. The quality of teaching is rigorously checked and monitored.
- The good achievement seen at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained.
- Governors have a good understanding of school data. This has contributed directly to the continuation of pupils' good progress over time.
- In the early years unit, children settle quickly because staff are skilled at meeting their complex needs and ensure provision offers exciting opportunities to learn and play.
- Students who attend the sixth form unit make good progress. As a result of a carefully planned curriculum which enables them to learn key life skills, they are well prepared for the next phase in education or the world of work.
- Behaviour across the school and in the residential provision is good despite the high levels of need of many of the pupils. Staff know pupils well and their insightful observational skills coupled with the consistent use of the behaviour management system, ensure any incidents of difficult behaviour are well managed.
- Pupils say they feel very safe when they come to school and when they stay in the residential unit. Provision of bike safety courses and a well-organised internet safety policy ensure they know how to stay safe both inside and outside school.
- Teaching is good overall with some examples of outstanding practice. Pupils clearly enjoy learning as evidenced by their happy smiles and their enthusiasm to join in activities set.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most able pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 do not always make the best possible progress because work set for them is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Staff are inconsistent in their use of sign language to support pupils' additional needs which slows progress for this group.
- Marking and feedback in pupils' books does not consistently give them sufficient guidance on how to improve their work.
- The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools which have not been met.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons and parts of lessons from across the school taught by teachers and support staff. Two lesson observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. The inspection team also examined the quality of work in the books of pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 and work in the folders of sixth form students.
- The social care inspector spent time with pupils and staff in the residential unit joined briefly by the lead inspector. The social care inspector also met with staff, pupils, the headteacher and the head of care.
- The inspection team held meetings and discussions with pupils, the headteacher, middle leaders, members of the school’s staff and care team. The lead inspector and social care inspector met with five members of the governing body.
- The inspection team took into account the views of 12 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account the views of 34 staff members who returned questionnaires to the inspection team.
- The inspection team studied health and safety documentation, documents relating to the procedures to check the performance of staff, pupils’ attendance data and the school’s system for checking pupils’ progress.

