

King James's School

St Helen's Gate, Almondbury, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 6SG

Inspection dates 10–11 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve exceptionally well by the time they leave school. Their progress and attainment in a wide range of subjects are above the national averages.
- The school prepares students exceptionally well for life and work after school, and the school's success and expertise in this area are nationally recognised.
- Students' behaviour in class and around school is good. They are polite, confident and friendly. They enjoy school and respect their environment.
- The school's work to keep students safe is outstanding. Teachers ensure students know how to stay safe in all contexts, including online. Students discuss difficult topics sensitively and with maturity, as they have confidence in the school and staff.
- The curriculum is broad and delivered skilfully. It supports effectively students' very good progress and high attainment.
- Leaders and managers have a relentless focus on improving the school and on ensuring the very best outcomes for every student. They have successfully ensured that students' results have remained very high over time.
- Governors manage finances particularly well. They have successfully challenged the school to achieve excellent outcomes for students, and have ensured that disadvantaged students perform as well as their peers by the time that they leave school.
- Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural activities are varied and interesting. The wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, not only sports and clubs, but also extra subjects such as Latin, enriches the students' experiences.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are inconsistent in their use of the school's policy for letting students know how well they have done and how to improve their work. This means some students make faster progress than others.
- Some students, particularly boys, are not making the corrections teachers have requested, and are not following teachers' instructions for the presentation of their work. In some cases, messy books limit students' ability to revise or move to a higher level.
- Not all teachers are using the discipline or marking policies effectively to ensure that students complete work and respond to teachers' advice in their books.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of lessons in every subject and saw the vast majority of teaching staff in action. A large number of students' books, folders, homework and practical work were seen and inspectors saw assemblies, tutor groups and library sessions.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in lessons and around the school site, which is extensive. Inspectors saw break and lunch times, and observed the students as they arrived for school and left at the end of the day.
- Inspectors analysed a wide body of school documentation on students' progress, behaviour, safety, monitoring of teaching and learning, and policies and procedures. Records of self-evaluation and improvement planning, departmental action plans and the schools records of governing meetings and finance were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors had meetings with the senior leaders of the school, middle leaders, those responsible for behaviour and safety, the special educational needs coordinator, representatives from the local authority and governing body, and with groups of students. Other discussions were held with heads of departments, teachers, support staff and teaching assistants throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of the 58 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents, and the school's own parent survey responses. Fifty staff survey responses were also analysed.

