

# King's School

Mansergh Barracks, BFPO 113, Gütersloh, Germany

## Inspection dates

27–29 January 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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's open and resolute leadership is empowering leaders and staff at all levels to ensure that students achieve as well as they can.
- Leadership of teaching is vigorous and all teachers are involved in the successful drive for improvement.
- Students achieve well as a result of good teaching. Lessons motivate students very effectively because activities are interesting and build understanding in small steps. By the end of Year 11, students reach standards that are above average.
- Students make good progress overall, doing better in mathematics than in English. The proportion of students making expected progress and the proportion doing better than this are well above average in mathematics.
- Students have positive and mature attitudes to learning. They are eager to give of their best and the vast majority are proud of their school.
- Behaviour is outstanding and students say they feel safe in school. Exclusions have fallen to a very low level. Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Consequently, the school is a harmonious community with respect for others at its core.
- Students' enjoyment of learning is promoted well through the wide range of opportunities and experiences that enhance the curriculum.
- Sixth form students achieve well in both academic subjects and on vocational courses. The school offers courses that meet students' needs and prepare them well as they move on to education, training or employment.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The most-able students, both in the main school and the sixth form, do not achieve as well as they could in all subjects. They are not always challenged to think deeply or given enough support to structure written responses that capture complex ideas logically.
- The school governance committee does not challenge senior leaders robustly enough about the school's performance, including the quality of teaching. Members rely too heavily on the information provided by leaders and do not have systems in place to check this for themselves.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, working jointly with a senior leader, observed 24 lessons and looked at a large sample of students' work. They also visited three tutorial periods and an assembly.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair and members of the school governance committee, representatives of the King's Parent Voice group, groups of students, including boarders, and a representative of Service Children's Education. They also talked informally to students about school life.
- Inspectors took into account 83 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took into consideration two letters from parents. Sixty five questionnaires completed by staff were analysed.
- The school's boarding provision did not form part of this inspection.

## Inspection team

Jane Austin, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Karl Sampson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jeremy Spencer	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- King's is smaller than most secondary schools in England. It serves the military communities of Gütersloh, Paderborn and Bielefeld. About 75% of its students are from military families, with the remainder from civilian families employed to support the armed forces.
- Pupils enter Year 7 from three primary schools and Year 9 from a middle school, all of which are part of Service Children's Education. However, typically for schools of this type, mobility is high. In the academic year 2013–14, 27% of students joined or left the school other than at the usual times.
- At present, the school has 36 weekly boarders. The boarding provision is due to close at the end of this academic year.
- The large majority of students are White British while about 20% come from a range of foreign and Commonwealth countries. A small proportion speak English as an additional language but none are in the early stages of learning the language.
- A very small number of students have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs, either supported solely by the school or who also receive additional help from external agencies, is low.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