Inspection team

Marian Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector
Denise Jolly	Social Care Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school meets the needs of ninety-eight pupils aged between two and nineteen all of whom have a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities or are currently being assessed for one. Pupils who attend come from all over the East Riding of Yorkshire with many travelling significant distances.
- All have learning difficulties and many have complex needs including autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), speech and language difficulties, sensory impairment, physical difficulties as well as profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- A slightly more than average proportion of pupils are disadvantaged (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority who are supported by the pupil-premium additional funding).
- The school is currently located on three different sites. This is due in part to a current building project which is to be completed next year which will, for the first time, bring early years to Key Stage 4 provision on one site.
- Children in early years and Key Stage 1 are educated in a primary school building in Gembling which is approximately eight miles away from the main school. Currently, there are ten Key Stage 1 pupils and 16 who are of nursery or reception age, 13 of whom attend part time.
- The 25 Key Stage 4 and sixth form students are educated at the Student Centre which is located at Driffild High school. Currently, the oldest students are 18 although it is planned that they will remain at the school until they are 19.
- The majority of sixth form students who attend the Student Centre also attend East Riding College completing a variety of courses linked to work-based and life skills. School staff accompany pupils at all times so this is not regarded by the school as alternative provision.
- A short break residential unit is located on the school site in which up to 12 pupils stay for one or two nights.
- The current headteacher took up post in November 2013. The assistant headteacher took up post as deputy headteacher in September 2014. An assistant headteacher has also recently been appointed.
- The school's residential provision was inspected in March 2014 and was judged to be good in all areas.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2 and 3 by:
 - ensuring that work set always matches the needs of the most able pupils accurately and enables them to make the most rapid progress possible
 - ensuring marking and feedback consistently give pupils guidance on how to improve their work
 - ensuring staff use appropriate levels of signing, in order that all pupils can understand and participate in activities as fully as possible.
- The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools:
 - 19.6: All staff have access to support and advice for their role. They also have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance.
 - 20.1: The governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for carrying on the school arrange for one of their number, or a representative who does not work at, or directly manage, the school, to visit the school once every half term and complete a written report on the conduct of the school. Where the school has an individual proprietor, that person may carry out such visits personally if they are not also the headteacher (or school equivalent).
- Enhance the recording of restraints, to ensure all actions staff take are consistently captured and evaluated for effectiveness.
- Enhance further the recording systems, in particular the review of children's residential targets, and the description of intimate care procedures, to clarify individual progress and care needs.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is led and managed well and the new headteacher has brought about significant changes since her recent appointment. The quality of teaching is diligently monitored by senior leaders.
- Despite the distinct difficulties posed by pupils attending school in three different locations, the senior leadership team has a clear vision of how to move the school forward which is shared by staff. An effective plan is in place for continuous improvement which focuses on improving the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils still further.
- However, the quality of leadership and management of the residential unit has dipped since its previous inspection. The headteacher and governors recognise this and have taken immediate action to rectify issues raised in this area, including ensuring all staff have regular supervision and appraisal. For example, a headteacher from another local school, which was graded outstanding for its residential provision, is now acting as a mentor to school leaders.
- Evidence of improvements since the previous inspection can be seen in the increase in the numbers of pupils beginning to read and recognise new words and the continuation of pupils' good behaviour in lessons.
- Despite the recent relocation to a site away from the main school, provision in the early years is good. The bright and cheerful environment is further enhanced by a wide range of activities which closely match the needs of all children. This, coupled with the highly effective staff, ensures good achievement for all groups, including those for whom the school receives additional funding.
- Middle leaders have recently been appointed and already play an important role in monitoring the quality of teaching and achievement in their subjects. For example, the co-ordinator of mathematics now undertakes lesson observations which have directly resulted in an improvement in pupils' progress in mathematics.
- The headteacher and the governing body ensure performance targets for staff link directly to pupils' achievement and targets in the school improvement plan. Checks on the performance of staff are undertaken regularly and robustly and this information is used to make decisions on teachers' pay progression.
- High expectations of what all pupils can achieve is at the heart of the school's ethos. The senior leadership team ensures that all are welcomed into school and every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed. Pupils clearly understand this and it reflects in their behaviour, caring attitudes and the good progress of all groups. The school challenges discrimination and fosters good relations.
- The curriculum is well planned and subjects are linked through themes, which change each term. It meets the new requirements for the teaching of British values and through, for example, the celebration of Martin Luther King's life, visits from the air ambulance and visits to the local market, enables pupils of all ages and abilities to gain an understanding of life in modern Britain.
- The curriculum is very well enriched with a myriad of visitors and visits away from the classroom and in residential time. These experiences bring learning to life for pupils. For example, trips to the fire station, pantomime, ballet, sculpture parks and the local church increase pupils' love of school and learning as well as contributing to their good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- Parents who made their views known through the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) unanimously support the work of the school, as evidenced by their 100 per cent recommendation of the school to others.
- The school is exceptionally and justifiably proud of its sports provision and the sporting accomplishments of its pupils. Its excellent use of sports premium money has led to an increase in facilities and the number of sports available to pupils. Uptake in sport has increased across the school and teams have had great success in Boccia and Benchball tournaments. As a result, the school has been named as the Youth Sport Trust Project Ability Innovation School for the Humber region. This is further evidence of the highly effective use of sports premium funding.
- The local authority has offered good levels of support to the new headteacher in bringing about change within the school. The authority has offered less support to the headteacher in managing the residential provision, however, this is now in the process of being resolved.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body have a range of skills and experience which they have updated regularly by undertaking further training. As a result, they are able to offer good levels of challenge and support to senior leaders on the achievement of pupils and quality of teaching.

