

King's Norton Boys' School

Northfield Road, Birmingham B30 1DY

Inspection dates

2–3 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders did not respond to the recommendations from the previous inspection with sufficient urgency. As a result, the school has not improved as quickly as it could have.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across all subjects and year groups, including mathematics and science.
- Teachers sometimes set work which is not challenging enough, particularly for the most-able pupils. Pupils are not always moved on to harder work quickly enough.
- The questions which teachers set for pupils when they mark their work are not always hard enough. Teachers do not always follow the school's marking policy.
- The sixth form requires improvement because teaching is not good enough to help learners make strong progress. Leaders do not check the performance of sixth formers in enough detail.
- Leaders do not always identify precisely how teaching needs to improve between each of the regular assessment points.
- Some subject leaders are not as well trained as others in checking and improving teaching and achievement.
- Although the school improvement plan identifies the correct areas for improvement, many areas do not contain any targets which are to be achieved. As a result, the governing body is unable to hold school leaders to account robustly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching and achievement are improving. The rate of improvement has accelerated since the headteacher joined the school.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are well mannered, polite and courteous.
- Pupils feel safe and secure because they receive high standards of pastoral care and are supported well to become happy and confident learners.
- Disadvantaged pupils are catching up well with their classmates.
- The wide range of subjects effectively supports pupils' personal development as well as their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- Pupils are helped to understand life in modern Britain very well.
- All sixth form learners secured places in employment or education last year.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise achievement so that they are consistently good or better, particularly in mathematics and science, by:
 - making sure that work is always sufficiently challenging for all pupils, particularly the most-able pupils
 - moving pupils on to harder work as soon as they are ready
 - ensuring teachers consistently follow the school's marking policy to show pupils how to improve.
- Improve achievement in the sixth form by checking the progress that individual learners and groups of learners are making in detail so that any underachievement can be tackled quickly.
- Strengthen the impact of all leaders in improving the school's performance by:
 - robustly using assessment information to precisely identify how teaching needs to improve between each assessment point
 - making sure that all subject leaders have the skills to both check teaching and achievement and to improve them
 - including clear and measurable targets in the school development plan and other subject plans at key points throughout the year so that the schools' effectiveness can be objectively and regularly checked.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Although improving, leaders have not yet created a school culture where high expectations are shared among all staff. As a result, pupils do not consistently benefit from good teaching and reach their full potential.
- Leaders, including the governing body, did not respond quickly enough to the recommendations made in the previous inspection. Consequently, outcomes for the past two years for Year 11 pupils in science have not been good enough and progress in mathematics has not been fast enough for many pupils.
- Leaders regularly check pupils' progress in the main school and they have improved the way that they do this over the past year. However, the impact of these checks is not as good as it could be because leaders do not use information about pupils' progress to help them to identify how teaching needs to improve in sufficient detail. Consequently, they are not fully able to check if teaching is continuously improving between each of the assessment points throughout the year.
- School leaders have provided effective support to subject leaders so that they have the skills to check teaching and achievement. However, not all subject leaders are as skilled as others and the strategies which are used to improve teaching are not always as effective as they could be. This is an important reason why teaching and outcomes are not consistently good.
- The school development plan identifies the most important areas for improvement because leaders have an accurate and detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, in many areas, the plan lacks clear and measurable targets with milestones identifying what is to be achieved at key points throughout the year. As a result, it is not possible to objectively evaluate the school's effectiveness at key points during the year so that any weaknesses can be quickly tackled.
- Leaders are aware that outcomes in science and mathematics need to improve. As a result, they have secured good specialist support from a local teaching school alliance and this is helping each of these departments to improve strongly. However, as with the school development plan, the action plans for each of these subjects are not sufficiently precise in order to secure the rapid improvements which are needed. Nevertheless, although there is still some way to go, pupils are making much better progress in these two important subjects than they have previously.
- Leaders have made sure that training and development for teachers is a high priority. This is an important reason why teaching and achievement are improving and why pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour are good. This training is also helping teachers to meet the appropriately challenging targets which are set by leaders for them to improve their work. Teachers value this support and they appreciate that it is having a positive impact on their teaching and the progress of their pupils.
- The school offers a good range and balance of subjects. The programme of popular extra-curricular activities are very well matched to pupils' interests and talents and many of these include arts activities for which the school holds the 'Arts Mark Gold' award. Together, these make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being as well as pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and their understanding of British values and life in modern Britain. For example, assemblies regularly allow pupils to explore issues such as respect and tolerance for the values and views of others from different backgrounds.
- Leaders are making sure that disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school are catching up well with other pupils. This is because they monitor the additional pupil premium funding well and make sure that eligible pupils benefit from the range of additional support which is available.
- Leaders have successfully communicated a clear sense of direction for the school and staff know the school's strategic priorities. Since joining the school, the headteacher, well supported by the senior leadership team, has made sure that important improvements have been implemented and there is a much greater sense of momentum than there has been previously.
- The local authority has provided effective support and challenge over the past year, although it was not as proactive as it should have been during the first year following the previous inspection. The local authority has facilitated two school reviews this year, involving other local schools. In addition, it has been appropriately involved in securing additional support for mathematics and science.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors do not hold the school to account robustly enough for the impact of important strategies contained in the school development plan, science action plan and mathematics action plan.
 - While the governing body meets with subject leaders in order to hold them to account for standards in