Inspection team

Rebecca Lawton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Clive Hurren	Additional Inspector
Paul Welford	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- King James's school converted to become an academy in September 2012, but has retained the major structures and principles of the predecessor school of the same name, which was judged to be good in 2009 when it was last inspected by Ofsted.
- The school is a slightly smaller-than-average secondary school.
- The proportion of students who have special educational needs or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of students who are from ethnic minorities or who speak English as an additional language is very low.
- There is no off-site, alternative provision used by the school.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school is a member of the Northern Teaching Alliance for sharing of good practice in teaching and learning.
- A small but significant proportion of teachers are relatively new to the school or are currently on supply or temporary contracts during an extended period of recruitment to some departments.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve students' attitudes to learning, particularly for boys, by ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations for the presentation of students' written work and are using the discipline policy to ensure completion of the work that is set.
- Ensure that all teachers are consistently using the school's policy for marking and feedback, and are ensuring that students know how well they have done and how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school has an unrelenting culture of excellence in achievement which has been sustained over time. The students appreciate the support of the staff and other members of the school community who have high expectations of the outcomes students can achieve, and know that their performance is the school's highest priority.
- Leaders have analysed and supported teaching in all departments. There are highly effective, good-quality training and professional development opportunities for all staff drawn from the school's wider association with the teaching alliance. Teaching has secured outstanding outcomes for students. Although there is a small but significant number of staff who are currently new to the school, new to teaching, or on temporary contracts, the school is working effectively with these staff to improve their performance to reach the same levels of excellence as other more established staff.
- Leaders and managers have secured crucial improvements to some departments in response to changing student and school needs. Leaders and managers have shown that they are able to correctly analyse performance and outcomes so that their actions are effective and ensure student achievement is maintained; for example, during periods of high staff turnover.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and students have the opportunity to study programmes that meet their needs and interests. In addition to subjects in the traditional curriculum, students can also study and take examinations in, for example, Latin, classics and sociology. A significant number of students do take up these additional opportunities and achieve well.
- The curriculum prepares students for life in modern Britain well. The personal and social curriculum is well managed and students are given a broad preparation for life and work. The school has been nationally recognised for its effective work to prepare students for employment through bespoke programmes for some, and links to apprenticeships for others. Key aspects such as democracy and the study of a range of faiths are covered sensitively and with awareness of a wide range of values. The school draws well on its wider community to support real-life contexts for these values; for example, by governors taking assemblies and students having talks from community leaders. Due to this, the school promotes British values very effectively.
- Leaders monitor student progress carefully and, for many years, have successfully secured high outcomes by the time students leave school. Current staffing turbulence in some departments has led to some slightly harsh assessment and weaker feedback processes in Key Stage 3, and the school is quickly addressing this to ensure that all students are making the rapid progress that has been characteristic of the school in the past.
- Careful monitoring of those students who are disadvantaged or who need additional support for their special educational needs or disabilities ensures that these students have equally high priority and support as their peers. Effective use of the pupil premium funding and careful monitoring of the impact of resources are ensuring that these students are very well supported in their academic and pastoral needs. For example, the school runs its own transport so that all students, regardless of context, can take advantage of the extra-curricular opportunities available.
- The school works hard to ensure equality of opportunity and, although there are some issues with the presentation and completion of work of some boys, so far this has not significantly impacted on their outcomes. The school is aware of how presentation may limit the legibility of answers and how important showing working is in some subjects, such as mathematics. The school is tackling this successfully with students and staff, so that every student can achieve the very highest marks available to them.
- The school continues to work with the local authority, which provides good quality advice and guidance and challenges the school on their annual data.
- The school provides good quality advice and guidance to students to ensure that they make informed choices of subjects and examination programmes. The school offers additional qualifications, which many students take advantage of, and has supported those in need of bespoke programmes to ensure that all have the best qualifications to meet their needs by the time they leave school.
- The school's work to ensure the safeguarding of all students is a high priority and is very effective. Links and partnerships with external agencies are used well to meet student needs and to respond quickly to emerging issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching in all departments, and have regular reviews and reports on all staff and student outcomes. Governors are ambitious and adept at analysing student performance and they successfully challenge the school to reach the very highest levels of achievement.

- The governing body is managing finances particularly well, for example, the historic school building and grounds are maintained in line with specialist requirements. Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is managed robustly and check regularly that the performance of disadvantaged students is in line with that of other students.
- Performance is linked to pay and the governors and trustees manage resources effectively. The governors ensure that all staff are well trained and that external resources are used efficiently. Governors work quickly to address any underperformance to ensure that standards are maintained.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They are polite, welcoming and conduct themselves well in lessons and at break and lunch times. There is very little litter and no graffiti, and students take pride in their school environment and their uniform.
- Students' attendance is above the national average and their punctuality to lessons is improving. Leaders and teachers have good relationships with all students and use these relationships to ensure that all make good progress in lessons.
- Some students, particularly boys, are not responding to teachers' advice in their books as consistently as others. In some books seen during the inspection, students were continuing over several weeks not to follow teachers' instructions to, for example, use a ruler for graphs, put a legible title and date on their work, or show their working in mathematics. Although not a barrier to the curriculum content of the lesson, in the majority of cases, this can impact on results in examinations if examiners cannot read the student's answers, or cannot award marks for process if the final answer is incorrect. Some students are choosing to ignore teachers' repeated requests for these within their books and are not being corrected through the use of the discipline policy.
- The use of exclusions and internal support for those in need of behaviour support has declined over time, as the number of incidents has reduced. The school has responded well to the very small number of incidents with high-quality training and support for all students, not only those involved, to reduce the potential of other incidents happening in the future. For example, students are well informed about how to report any incidents of bullying and are confident in the staff to respond quickly if they did inform them of any issues.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students say they feel safe and valued, and records and documentation show that students are safe both in school and on trips and visits.
- Governors are trained in 'safer recruitment' and are keeping a close eye on safeguarding and child protection at the school. They react quickly when issues are brought to their attention and they use a wide range of external agencies to check the building, the curriculum and the environment to ensure students' safety.
- Monitoring documents show that incidents of cyber bullying, homophobia or racism are very rare and, if they do occur, the school responds quickly and puts in place information for all students to prevent further incidents.
- The school ensures that students have a good understanding of a wide range of social, moral and cultural issues such as drugs, relationships and questions of right and wrong. This ensures that students are knowledgeable and mature in their attitudes to staying safe.
- Leaders have ensured that student safety is a priority and that vulnerable students are well supported. The care and guidance for those in most need is particularly strong.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the past, good quality teaching has secured consistently good and often excellent progress for students, which has led to attainment that is well above the national average by the time students leave school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good knowledge of the students' abilities; this has led to the very best outcomes for all students by the end of their time in school.
- In recent years, the school has increased its intake into Year 7 and the skills and abilities of students attending the school have changed. Due to this and the significant proportion of staff that are new to the school or on temporary contracts, the consistency of the quality of teaching has changed. Teachers are

having to adapt their teaching and their assessments, particularly in Key Stage 3, to ensure that all students make the same rapid progress as they have in the past.

