

Kingstone High School

Kingstone, Hereford, HR2 9HJ

Inspection dates 30 April–1 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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, supported by other senior leaders, has demonstrated a relentless determination to drive up standards. As a result, teaching and achievement across the school are improving rapidly.
- Leaders at all levels have accurately identified previous weaknesses of the school and use them as the basis for well-considered strategies for improvement.
- Leaders' skills in using information about students' progress have developed rapidly. This enables them to hold teachers to account and identify students at risk of falling behind.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the school. They are well informed, realistic and have made wise long-term plans.
- Teaching is good. Engaging resources and clear explanation help students to learn well. Teachers check students' understanding regularly so that they can adapt the lesson when necessary.
- Students' attitudes to learning are overwhelmingly positive. They behave well in lessons and during social times, and take pride in their work. They feel safe in school and are right to do so.
- Students currently make good progress in almost all subjects, including English and mathematics. Attainment and rates of progress have risen sharply this academic year.
- Disadvantaged students are making good progress and catching up with their classmates and other students nationally.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, the work is not sufficiently challenging for the most-able or proves a little confusing for weaker students.
- Although books are well marked, students do not always meet the school's expectation that they respond to teachers' comments. Sometimes this is because they do not know how to make the improvements.
- Standards in some subjects are not checked reliably against those in other schools.
- Although all students are prepared for life in modern Britain, some do not work effectively with different communities from theirs.
- The skills taught in English lessons are not sufficiently reinforced in other subjects because the teaching of reading is not fully coordinated across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons, taught by 23 different teachers; two observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also visited an assembly and observed students' conduct at break and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with senior and other leaders, class teachers; and governors who also represent the academy trust.
- Inspectors met formally with three groups of students and spoke informally with many others.
- Inspectors looked at books and folders in lessons. They scrutinised some students' work in depth to look at literacy, and checked the accuracy of teachers' assessments of attainment and progress. They also looked at information on students' targets and current levels of achievement.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents. These included school development plans and their evaluations, records of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, individual student case studies, school policies, records of support provided for vulnerable students and information on their progress, reports to parents and school publicity information.
- Inspectors took into account the 40 recent responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and comments about the parent forum supplied by the school. They also considered the 30 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Owen	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Cooper	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kingstone High School is a smaller than average-sized secondary school. The number of students on roll is currently decreasing.
- The school is part of the Kingstone Academy Trust with the adjacent Kingstone and Thruxton Primary School. The two schools share a governing body and the headteacher serves as executive headteacher of the primary school.
- Almost all students come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The proportion of students who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care, is below average.
- At Key Stage 4, eight students currently attend Herefordshire and Ludlow College and a very small number attend the Keith St Peters Hair Academy to follow work-related courses for one day each week. A similarly small number of students at Key Stage 3 and at Key Stage 4 have taken up full-time placements at The Aconbury Centre or St David's Centre, local short-stay schools which offer alternative educational provision.
- The school does not use early entry to GCSE examinations.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is used to improve the reading skills of students.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The headteacher was appointed to his post permanently from December 2014. The deputy headteacher took up his post permanently in January 2015. The subject leaders for mathematics and science have also been appointed to their posts since the last inspection.
- The school holds the British Council International School award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - the work set in all lessons is appropriately challenging for all students to make outstanding progress
 - all students understand how to improve their work and are able to act on teachers' written guidance and answer their questions.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - increasing the opportunities for students to work with other communities which are different from their own
 - developing a coherent approach to teaching skills in reading which all subjects contribute towards
 - ensuring that links with other schools provide all subjects with the opportunity to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher accurately identified weaknesses in the school at the time of the last inspection. He set about addressing them in a direct and determined way, ably assisted by other senior leaders. He has ensured that information about students' attainment and progress is collected regularly and analysed and communicated to all the staff. On this basis, he makes sure that teachers and subject leaders are held to account for students' progress. Any underperformance by teachers or by students is tackled promptly. The result is an ethos which is fully focused on good achievement and effective teaching.
- The school raised its expectations of students' behaviour at the start of this academic year. Staff and students report that this has led to a marked improvement in students' conduct.
- Leaders' evaluations of the school are accurate. Their judgements, both during the inspection and over time, matched those of inspectors. A detailed calendar explains how the quality of teaching and students' progress are checked using assessments, work scrutiny and visits to lessons. This document is central to the school as it explains clearly what leaders expect.
- Subject and other leaders have a good understanding of how to check standards in their area and use this information to make improvements. They share a commitment to high standards and ensuring greater consistency, and understand how they contribute to the progress of the school. Subject leaders have benefited from extensive training and now make good use of data to identify students at risk of falling behind. They make sure that the judgements made about students' work by different teachers are consistent. Some leaders have made arrangements to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments with those of other schools, but others have not.
- The pupil premium has been spent very effectively to improve the attendance of disadvantaged students and ensure that they are fully engaged in their learning. The attendance of this group now exceeds that of other students and disadvantaged students' progress continues to rise. The school evaluates the impact of its provision carefully and adapts its expenditure accordingly.
- The school uses Year 7 catch-up funding effectively and students who arrived at the school with some gaps in their reading skills improve rapidly.
- Leaders create good relationships between students. Good support for disadvantaged students and the school's clear stand against any form of discrimination promotes equality of opportunity effectively.
- The school's curriculum is well balanced. Leaders are committed to preserving its breadth as student numbers decline, for example by sharing teachers with other institutions. The school has plans to replace National Curriculum levels with a single set of age-related expectations for all year groups, but these are in the early stages of development. The school provides a good range of after-school sport and activities in the performing arts.
- The school generally promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through taught lessons, especially in religious education, citizenship, form time and through trips. These provide students with a knowledge of different faiths, democracy and the rule of law, common moral dilemmas and an insight into the experience of societies across the world. However, some students do not have sufficient opportunities to work effectively with communities which are different from their own.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements. Staff keep meticulous records, which are securely stored. The school draws on the sustained involvement of other agencies to help vulnerable students. Staff are well trained to identify students who may be at risk. Regular maintenance, fire drills and clear procedures keep the site safe.
- The school provides good careers guidance and students feel well prepared for their next stage of their lives. Year 11 students found mock interviews conducted by local business people particularly helpful. As a result, the vast majority of students find an appropriate place in further education or training.