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

- Raise achievement further, including for the most-able students in the main school and the sixth form, by:
  - ensuring that activities challenge students to think deeply and articulate their ideas clearly
  - enabling students to express their ideas confidently across all subjects through sophisticated, written responses so that they reach the very highest levels
  - monitoring closely the progress of sixth form students who are studying to gain GCSEs in English and mathematics at grade C and above.
- Increase the impact of the school governance committee on improving the school's performance further, by:
  - developing effective systems that enable members to check for themselves how well students are achieving
  - ensuring that members challenge leaders rigorously to secure the highest quality teaching and provision for students' learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has brought a new open, collegiate style to the leadership of the school and rapidly gained the commitment of staff to this way of working. Leaders at senior and middle levels know what is expected of them and are trusted to discharge their responsibilities to a high standard. Staff at all levels say they feel empowered to carry out their roles, both in the day-to-day running of the school and in the drive towards becoming outstanding.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance and this forms the firm foundation for setting annual priorities. Progress towards meeting these is evaluated at regular intervals.
- Middle leadership has improved since the last inspection. There is a rigorous system for holding middle leaders to account for performance in their subjects or their pastoral responsibilities. Departmental and pastoral plans are closely linked to the school's overarching priorities. They include detailed tracking of students' progress towards meeting their challenging targets, with a particular focus on groups who are not doing as well as they could, such as boys and more-able students. The impact of any interventions is evaluated regularly and rigorously.
- Leaders have a dynamic approach to improving the quality of teaching. A range of methods has been adopted, based on a thorough audit of strengths and areas for development. Together, staff have set out three key features of lessons to focus on improving this year. Staff are working collaboratively in cross-curricular groups to share and develop further the good practice within school. Where appropriate, teachers have the opportunity to benefit from coaching as well as attending external courses, to raise the quality of their teaching.
- The management of teachers' performance is rigorous. Regular evaluation of the impact of teaching, using a range of methods, including looking at students' work, gives leaders a clear view of where practice requires improvement. The headteacher has taken robust action, for instance in geography and science, to bring about improvement in the quality of provision.
- Leaders are successful in their determination to maintain students' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. Despite the absence that often occurs when service personnel return from active service, steps taken by leaders have been very effective in raising students' attendance, both in the main school and the sixth form.
- Good leadership of the sixth form ensures that students' needs are well catered for. Improvements in teaching since the previous inspection, alongside a strong programme of academic mentoring, have led to an overall rise in students' achievement. However, sixth form leaders do not monitor the performance of students re-sitting GCSEs in English and mathematics with the same rigour as they do for students on other courses. Consequently, interventions to support those who are struggling to reach the standard required are not always as prompt as they should be.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and prepares students well for the next stage of their lives. Last year, 97% of Year 11 students went on to further education, training or employment. All of the most recent sixth-form leavers also moved on to education, training or employment, with 75% gaining university places. Well-targeted information, advice and guidance, pertinent to the particular decisions students in this school have to make, are provided.
- The curriculum supports equality of opportunity well, through meeting the needs of different groups of students, including those who find learning difficult and those who join the school other than at the usual starting points. An appropriate range of vocational options enables students to select a balance of courses appropriate to them. For instance, courses in basic employment and personal effectiveness skills are available to help some students prepare for working life.
- Since the previous inspection, opportunities for students to develop and apply their literacy skills have expanded. An action plan to improve writing skills beyond work in English has been drawn up but has yet to be implemented. Currently, the school does not have an overarching strategy to help students to tackle complex issues convincingly and succinctly in written answers.
- Students enjoy the broad range of trips and visits that enhance the curriculum, including those to other European countries. They also appreciate the regular blocks of lessons dedicated to enrichment activities. Students have a wide choice including photography, skiing, knitting, game making and American football.
- The school places a strong emphasis on promoting British values, effectively weaving the teaching of these through the curriculum. Students learn in depth about British history and place great emphasis on the importance of Remembrance Day. Democracy is exercised through an established system of voting for school and house council representatives. Students have a say in decisions about school life because their views are taken into account through these councils.

- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Tolerance of, and respect for, other cultures runs through the heart of the school's curriculum. Fijian students spoke with pride of the opportunities they had to share aspects of their culture, including dress, food and dance, during Fijian Day. During the inspection, students observed Holocaust Memorial Day and showed sensitive insights into the events this marked.
- The school's systems to safeguard students meet requirements. Staff are well trained in safeguarding and child protection systems and procedures.
- Communication between home and school is given a high priority, particularly given the long distance that some families live from the school and the short-notice moves that they sometimes experience. The school's website is informative and parents have ready access through this to information about their child's studies and homework.
- The King's Parent Voice, a group of parent volunteers, provides a valuable forum for sharing parents' views and concerns and working with senior leaders to make improvements in areas such as breakfast club and reporting on students' progress. Arrangements for parents' evenings have been improved in response to parental views. Nonetheless, responses to Parent View indicate that not all parents feel they know enough about how well their child is doing.
- School leaders value the support they receive from Service Children's Education, for instance in developing the provision in English and science, and in evaluating the school's overall performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The school governance committee, which has a large proportion of new members, including a new Chair, is beginning to embrace its role as critical friend to the school. Members are very supportive and well informed about welfare issues affecting the school community. The King's Parent Voice group is represented on the school governance committee. Wherever possible, school governance committee members ensure that appropriate action is taken to deal with any issues raised by this group.
  - The school governance committee is well informed about the recruitment and performance challenges faced by the school and is supportive of leaders in dealing with these. However, it has only recently begun to receive detailed presentations about students' learning and progress and is not fully equipped to hold leaders to account for achievement or the quality of the school's provision. Members are well aware that systems are not in place to enable them to check for themselves the accuracy of the information provided by senior leaders. Training by Service Children's Education is planned imminently to begin to equip members for these aspects of their role.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