their areas, this has not had sufficient impact on securing consistently good teaching and achievement.

- The governing body has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and this is enhanced through appropriately regular visits to the school. Governors have a realistic view of the school and they are appropriately involved in aspects of the school's self-evaluation process. They know that teaching and outcomes are not yet good enough.
- Governors monitor the additional pupil premium funding and they are aware that pupils are catching up well.
- Governors are appropriately involved in making decisions about whether teachers should receive pay rises, based on their pupils making good progress. The governing body also has effective procedures for managing staff underperformance.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are vetted and trained as required and pupils feel safe at school. The school makes safeguarding a high priority through topics that pupils are taught in the curriculum and it liaises with parents and carers as well as a range of external agencies, including the police, when it is necessary so that pupils are fully supported and safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because pupils do not benefit from consistently good lessons and, as a result, do not always make strong progress.
- Some teachers do not always plan learning which is challenging enough, particularly for the most-able pupils. These pupils sometimes have to complete work which is too easy or they spend time working on lower-level activities before moving on to harder work. As a result, time is lost and pupils do not reach the high levels that they are capable of. At other times, pupils of all abilities are not always moved on to more challenging work as soon as they are ready which results in slower progress.
- The school's approach to marking is not used consistently well by all teachers. Teachers are required to give pupils feedback on their areas of strength, set pupils a target to achieve and a question to answer which extends or builds on the work that pupils have completed. When this is done well, pupils are consistently required to think deeply and this helps them to develop greater understanding. However, the questions which are set are not always challenging enough which means that opportunities to accelerate progress are missed.
- Teaching for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is too variable. In some lessons, teachers make sure that the particular learning needs of individuals are accurately met which means that pupils are able to make good progress. However, as with other pupils, sometimes work is not well matched to pupils' skills and abilities, which results in slower progress. Some pupils benefit from additional support in small groups. This aspect of teaching is good because pupils are making good progress in developing basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teaching of mathematics and science is improving as a result of the external support which is in place for teachers. Teachers plan increasingly effective lessons which are appropriately challenging, and the quality of teachers' marking is improving. Teachers in both of these subjects are also developing their skills in asking questions and pupils are being required to think hard more often than in the past.
- Teaching in other subjects, including English, is also improving as a result of good training. For example, work in pupils' books shows better understanding than earlier in the academic year as a result of the improvements which have been made.
- When teaching is good, pupils rise to the challenge of high expectations and make good and sometimes better progress. This is typical in music, art, religious education and design technology.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are predominantly happy and confident learners at school because they know that staff are available to provide a good level of personal and emotional support when it is required. Pupils told inspectors that they value this greatly and the vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that the school takes good care of their children.