- Leaders monitor the progress, behaviour and attendance of students attending alternative provision, rigorously and frequently. They amend the provision if it is not proving successful.
- Leaders evaluate teachers' performance effectively and use the results to make decisions about pay rises and promotion. Staff, including teachers at an early stage of their careers, report that training can be linked to their targets and has brought substantial benefits.
- Staff work effectively with parents, including some who are initially distrustful of education. The school has taken steps to work more closely with the local community, for example by running a youth club for local children. Almost all parents are very supportive of the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors, who also comprise the academy trust, provide effective oversight of the school's work. They ensure that they themselves are properly trained, and seek advice and best practice from a range of sources. They are frank about the limitations of the governing body at the time of the last inspection, and now demonstrate detailed familiarity with teachers' performance, students' achievement and how it compares to that of students nationally. Records of meetings show that governors ask challenging questions of senior leaders.
 - Governors make sure the school stays within its budget and have clear plans to manage the school as student numbers decline. They have a clear vision for the school as a place which puts young people first, meets their social needs and ensures that they make the best possible academic progress.
 - Governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They have ensured that the school meets all its obligations to protect children through the rigorous scrutiny of staff during the appointment process and the monitoring of policies that keep students safe.
 - Governors involve an independent adviser in their management of the headteacher's performance so all decisions concerning his role are well founded. They make sure that pay increases are awarded on the basis of teachers' performance and that underperformance is addressed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Students approach their learning with commitment and enthusiasm, bring the right equipment to class and present their work tidily. They generally understand how their behaviour contributes to learning. Students collaborate effectively in lessons, for example by commenting on a partner's work to help them to improve.
- During the inspection, students were universally polite and helpful. Their conduct at social times is orderly and responsible. They respect the school's facilities and they drop very little litter.
- The school records behavioural incidents carefully. There have been a few incidents of name calling and the school has responded with an appropriate degree of seriousness. Stricter enforcement of new behaviour guidelines led to a rise in fixed-term exclusion earlier this academic year, but the rate is now falling to below the national average. There have been no permanent exclusions this academic year.
- Students told inspectors that behaviour has improved considerably and that lessons are disrupted now on very rare occasions, if at all. This was confirmed by inspection evidence.
- Students understand the value of alternative provision; their attitudes and behaviour when they attend are good or outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Child protection procedures are robust and staff are well trained. As a result, all staff are aware of the various risks to students' safety. Leaders check that visitors pose no risk to students. They take decisive action when needed. The school involves other agencies promptly to support vulnerable students. All

necessary policies and risk assessments are up-to-date and reviewed regularly.

