

Kingsland School

Whitecroft Street, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL1 4HX

Inspection dates 3–4 February 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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher's belief in the students' potential to succeed and her passion for ensuring that they are well prepared for the next step in their lives, provides exceptional leadership to the school.
- The school leaders and all staff inspire the students to overcome difficulties in their lives, so they can return to a mainstream school or stay at the school and get the best possible GCSE results.
- The students are rightly proud of what they achieve. They recognise the support they receive really helps them to get the qualifications they need to get the jobs they want.
- The school works extremely well with other services to ensure that the students and their families are well supported.
- All students are assessed when they get a place at the school. This means the teachers know exactly what help the students need so they make good progress from their different starting points.
- Students are taught how to get on with people of different backgrounds and faiths. They learn to be respectful and considerate to others.
- Many students make very good progress in improving their school attendance due to the support they receive.
- In most lessons, the work is planned to make sure the students make good progress in what they know, understand and can do.
- The teaching assistants and learning mentors provide excellent support to the students in all aspects of their lives.
- The management committee and other leaders ensure that students are safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some lessons are not planned to match all the students' different starting points.
- Teachers do not always clearly communicate to students how to improve their work.
- Not all students attend school as often as they should. Some students arrive late to school and to lessons.
- The management committee has only recently begun to be more fully involved in the performance management of teachers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons, two jointly with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher. The headteacher and lead inspector also observed learning during a walk through the school. The lead teacher for the Specialist Learning Centre and an inspector also observed learning during a walk through the Specialist Learning Centre.
- Students were also observed as they arrived at school and during break and lunchtime social activities.
- An inspector visited Oldham College to observe a group of Year 11 students on their weekly placement on vocational courses.
- The inspectors listened to students read during lessons and held several discussions with students, in meetings and informally during break times.
- The inspectors held meetings with the school’s middle leaders and with a group of support staff, as well as the senior leaders.
- The inspectors looked at school policies and documents covering all the work of the school. They also looked at the minutes of the management committee meetings and reports written by external consultants who have advised the school.
- The school’s records of the students’ achievements and progress were discussed with school staff and a number of the students’ books were looked at in detail.
- The records of incidents, attendance and behaviour were reviewed. Case studies of individual students were read and discussed with staff.
- The school’s procedures for making sure students are safe and learn how to keep safe were read and discussed with staff.
- There were insufficient responses to Parent View, the Ofsted on-line survey, for the inspectors to be able to analyse. The inspectors looked at the parents' responses to the school’s surveys on their views and the 10 responses received to the survey sent out during the inspection.
- The inspectors read the 23 staff questionnaires that were returned.
- The inspectors met with two members of the management committee and two officers of the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with the school's independent consultant.

