

Kingswood Secondary Academy

Gainsborough Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9NS

Inspection dates

2–3 November 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not good enough to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. Not all teachers set pupils work that contains sufficient challenge.
- Where teachers do not pitch work at the right level, pupils are not fully engaged in their learning and fail to make sufficient progress.
- Although outcomes are rising for current pupils in mathematics and science in Years 7 to 11, a minority of key stage 4 pupils fail to make the progress they should in these subjects.
- While exclusions are reducing, the proportion of pupils who are excluded from the school more than once is above national levels.

The school has the following strengths

- In the short time he has been at the school, the principal has taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes at the school.
- Leaders at all levels have an accurate view of the quality of the school's provision. They take swift action where they identify any underperformance.
- There are pockets of very strong teaching at the school. Where this occurs, pupils engage well with their learning.
- Outcomes for pupils are now improving. Greater proportions of pupils currently at the school make the progress they should at key stages 3 and 4.
- A much higher proportion of current most-able pupils are making the progress they should, particularly at key stage 4.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who make the progress they should in their learning is rapidly increasing, particularly at key stage 3.
- Teachers' opportunities to receive training link closely to the school's priorities.
- Attendance at the school is average, for all groups of pupils.
- The sixth form is good. The teaching and the support sixth-form students receive enable them to achieve well so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding work closely together to ensure that pupils are safe.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those for whom English is an additional language, make strong progress in their learning. This is due to the close support they receive.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to secure further improvement in pupils' outcomes and their attitudes to learning, particularly in key stage 4 mathematics and science, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - use assessment information about their pupils to plan appropriate learning activities
 - plan activities that provide sufficient support and challenge for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and the most able, to enable them to make at least the progress they should.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who have more than one exclusion from the school by developing further the support these pupils receive to manage their behaviour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, ably supported by his senior leaders, has taken decisive action to implement a culture of higher expectations of both staff and pupils. In so doing, he has focused unremittingly on improving the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes and their behaviour. This focus has led to improvements in all three of these areas. However, the principal rightly recognises that there is more to do to ensure that the improvements in teaching and pupils' outcomes are secure and consistently evident across all subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Leaders at all levels have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have engaged with external advisers to confirm this evaluation. Leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of the actions they have taken to improve the school's provision, and of what actions they need to take.
- Senior leaders work closely with subject leaders to check on the quality of teaching and on pupils' achievement in their subject areas. They quickly identify where performance does not meet the school's raised expectations, and undertake effective action to challenge this. Because of this, teaching and pupils' achievement are both improving across most subject areas at both key stages 3 and 4. Senior leaders, however, rightly recognise that these improvements are not sufficiently well established in mathematics and science at key stage 4 to enable pupils to make good or better progress in these subjects.
- Leadership of achievement is good. Senior leaders have engaged well with educational advisers from the multi-academy trust to ensure that teachers' checks on pupils' progress are accurate. Consequently, senior leaders are secure in their evaluation of pupils' outcomes across all years. They use this information effectively to identify quickly where pupils are falling behind and ensure that appropriate support is in place to enable them to catch up. Because of this, pupils' outcomes are now improving across most subjects at both key stages 3 and 4.
- The school uses additional funding effectively to support disadvantaged pupils and those pupils in Year 7 who arrive at the school behind in their communication and numeracy skills. Leaders regularly review the support these pupils receive, and adapt the support as appropriate. As a result, those pupils who are entitled to this additional funding who have previously fallen behind are now catching up. Where this is not the case, senior leaders ensure that these pupils receive further support.
- The leader of the provision that supports the pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities uses additional funding well to support these pupils in their learning. For example, adults who work closely with these pupils receive training through this funding to ensure that the support they provide is effective. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in their learning, due to the effective support they receive.