- Pupils know the importance of a good education. Most are keen to see greater consistency in lessons and they are keen to achieve their best, both personally and academically.
- Pupils know that physical and emotional well-being are important. This is because the school provides a wide range of sporting activities as well as opportunities for reflection in assemblies and in personal, social and health education lessons. In addition, the school offers a nurture facility for those pupils who require this support.
- Pupils are taught about how to keep safe and they have an age-appropriate understanding of safety matters, including how to stay safe when working online. Pupils understand the different forms in which bullying can occur and they are confident that bullying is always dealt with quickly and effectively by staff, even though incidents are rare. Pupils are aware of the risks associated with drugs and alcohol and they are taught about the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are making good progress, both academically and personally, and their progress and attendance is checked by leaders.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The vast majority of pupils behave sensibly at social times and in lessons. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning most of the time and they try their best, even when teaching is not as good as it should be.
- Relationships between pupils and their teachers are positive. Pupils are respectful towards each other and staff. Most pupils are polite, well mannered and courteous. One pupil said, 'There is no discrimination in this school. We all get on well.'
- Pupils conduct themselves very well when moving around the school and many politely held doors open for inspectors.
- The proportion of pupils who get excluded from school has reduced significantly since the last inspection.
- The majority of pupils attend school regularly. Attendance has improved this year and is now average. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is also improving. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs has been too low in the past, but the attendance of these pupils is beginning to improve this year.
- The behaviour of pupils who attend alternative provision is good.

Outcomes for pupils

requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because they are not consistently good both historically and for pupils who are currently in the school. This is because teaching has not always been good enough and currently is not consistently good.
- Since the last inspection, outcomes for Year 11 pupils in 2014 and 2015 have been variable. In 2014, although an above-average proportion of pupils achieved five or more good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, too many pupils did not make enough progress across a range of subjects. In both years, too many pupils underachieved in mathematics and science.
- The difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others narrowed significantly in 2015 compared to 2014. This was because many more disadvantaged pupils achieved five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics. However, for the past two years, those disadvantaged pupils who joined the school with average attainment have not made enough progress in both English and mathematics, compared to other pupils nationally. Disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school are catching up with their peers well, including those who joined the school with average levels of attainment.
- The most-able pupils do not always reach the high levels of attainment that they are capable of. In the past, too few pupils have achieved the highest GCSE grades. The most-able pupils currently in the school are starting to make better progress. Nevertheless, their achievement is too variable and not consistent across all subjects and year groups.
- As with most other groups of pupils, lower-attaining pupils do not always make good enough progress to help them catch up with others. For example, last year, pupils who received additional support through the Year 7 catch-up programme (which is additional funding given to schools to support those who join with attainment in English and mathematics below what is expected) did not make the rapid progress required to catch up. However, those pupils who are receiving this support this year are making better progress.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress in developing their basic skills, because they receive effective additional support. However, the particular skills and knowledge pupils need to make good progress in all subjects are less well developed by teachers. As a result, pupils do not always make good progress, across all subjects and year groups.
- The progress that pupils are making currently in the school in mathematics and science is improving, though it is not yet as good as it needs to be.
- Outcomes in English have been broadly average for the past two years. Most pupils in the school are making the progress that is expected in English but too few are making good or better progress because teaching is not always good.
- Those pupils who attend alternative provision make good progress, partly as a result of improved relationships with other pupils.