- Students say that they feel very safe in school and almost all parents agree. Students report that bullying is very rare; there is a simple procedure for raising concerns and the school resolves any problems swiftly. They are well informed about different types of risk, including those posed by substance abuse and the internet. The school invited a mental health charity to check on its care for vulnerable students, and the charity found that the school makes good provision.
- The school's work to support students who are persistently absent has led to the rapid reduction of absences of all students and disadvantaged students in particular. As a result, both proportions are now in line with the national averages. The overall attendance rate is improving and is broadly average.
- The school receives daily updates on the attendance of students on alternative provision, and any absence is pursued immediately. Students attending the alternative provision comment that they feel safe and are well supported.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving strongly because leaders have held teachers to account. Year 9 students reported that it had 'improved loads' since they were in Year 7. Relationships between teachers and their classes are conspicuously good. Classrooms exude a positive atmosphere, and well-chosen and attractive resources go a long way to secure students' engagement. Teachers are knowledgeable and explain ideas in a clear and well-structured manner, so that students make secure gains in their understanding.
- Teachers plan work carefully so that it builds on what students can already do. Activities are usually challenging for students of differing abilities, even where the spread of abilities in the class is wide. As a result, students make at least good progress in the very large majority of lessons. In the few lessons where some students make slower progress, the work set for the most-able students lacks sufficient challenge, or students of lower ability struggle for a time as they are unsure what to do.
- Teachers routinely check on the progress made by all students in the class through targeted questioning or the use of mini-whiteboards on which students record their answers. Teachers use the outcomes to adjust the pace and direction of the lesson so that it is focused on what students need to do next. Homework, often precisely based on students' next steps, makes a good contribution to learning.
- In mathematics, attention to routine calculation skills is skilfully combined with new topics. Teachers pay due attention to the practical application of mathematical ideas. Mathematical skills, such as the construction of graphs, are taught effectively in other subjects. Consequently, students across the school are making progress which is good or better.
- In English and in humanities, teachers provide opportunities for writing in a wide range of styles and ensure that students pay careful attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Students receive guidance on how to organise longer pieces of writing. As a result, writing skills develop rapidly. Teachers in English also ensure that students become more confident readers of fiction and develop the skills of close textual analysis. However, the teaching of reading is less well coordinated with other subject areas across the school.
- The school provides well for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Leaders make sure that each individual student's needs are carefully assessed and monitored. Well-trained higher level teaching assistants work closely with teachers to provide small group support which pays careful attention to students' starting points.
- Teachers consistently provide detailed written guidance to students on how to improve their work. Students usually respond in line with the school's expectations by making corrections or addressing additional questions posed by the teacher. However, occasionally the impact of the marking is lost because teachers do not insist that their advice is acted upon. When questioned, some students explained that they did not fully understand what to do.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' achievement has improved considerably since the last inspection. Students who left in 2014 started Year 7 with attainment that was below average. They left Year 11 with attainment which was broadly average overall but below the national average in English. However, as a result of better teaching, students currently in Year 11 are on track for much improved results in 2015, including in English and mathematics.
- The rate at which students make progress has increased rapidly, especially since the start of this academic year. In 2014, the proportions of students who made or exceeded expected progress in English were below the national averages. In mathematics, the proportion who made expected progress was below the national average and the proportion who exceeded expected progress in line with the average.
- Data supplied by the school indicate that all these proportions will be at or above the national average in 2015 and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. In the very large majority of lessons across the school, students make good progress and this is supported by the work in their books. A further scrutiny of work from Year 7 and Year 9 shows a similar picture. In almost all subjects, work is challenging, accurately graded and represents progress from the start of the academic year which is at or above that expected.
- Disadvantaged students left the school in 2014 with attainment on a par with other students in English, and an average of three quarters of a grade below them in mathematics. Compared with other students nationally, they were half a grade behind in English, and one and a third grades behind in mathematics. These results represent a considerable closing of the attainment gap for disadvantaged students compared with other students. School data show that disadvantaged students continue to make progress in lessons at least in line with their peers and so catch up with other students nationally.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress, especially in mathematics. This is because their needs are precisely identified and well-qualified staff build carefully on what they are already able to do. Year 7 'catch-up' funding has been spent largely on specialist literacy teaching and this has been particularly effective in helping students to catch up in reading.
- The most-able students are responding well to work that is appropriately challenging. For example, in a Year 7 French lesson, they were able to write in three tenses and showed an extended ability to manipulate language. Work scrutinised by inspectors and the schools' information suggest that the progress of the most-able students is increasing rapidly, especially in mathematics. This reflects the school's clearer expectations for this group and means that more of these students are attaining at the higher levels.
- Students undertaking work-related courses are making good or outstanding progress in acquiring the technical knowledge and skills required for employment in their chosen field. The very small number of students attending the short-stay schools are also making good progress from their starting points. This is because the alternative provision is allowing them to overcome the medical and social difficulties which are impeding their academic progress.

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	137073
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	462573

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	381
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Shearer
Headteacher	Steven Fisher
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2013
Telephone number	01981 250224
Fax number	01981 251392
Email address	admin@kingstoneacademy.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and *inspects* to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234)
Textphone: [0161 618 8524](tel:01616188524)
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015