Inspection team

Susan Hayter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jean Tarry

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingsland School is made up of two separate services for students with different needs on the same site. The pupil referral unit provides education for pupils permanently excluded from mainstream schools and those students who are experiencing extreme difficulties at their school. On the same site, but with separate facilities, the Specialist Learning Centre provides education for students who cannot attend mainstream schools due to a range of health-related needs.
- The school opened on the current site and began providing the current services in September 2013. However, during 2013 to 2014 there were a significant number of Year 11 students who had statements of special educational need for emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- The school is currently oversubscribed. The planned admission number is 70. There are slightly more girls than boys in Year 10 and Year 11.
- The majority of students are in Year 10 and Year 11. There are younger students in both the pupil referral unit and the Specialist Learning Centre. Students are reintegrated into mainstream schools whenever this is appropriate and sustainable. This means there is a high turnover of students being admitted to the school and then moving on to mainstream or special schools.
- Due to the movement of students to different schools, the proportion of students from different ethnic groups and those with special educational needs often changes. There is a number of students who have a statement of special educational needs or who are being assessed for education and health care plans.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is just above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- A management committee fulfils the role of a governing body. There will be some changes of personnel within the committee in the near future.
- Students start at the school at any point during the school year. All students who join the school have experienced difficulties in their previous school. Many students have attended several different schools before getting a place at Kingsland. The disruption in their education and usual poor attendance means that most students start at the school with well below national expectations both in their progress and attainment.
- The detailed assessments the school undertakes when the students are admitted identify a significant number of students who have not had their specific learning, emotional and mental health needs fully identified in their previous schools.
- The school works with a number of services to support the students and their families. These include the educational psychology service, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), careers officers, education welfare services, children's social care, Oasis, a service to support students with substance misuse difficulties and Barnardo's, supporting students at risk of child sexual exploitation.
- Some students attend alternative providers for some of their time. The providers are Oldham College, Raise the Youth and Ground works. The number of students at each placement varies due to the changing number of students on roll at the school at any one time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of students by:
 - all staff consistently using the detailed assessment information available so that all lessons are planned to match the students' needs and starting points
 - all staff consistently using the school's marking and feedback system which makes sure the students know what their next step is in each subject.
- Improve attendance and punctuality so that more students' attendance matches the average in mainstream schools.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- All school leaders, including the management committee, share the same vision for the school. They have shared this very effectively with all staff and the students so that Kingsland is a school where students go to learn and achieve well so they can return to mainstream schools or move on to further education, training and employment successfully.
- The school leaders have managed a period of change from 2013 when the school established itself on the current site very successfully.
- Senior and middle leaders have a very robust system in place for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and the progress the students make. This means that they can support staff and students to improve further in a very precise way.
- The performance management of teachers is effective and is linked to the teachers' standards and the progress and attainment of the students.
- The curriculum matches what the students need to do to ensure they achieve GCSE or Entry Level qualifications in at least English, mathematics and science. The school uses alternative providers and external facilities to broaden the curriculum successfully.
- The school provides good opportunities for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout lessons and in assemblies. The guidance provided to reduce all forms of extremist views is effective.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Most students have ambitions to work and know what they need to do to achieve their ambition because of the support the school gives. Through well-planned lessons and the highly effective relationships students develop with staff they develop tolerance and understanding of other people's views. This was observed directly in several lessons and as the students moved about the school.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the disadvantaged students. The school is developing ways to show the impact of the funding on the disadvantaged students who are only with them for a short period of time.
- Some parents are initially reluctant to accept places offered to their children. However, the results of the school's surveys show that most parents see the benefits the school brings. Support for parents who need help is extremely effective.
- The recently introduced special educational needs coordinator's role is having good impact and ensures that students' specific learning needs are assessed fully on entry.
- Leaders constantly promote equal opportunities. All staff work to increase the students' understanding of the negative impact of discrimination against those who experience protected characteristics.
- School staff support the students at alternative providers. This ensures that the students attend, are safe and make good progress. The school is quick to accept that the placements are not effective for all students and make different arrangements for them at school.
- The school meets all statutory safeguarding requirements.
- The leaders were aware of the need to provide information about the school on a website and were very effective in addressing this omission during the inspection.
- The school works closely with impartial careers advisers so the students get good advice and guidance about options when leaving school.
- The local authority has provided support to the school during the period of change and continues to provide independent consultants to advise the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Overall, the members of the management committee support and challenge the school leaders appropriately, for example, by requesting more detailed information about the impact of the spending of the pupil premium funding.
 - At the current time, the management committee is going through a period of change in terms of members. This period of change appears to have led to some gaps in covering areas of responsibility and detailed knowledge of the achievements of the students. The plans to ensure that new members are quickly up to date are robust. Members recognise that they need to be more fully involved in the performance management of staff and the pay progression for teachers. This is the reason why the overall quality of leadership and management is good, rather than outstanding.
 - Some members are actively involved in the current strategic review of pupil referral provision in Oldham. They are able to support the school in any further developments it may face in the future.