16 to 19 study programmes

requires improvement

- Leadership and management requires improvement because sixth form leaders have not made sure that teaching and outcomes are consistently good. Leaders do not use performance information in sufficient detail. As a result, this inhibits teachers' ability to accurately identify patterns of underachievement between different groups of learners, including those who have similar GCSE results. The approach to analysing this information relating to the performance of sixth form learners is less developed than it is in the main school.
- Outcomes require improvement because standards in the sixth form are not good enough both historically and for learners currently in the school. Learners have not achieved high enough grades in their A level studies for the past two years. In addition, those learners who are the most able do not always excel and reach the very highest A level grades of which they are capable. However, progress is improving because teaching is improving and learners who are currently in Year 13 made much better progress in Year 12 than previous groups have.
- Outcomes in work-related courses have been poor in the past. Leaders have responded to this by removing all but one vocational course from the sixth form curriculum and learners who are currently following the BTEC sport course are making good progress.
- Outcomes for those learners who are required to retake GCSE English or mathematics are good. The vast majority of learners achieve at least a grade C.
- Teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because there is too much inconsistency, which is similar to the main school. In particular, teaching is not always challenging enough, particularly for the most-able learners. In addition, learners are not always moved on to more challenging work quickly enough which means that, occasionally, learning does not proceed at a good pace.
- Teaching is improving in the sixth form and sometimes it is good. Many teachers have a good knowledge of the examination specifications and they use this well to help learners to understand what they have to do to achieve higher grades, for example.
- All learners are following appropriate courses which are based on learners' individual needs and interests. Learners benefit from wider opportunities to develop their leadership and employability skills by supporting younger pupils with reading and working in various parts of the school, for example. A small number of learners benefit from work experience placements. Learners value the good-quality impartial careers advice and guidance which they receive prior to joining the sixth form and which they are able to access while studying their sixth form courses. A good programme of visiting speakers complements this provision well.
- As in the main school, the provision for learners' personal development and welfare is good. Learners appreciate the good levels of support which are available to them from their tutors and the welfare assistant, for example. The life skills course effectively helps learners to understand safety matters, including the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.
- Learners are proud to be members of the sixth form and behaviour is good. Many learners act as strong role models for younger pupils and all dress smartly and look professional. The vast majority of learners attend regularly.
- Retention rates are good from Year 12 to Year 13. The vast majority of learners stay in the sixth form for the full two years. The school is rightly proud of its success in helping learners to move on to higher education, employment or training and the vast majority secure places.

School details

Unique reference number	103562
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10002516

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	674
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Brown
Headteacher	Paul Woodhouse
Telephone number	0121 628 0010
Website	www.kingsnortonboys.bham.sch.uk
Email address	enquiry@kingsnortonboys.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 November 2013

Information about this school

- King's Norton Boys' School is smaller than most secondary schools.
- Almost one third of the pupils are of minority ethnic heritage, which is just above average.
- One in 10 pupils speaks English as an additional language, which is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The pupil premium, which is additional government funding given to schools for children who are looked after and those known to be eligible for free school meals, provides support for almost one third of pupils. This is similar to the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- A very small number of pupils attend three other institutions on a full-time basis. Pupils follow courses at Bournville College, The Reach School and a local centre called The Flexible Learning Centre.
- A small number of sixth form pupils attend King's Norton Girls' School for part of the week to study some of their courses and some pupils from the girls' school study at King's Norton Boys' School.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2014.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 31 lessons, 12 of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. The inspection team made several short visits to other lessons with senior leaders to check on the progress and behaviour of different groups of pupils. Inspectors also looked at a wide range of work in pupils' books.
- Meetings were held with four groups of pupils from all year groups. Other meetings were held with members of the governing body and with senior leaders and staff, including those responsible for leading subjects. The lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 78 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also analysed 78 responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire as well as responses to a questionnaire which the school uses.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including those relating to the monitoring of teaching and the targets set for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at records relating to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding, the school's development plan and plans for improving mathematics and science. In addition, inspectors analysed a wide range of information on pupils' performance.

Inspection team

Richard Sutton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Bromfield	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Kent	Ofsted Inspector
David Smith	Ofsted Inspector

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