- They manage pupil premium funding prudently and this careful management has enabled them to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. As a result, last year this group made good progress overall in school, clearly demonstrating that gaps in learning for this group are closing.
- In partnership with senior leaders, governors have developed an effective system for checking the performance of all staff which rewards good teaching and addresses underperformance.
- Safeguarding procedures and policies meet current requirements. Governors undertake regular child protection training and carry out regular checks on premises and school buildings. However, recently they have not carried out sufficient independent monitoring of the residential unit and this has resulted in a breach in regulation. An action plan to rectify this is now in place with immediate effect.
- The finance committee ensures that financial resources made available to the school are managed effectively as evidenced by the school's current solvency.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Despite their very high levels of need, pupils across the school and residential provision, show good attitudes and behaviour. This coupled with the skill and knowledge of staff ensures that learning in classrooms is infrequently interrupted by incidents of inappropriate behaviour. This has contributed directly to the improvement in pupils' achievement across the school.
- A very caring approach to all is promoted throughout school as demonstrated by the caring attitudes pupils show to each other and adults alike. 'This school is perfect and can't get any better' and 'I love school', were some of the comments made by pupils. The happy smiles at the start of the day demonstrated just how much pupils enjoy coming to school. This was further evidenced by the higher than average levels of attendance, which on day one of the inspection were 100 per cent.
- Parents hold the view that behaviour is good and often better and that their children are safe and happy at school and that the school prepares pupils well for the future.
- School records show that no pupil has been excluded since the previous inspection or at all in the past three years. Incidents of difficult behaviour rarely escalate because of the effective way in which the behaviour policy is consistently applied across the school by skilled staff.
- Sixth form pupils show very positive attitudes to learning. Experiences away from the classroom help them to develop mature attitudes and enable them to make good strides towards developing life skills.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All staff regularly complete relevant safeguarding training and work with outside agencies to ensure pupils' safety both inside and outside school.
- Pupils say they feel very safe, because staff are always there to help them. Those who access residential care also agree they feel very safe and secure because staff are there to help them day and night.
- Training in how to ride their bikes safely as well as how to travel independently all contribute to pupils' learning how to keep safe outside school.
- During the inspection, different groups of pupils spoke to the inspection team, both formally and informally. They were clear that bullying can take different forms and were adamant it did not happen in their school. They were also clear where to turn should an incident occur.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching and pupils' learning across the different phases of the school is good. Leaders keep photographic records as evidence. This and evidence in pupils' books, support senior leaders belief that the quality of teaching is good over time.
- Communication skills, reading, writing and mathematics are taught well across the school as evidenced by good and better progress made by the majority of pupils
- Staff know pupils exceptionally well. As a result, planning for future learning is accurate and ensures work set meets the needs of pupils, enabling most groups, including those who are disadvantaged, to make good progress overall. However, planning for the most able pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 is not always sharp enough.
- Homework is set, where appropriate, and pupils take pride in completing it. The majority of parents agree

it helps pupils to practice skills and increases their rate of progress.

- Teaching assistants and teachers work exceptionally closely together in order to meet pupils' complex needs. They share high expectations for the progress of the pupils in their care. Effective teamwork and planning is apparent within the majority of classrooms and results in pupils' increased enjoyment of learning, which reflects in their good attitudes and behaviour.
- Staff often use sign language to support pupils who have limited speaking abilities. Most staff sign well and confidently. However, this is not always carried out consistently and when this happens, learning slows for pupils with these additional needs.
- Currently, pupils are making good and sometimes even better progress in reading, communication and mathematics. Thanks to the carefully planned and consistent teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) pupils in Key Stage 1 and children in the early years make good progress towards developing early reading skills.
- Extra sessions planned for pupils who need additional help with their learning are well thought out and carefully monitored. As a result, these pupils make the same good progress as others in the school.
- Where appropriate, pupils' work is marked. However, marking and feedback do not consistently give pupils all the guidance they need on how to improve their work.
- Pupils undertake a wide variety of activities and lessons which include religious education, personal and social education, and art and design, which promote and develop their good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' achievement is good overall. Current school data show that the majority of groups, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress across the different phases of the school.
- Pupils with additional needs, for example, those with ASD, make good progress because of the well thought out and individual curriculum which is provided for each pupil.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to others in the school. This demonstrates the highly effective use of pupil premium funding which the school uses to provide extra support to boost pupils' achievement in a variety of different ways, including one-to-one and small group sessions.
- Current school data show pupils across the school have got off to a good start and are set to make even greater gains than last year. Lesson observations, a scrutiny of pupils' work and staff records, support this view.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good because activities are made exciting and learning is fun. A group of Key Stage 3 pupils explained just how much they enjoy the innovative approaches taken by their teachers with the comments: 'We love maths because our teachers use Kung Fu moves to help us count which makes us laugh, especially when we have to do it ourselves, but it helps us to remember'.
- Pupils' progress in reading has accelerated this year due to the introduction of a new approach which has engaged pupils more effectively and is used consistently by staff in different areas of the school.
- The most able pupils in Key Stages 2 and 3 do not consistently make the rapid progress they are capable of. This is because staff sometimes set work that is too easy for these pupils. For example, they are not always given the opportunities they need to write longer pieces of work in English and other subjects.
- Key Stage 4 students currently share the Student Centre with sixth form students. They access a range of different curriculum options including basic skills in English and mathematics, physical education and life skills including cooking and shopping for themselves. This broad curriculum ensures they leave with a range of skills and accreditations which prepares them well for their transfer to the sixth form provision.
- Because of the well-targeted support, the majority of groups make equally good progress in English and mathematics as their peers. This shows the school's continued commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The early years provision

is good

- Outcomes for children who join the early years are good because staff are very skilled at recognising their needs. Children make good progress overall from a wide range of starting points. Staff work closely together to ensure that activities set, match the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of all children.
- Leadership and management and the quality of teaching are good and ensure children are well prepared

when they start Year 1.