**are outstanding**

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is outstanding.
- Students conduct themselves responsibly and maturely both in lessons and around the school. They are polite, well-mannered and get on very well with one another and with their teachers. They are articulate and confident speakers, at ease with adult visitors.
- Students are proud of their school and the vast majority respond positively to the school's trust in them to control their own behaviour and to take responsibility for their own conduct. Through the school and house councils, students participated in drawing up the system of rewards and sanctions. They say it is clear and are now confident that it is fair.
- The school is highly effective in improving the behaviour of the small proportion of students who find it difficult to behave well. There has been a very sharp decrease in the number of fixed-term exclusions this academic year. This is the result of high-quality pastoral support, sometimes enhanced by the work of partner agencies including regimental unit welfare officers. One parent who contacted inspectors described the turnaround in their child's behaviour as 'miraculous'.
- The vertical tutoring system helps students develop high levels of care for one another and fosters a calm, cohesive school community. Some students commented on remarkable improvements in their behaviour and their desire to pass on the lessons they have learned to younger students, for instance through the vertical tutor groups.
- Almost all students demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning, particularly those who have been at the school for longer periods of time. Incidences of disruption are rare. When students do have to spend time in the isolation room, an infrequent occurrence, learning continues as they complete their work there.
- Students' attendance has improved in recent years and is above average.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students of all ages, including those who have special educational needs or speak English as an additional

language, report that they feel safe and secure in school. They identify many adults in school whom they can call upon if they are worried or bothered. This is confirmed by the vast majority of parents' responses on Parent View.

- Students demonstrate an excellent understanding of the different kinds of bullying, including prejudiced-based, racist and cyber bullying. The school has provided wide-ranging briefings for students on e-safety, including those from external agencies such as the Royal Military Police. Consequently, students have a very secure understanding of the threats posed by cyber bullying.

### **The quality of teaching**

**is good**

- The impact of teaching on literacy, reading and mathematics is good. It is not outstanding because the school does not have a coherent approach across subjects to teaching students how to structure complex written responses so that they express ideas and arguments clearly and concisely to achieve the highest grades.
- Some aspects of teaching have improved since the previous inspection. For instance, teachers' questioning is much sharper, promoting students' ability to articulate their ideas through probing their understanding and uncovering misconceptions.
- Marking and feedback on students' learning have also improved, although some inconsistencies remain. The best practice is high quality and demands focused, developmental responses from students. Opportunities for students to assess their own work and that of their peers are also variable in quality. However, teachers' feedback during lessons is a strength, carefully directing and challenging students' thinking.
- Lessons are structured well to build students' skills systematically. For example, in a Year 8 drama lesson on direction, each part of the process was added in bite-sized chunks so that this group of lower-attaining students could achieve success.
- Teachers are successful in engaging students' interest and motivating them to learn. This was evident in a Year 7 French lesson, where a series of quick-fire activities and games enthused students as they learned vocabulary for rooms in a house. Similarly, in a Year 12 religious studies lesson, students were motivated by collaborating on brisk group tasks to work out responses to ethical questions from the perspective of moral philosophers.
- Teachers encourage students to do their best through modelling tasks. For instance, a Year 11 English class listened attentively as the teacher read her own response on a topic they were preparing to write about. In food technology, students were challenged to work independently as they watched and noted the teacher's silent demonstration of a process.
- Relationships between teachers and students are strong and respectful. As a result, students work hard and productively in almost all lessons. They are eager to learn and keen to give of their best. Students collaborate very well in pairs and small groups, valuing one another's responses.