- The members have a good understanding of the school's financial position and have supported work to secure additional funding to match the growth in student numbers successfully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. This is because of the support the school puts in place for all the students.
- The students were very keen to show off their school and their own achievements. They are proud of their uniforms and learn to comply with the school's dress code because of the positive relationships the staff quickly form with the students when they are admitted.
- As yet, students do not often show an enthusiastic love of learning. It is recognised that for most students compliance is the first step to re-engagement with school life. In art and science lessons observed during the inspection students did show that they could be enthusiastic learners.
- The individual students' records show that most students have experienced extreme difficulty at their previous school with either their behaviour or attendance and for some students both. They arrive disaffected with very low self-esteem. From these very low starting points, most students make rapid progress in learning how to manage themselves and their relationships with other students and staff.
- Several students commented they 'learn to keep their heads down and get on with the work' because the school instils them with the confidence to do so.
- The school is supportive when students experience difficulties and although the staff are trained to use physical interventions, they very rarely do so because the students respond to the guidance given.
- The students appreciate that the school sticks consistently to the rules and gives them the opportunity to repair any damaged relationships when incidents happen.
- The school works well with a wide range of agencies to ensure that the students learn to keep themselves safe. This includes e-safety, the dangers of substance misuse and other high-risk lifestyle choices.
- All incidents of bullying, including racial and homophobic-motivated incidents, are dealt with consistently and effectively.
- Students are well supported during off-site visits and at alternative providers. School staff provide direct support when required and all appropriate checks are in place.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Currently, students' attendance is 86%, which exceeds the national average (68.6%) by 17.4% for pupil referral units in 2013 to 2014. This is a significant achievement for the students and the school. However, the school is not satisfied and recognises that not all students have the same success. Some students, due to health issues and deeply rooted disaffection, are placed on partial timetables. For the vast majority of students these are progressed to full time or near full time within a reasonable period.
- The students talk confidently about knowing who to talk with if they feel unsafe or worried. The records show that the school is tenacious in ensuring the students get the support they need from the right services.
- The site and premises, although restricted in size, are well maintained and safe.
- The school's 'meet and greet' procedure for all students ensures that they do not bring anything into school that could cause harm or disruption between the students. The students accept this process and recognise that it keeps them all safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Good and outstanding teaching in the school is supported by the very accurate and informative assessments the school completes when the students join the school.
- Where students make good progress, teachers have planned lessons using information about what students know and understand already. This means students can learn the next step and enjoy success.
- Not all teachers plan as effectively, which means students revisit work they have already done and understand and this slows their progress.
- Most teachers use a wide range of questioning to ensure that students understand what is being taught. When this is done well, students also have the opportunity to practise their speaking skills and extend

their spoken vocabulary. For example, in an English lesson students described the closure achieved by the author of a poem about his experience of being bullied.

- In the main, students are encouraged to read and the majority read confidently. The recently introduced assessment process and resulting support provided have led to some students making rapid gains in their reading ability.
- Students have a range of opportunities to write for different purposes in different subjects. The literacy policy has helped to improve the standard of spelling and punctuation. Teachers' use of assessment information when planning lessons means the pupils are making more progress in mathematics than previously.
- School leaders have a good understanding of the quality of teaching because they regularly visit classrooms and check students' work in their books to ensure that they are making progress.
- Students talk positively about most lessons. There is a pride in most students that some are now being prepared to enter the higher tier GCSE in mathematics.
- Most teachers share with students what they need to do in each subject to reach the next grade or level. When this happens, the students make more progress because they are clear about how to improve. This is not yet consistent in all cases.
- All classrooms and corridors are rich with displays of students' work and prompts and guides to support students' learning. The staff create an environment that supports the progress students make.
- The trusting and supportive relationships between staff and students are key to the most successful teaching. The staff overcome the students' past negative experiences in school and re-enthuse them through the use of humour, kindness and patience, but also by inspiring students to want to learn.

The achievement of pupils is good

- For a variety of reasons, students arrive at the school having made significantly less progress than expected from their starting points in Year 7. Accurate assessments when students arrive show that they are three or four grades behind where they should be.
- From this very low starting point, most of the students go on to make good progress. Students who are in the school for short periods of time before being reintegrated into mainstream schools, get back on track by re-engaging with learning, particularly in English and mathematics. Those students who stay at the school longer and for Year 11 progress enough to achieve a range of GCSE grades. Although their results remain at the lower grades, these results represent a significant achievement.
- The school has recently started to enter Year 10 and Year 11 students for functional skills tests in English and mathematics. Most students have been successful in achieving these qualifications at either Entry Level or Level 1. This has boosted students' confidence and exam techniques very effectively so they are encouraged to take the next higher level.
- For some students, success in GCSE English in Year 10 has encouraged them to aim for GCSE in English language and literature in Year 11.
- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong, but this is being addressed this year by a newly appointed lead teacher. Work in some students' books and their autumn term assessment results demonstrate that the rate of progress in this subject is increasing.
- The school's assessment tracking and qualification results show that there is very little difference in the achievement of different groups of students. The groups of students are small and the individuals' experiences contribute more to their progress than their disadvantage, gender, ethnicity, academic ability or special educational need.
- The school has made students using their literacy skills in all lessons a priority and this has been effective. The school is aware that it needs to apply the same focus to the use of numeracy skills across different lessons. Achievement in art is particularly strong and the school's environment is considerably enhanced by the high quality displays around the school.
- Students' good progress in their social and emotional well-being is evident in the reduction in negative behaviour incidents and students' increased interest and involvement. Nearly all students make rapid gains in this area and are, therefore, more ready and able to learn.
- Students achieve well on the vocational courses taken at alternative providers. Placements at Oldham College prepare the students well for courses at the college when they leave school.

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	134759
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	448034

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lee Eddowes
Headteacher	Lynda Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	19 September 2011
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