- Children join Nursery classes with a wide range of skills and knowledge which are generally well below those usually associated with children of a similar age. Despite the many and varied barriers to learning they face, they settle quickly into the routines of the Nursery classroom, separating from parents with little fuss.
- Last year, all children made progress in a range of different areas. This represents good progress for all groups including those for whom the school receives extra funding and the most able.
- Activities inside and outside the classroom support children to become active and inquisitive learners. Trays of water, sand and wallpaper paste offer children opportunities to discover new textures. Snack time promotes good manners and turn taking as well as healthy eating. Opportunities such as these promote children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Staff work very closely together and have high expectations of what children can achieve. They support and guide children well and regularly record the small steps they make in learning. They are skilled at using questions to increase children's curiosity and a desire to find out more. These approaches ensure good progress for pupils of all abilities.
- Relationships between staff and children are strong, as evidenced by the way children quickly settle despite their often long journey from home and develop an understanding of how to behave. This could be seen in the calm way in which children played, demonstrating good behaviour and safe practices.
- Parents feel that the early years unit gives their children a good start in school. They commented on the warm and friendly approach of all staff and appreciated their support in helping their children to learn.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Students who attend the sixth form provision make good progress from a range of different starting points.
- Although the school has only recently put in place a sixth form provision, it has very quickly become established and is already oversubscribed.
- Students who join are predominantly Year 11 leavers who have previously attended the school. This ensures they are already familiar with school routines and staff. As a result, they make a good transition to the next phase in their education.
- 'Being in the sixth form is great', students commented 'Because we get to go to college and to try new things and we get treated like grown ups'.
- The curriculum is clearly focused on developing students' basic and life skills and the majority of students work on a range of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) units as well as basic skills and Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) units. Students also develop their enterprise skills through producing items and selling them for profit as well as running coffee shops for parents, staff and local residents.
- More able students often access GCSE courses successfully, often in the co-located secondary school.
- As a result, all students leave with a range of qualifications and accreditations which prepare them well for the next phase in their education or the world of work.
- Students' behaviour is good and at times is outstanding. They majority show mature attitudes in lessons and quickly learn the social skills required, for example, to order a meal in a busy college café.
- The unit is well led and managed by the unit's lead teacher and the deputy headteacher, who rigorously monitor the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching is good and leads to good outcomes for all students.

Outcomes for residential pupils	are good
Quality of residential provision and care	is good
Residential pupils' safety	is good
Leadership and management of the residential provision	are adequate

- Staff always place the well being of residential pupils at the centre of their practice. Careful consideration is given to ensure the compatibility of all groups who stay in order that friendships are promoted and the children's diverse needs can be met. Staff work tirelessly to remove barriers to participation. Children enjoy an extensive range of activities on and off site. These include sensory play, outward-bound activity holidays, celebrating important events like birthdays and diverse cultural and faith occasions.
- Staff actively promote and safeguard children's welfare. They are suitably trained and have a clear understanding of the school's safeguarding policies. When necessary, they take appropriate action to report concerns about the welfare of children. Regular health and safety audits ensure matters are promptly identified and improved. The systems for staff recruitment and induction are robust to help protect children from unsuitable people being employed to work in the school.
- A main strength of the provision is staff's commitment to enabling residential pupils to manage their own behaviours. Staff are highly skilled at defusing situations calmly and proactively. Children trust staff to help them overcome their anxiety and find a positive solution to their problems. Restraint is rare. However, records do not provide consistent accounts of all staff actions arising from incidents. This does not affect children's welfare because of regular meetings to review all children's behaviour.
- The headteacher and head of residence promote a culture that ensures staff listen to children and respect their individuality. Their commitment to providing high quality care to children is commendable. A strength of the school is the warm and trusting relationships staff use to support children's development. Parents are delighted with the progress their children make. Children say: 'It's soooo good here.' and, 'I get to do things here I cannot do at home.' However, recent changes and vacancies in the governing body have resulted in reduced independent monitoring of the service. While this has limited the overall development of the residential service, it has not affected the welfare of children because of the regular visits by governors to observe their direct care and relationships.
- Recent staffing shortfalls have meant that formal evaluation of the progress made by children as a result of their overnight stay is inconsistent. Additionally, staff have not participated in regular supervision to review the shortfalls in attending training and lack of regular updates to care planning. However, due to the consistent commitment and dedication of staff, this has not affected children's welfare or overall development.

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>

Boarding/Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	118144
Social care unique reference number	SC055984
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	447762

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	15
Number of boarders on roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Thacker
Headteacher	Gail Lawton
Date of previous school inspection	6 October 2010
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