### **The achievement of pupils**

**is good**

- Students achieve well, both in the main school and in the sixth form.
- In 2014, the proportion of Year 11 students gaining at least five GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was well-above average. Attainment in almost all subjects was above average. However, boys did not attain as well as girls by a considerable margin.
- Senior leaders are taking effective steps to close the gap between the achievement of boys and girls. The school's assessment information for the current Year 11 students indicates that intervention groups are helping to improve boys' performance.
- Analysis of the 2014 GCSE results, and of work in students' notebooks, shows that those who join the school in Year 7, or who attend the school for longer periods of time, make more progress than other students.
- The proportion of Year 11 students who made expected and better than expected progress in mathematics in 2014 was well above average.
- Although performance in English improved, students' progress was more variable. A much larger-than-average proportion of students whose attainment at the end of Year 6 was average, or below, made the expected rate of progress. There was a similarly positive picture for disabled students and those with special educational needs. However, performance was not as strong for more-able students.
- An above-average proportion of Year 11 students gained at least three A\*/A grades at GCSE in 2014. Compared with the national picture, the proportion of these most-able students who made more than expected progress in mathematics was well-above average. However, in English, the proportion of these students who made the expected rate of progress, or more, was slightly lower than average. Students'



work and lesson observations indicate that this is the result of relatively weaker teaching in English. In addition, the lack of a consistent, coherent approach to teaching the skills needed to write at length, is hindering the progress of the most-able students.

- Steps to raise students' standards in, and enjoyment of, reading are showing signs of success. Some Year 11 students have been selected as literacy leaders to work with Year 7 students so they can benefit from extra help with their reading. In addition, all students in Years 7 and 8 participate in a scheme to increase the number of books they read and review. Both strategies are having a positive impact on students' literacy levels as well as their enjoyment of reading.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make progress that is in line with that of their peers. This is because staff know these students well and provide support that matches their needs closely.

#### **The sixth form provision**

**is good**

- At the end of Year 11, a significant proportion of students leave the school. Consequently, the starting points of the small number of students who continue on to Year 12 are lower, overall, than the above-average levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 4.
- The school provides courses that cater well for the needs of sixth-form students, including those who join from other schools. Academic, mixed and vocational routes ensure that students can build on their previous achievements as well as prepare successfully for their next steps, whether these are in education, training or employment. Good-quality careers guidance and excellent support for individual students ensure that almost all complete their programmes successfully.
- The majority of examination entries are in academic subjects. Students on these courses make good progress and, increasingly, their achievement in many subject areas is above national averages. This is the result of good teaching, such as that seen during this inspection in history and sociology, which shows improvement since the previous inspection. Frequent, rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching by subject leaders has contributed much to these improvements.
- The number of students gaining the highest grades at A2 level is rising but remains below the national average. In some instances, the skills students need to reach the highest levels are underdeveloped. This is because students do not receive enough support in learning how to construct high-quality written answers that convey complex ideas and arguments clearly.
- Good leadership has brought about closer tracking of students' progress and the development of a bespoke mentoring programme. Consequently, interventions to support individual students at risk of falling behind are, in the main, swift and effective. Students are unanimous in their praise for this support and the excellent pastoral care that they receive from staff. However, the performance of the small number of students who did not gain a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics, and who are working to reach this level, is not monitored with the same rigour. As a result, timely support is not always provided if their progress falters.
- The small number of students on vocational courses make good progress because programmes are tailored carefully to their individual aspirations and abilities. The recently introduced hairdressing programme is an excellent example of this approach. High-quality teaching, coupled with the opportunity to focus on different aspects of the vocational skills, enable students to thrive. Vocational courses are strengthened by work placements that increase students' confidence as they apply the skills they are learning.
- The school is well equipped with dedicated spaces and resources to support students' independent study. Most sixth-form students have extremely positive attitudes to their studies. A blend of targeted study days, timetabled independent study time and support for private study helps them develop the skills they need.
- The general studies programme ensures that students have a good understanding of potential risks to their health and well-being. They appreciate the 'streetwise' programme designed to help them integrate seamlessly back into life in the United Kingdom.
- Sixth-form students play an important role in school life. They are perceived as role models by younger students as the result of the help they provide through the vertical tutoring system and as literacy leaders. They attend well and are punctual to lessons.

## 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	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.
		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.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132382
<b>Local authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Inspection number</b>	454184

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>	Ministry of Defence
<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>	571
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	97
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Service Children's Education
<b>Chair</b>	Lt Col. John Weetman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alex Foreman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17-19 January 2012
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