- Not all students in Key Stage 3 are consistently following the school's procedures and some staff are not ensuring that all students are meeting expectations for the presentation of their work or responding to the feedback they receive. For example, some teachers repeatedly ask students to make corrections to their work but these are not always done. Not all staff use the full range of the school's discipline policy to make sure that this happens.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers have high expectations of the outcomes that students can achieve and skilfully shape learning so that students have the opportunity to reach these high standards. In science in particular, lessons are well planned and enable students to explore and refine their ideas, and teachers facilitate high-level discussions of the topics. This is leading to exceptional results in science.
- Those students who have additional support from teaching assistants, or who attend groups to improve their literacy or numeracy, are making accelerated progress and are quickly closing any gaps in their attainment to that of their peers. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable, passionate and care about students' individual needs. Teaching assistants provide additional resources and shape teaching so that these students make the very best progress possible.
- Small group activities such as the 'literacy leaders', where older students read with younger students during registration time, promote reading skills and have led to an increase in students borrowing from the library. The 'student librarian' has encouraged students to increase their range of reading very effectively.
- The use of technology in lessons is very effective and teachers use good resources to help students to understand and investigate across different subjects. Teachers link learning to life successfully, for example, by describing how geography and history topics link to social and economic themes currently in the news.
- The curriculum is carefully shaped to ensure that all students have the potential to reach the highest levels possible, whilst covering social, moral, spiritual and cultural elements in depth. Many students take advantage of additional subjects such as Latin, classics and sociology where staff who have additional subject knowledge and skills share their passions for alternative subjects with students. This helps to foster a desire to succeed and a flexible approach to learning.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- In the past, students have started at the school with levels generally above those expected for their age. However, in recent years, as the school's intake has increased, ability levels have been generally in line with national expectations.
- All students make at least good progress, and many make exceptional progress and achieve GCSE grades at the highest levels possible. For example, in the most recent examinations for GCSE statistics taken by the whole of the current Year 11 cohort, a quarter attained an A or A* grade, and 89% were awarded a C grade or above.
- The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics is above the national average and this has been sustained over time. Grades in the single science examinations are well-above national averages and the proportion of students gaining the very highest A and A* grades is increasing in many subjects.
- The school has used early entry to GCSE in some subjects for Year 10 students who are ready to sit the examinations. This has not limited student achievement and many of those who take these early examinations attain the very highest grades possible.
- The attainment of the small proportion of disadvantaged students at GCSE is rising over time and the gap between their attainment and their classmates in school is very small at around half a grade in English and mathematics. The overall gap between the progress and attainment of these students and the national average is even smaller at less than half a grade.
- In recent years, some of the published data on the performance of students at this school has been incorrect. The achievement and progress of students currently in school across all years and the majority of subjects were checked during the inspection, by looking at students' books and teacher assessments. This showed that progress and attainment is better than the published data suggest.
- The large number of the most able students perform very well. The final attainment of these students is high and increasing over time. The proportions who achieve the very highest A* and A grades is increasing, due to a concerted effort to push these students to reach the very best standards in their GCSE examinations. Some subjects, such as science, English and statistics have seen rapid increases in

the proportion of students reaching these highest grades.

- 'Catch-up' funding to support students who join the school with levels below those expected for their age, and the funding for disadvantaged students, are used very effectively to ensure that these students make accelerated progress. Programmes for reading, writing, mathematics and specific bespoke sessions for students' individual needs ensure that these students close gaps quickly, early on in their school lives. This support continues right up until their examinations so that this group of students have all the support and encouragement they need to succeed.
- The small proportion of students who have special educational needs and disabilities make good progress and receive the support they need to reach standards appropriate to their abilities by the time they leave school. Bespoke alternative programmes with qualifications to meet their needs are managed well by the staff to ensure that these students leave well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment.

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	138706
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	449701

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	884
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Stahelin
Headteacher	Robert Lamb
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01484 412990
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