- Senior leaders have rightly increased the rigour with which they manage teachers' performance. Teachers' performance targets focus strongly on pupils' achievement, including the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This has led to improved outcomes in most subject areas at both key stages 3 and 4, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- The training that teachers receive links closely to the school's priorities for improvement. Staff are able to access wide-ranging opportunities to develop their classroom practice, particularly through sharing best practice and receiving training from the multi-academy trust's Learning Alliance. Staff recognise the importance of these opportunities to reflect on their classroom practice and develop their teaching.
- The well-designed curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad range of subjects. Furthermore, leaders have adapted the curriculum to meet the different learning needs of the school's pupils. For example, the most able have been provided with the opportunity to study more rigorous academic qualifications at key stage 4, including all three science subjects. The least able receive extra opportunities to develop their communication and numeracy skills where this is necessary. Extra-curricular opportunities, such as educational visits and pupils' involvement in youth achievement awards, further enhance this curriculum and help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- There are wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to secure their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including their understanding of fundamental British values. The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme, together with assemblies, provides pupils with effective opportunities to consider their place in the community, both within the school and the wider community. Pupils have a secure understanding of their need to show respect to others. As one pupil said, 'People get on with each other naturally, because they think it is the right thing to do.'
- Until recently, the school had recruitment problems in mathematics and science. Currently, the school continues to have recruitment problems in science.

Governance

- Due to the regular reviews they receive of the quality of the school's provision, governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths, and areas to improve. They are committed to ensuring that the school's provision continues to improve.
- Governors undertake their own, separate activities to ensure that the information that they receive from senior leaders about the school's effectiveness is accurate. This has included using educational advisers who are external to both the school and the trust to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision.
- Governors' accurate view of the quality of the school's provision has enabled them to provide effective support using the multi-academy trust's educational advisers.
- The safeguarding governor works closely with senior leaders to ensure that the school's safeguarding procedures are effective, and that staff receive appropriate training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- The senior leader who has responsibility for safeguarding manages a highly effective team of safeguarding leaders who are committed to securing pupils' safety. There is a strong and palpable safeguarding ethos in the school. This is evident in the very careful attention given to all pupils, especially those who are experiencing difficulties, to ensure that they receive the support they need. Where they have concerns about pupils' welfare, safeguarding leaders take prompt and appropriate action, including working closely with parents and carers. Safeguarding leaders make timely referrals to local agencies. They are tenacious in their contact with these agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support they require.
- Through their close work with local agencies, safeguarding leaders have a clear understanding of the issues in the local area that may affect the welfare of their pupils. Where the designated safeguarding lead identifies an emerging issue, he ensures that all staff receive the appropriate information to support the school's pupils.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. They receive regular information relating to safeguarding, including training on child protection, the different types of abuse, how to stay safe online, and preventing radicalisation and extremism. Because of this training, staff are aware of the signs to look for to recognise where pupils may be experiencing difficulties. Furthermore, staff are aware of the actions they must take when they have concerns relating to a child's welfare.
- Pupils receive wide-ranging opportunities to learn how to be safe, including through the PSHE programme and through assemblies. For example, pupils have learned about road safety, being safe online and being safe in relationships with other people.
- Those pupils inspectors met said that there are people they can speak to if they have any concerns, including school counsellors. They are confident that adults would listen to them and take the appropriate action.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable across the school to enable pupils to make good or better progress across a range of subjects, particularly in mathematics and science in key stage 4.
- Where learning is less effective, teachers do not use information about pupils' prior learning well to plan tasks that are suitably challenging. Where this is the case, pupils undertake work that is too easy. On these occasions, pupils do not fully engage with their learning and as a result do not make the progress that they should in their learning.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers have positive relationships with their pupils. Teachers set tasks that are appropriate to pupils' levels of ability, taking into account their prior learning. They ask questions to establish pupils' understanding, and provide support where it is required. For example, in a Year 11 mathematics lesson, the teacher provided support to those pupils who found calculating an angle of a triangle difficult. The teacher's support enabled these pupils to identify where they had gone wrong, and complete the task successfully.

- Pupils in Year 7 undertake a curriculum in humanities that is enabling them to develop their communication skills and grow in confidence in their learning. This is enabling these pupils to make more rapid progress in their learning, particularly in developing their communication skills. In a humanities lesson, an inspector observed Year 7 pupils discussing the concept of change. The pupils were able to enter discussions with each other, and were confident in taking an active part in their learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support from their teachers. Teachers receive detailed information about these pupils and their learning needs, which they use well to plan their lessons. As a result, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in their learning.
- Pupils in key stage 3 receive weekly opportunities in their English lessons to engage in reading. English teachers closely monitor the impact that this is having on the development of pupils' communication skills. Through this close monitoring, the teachers are able to ensure that pupils read from suitably challenging books. Those pupils, including the most able, whom an inspector heard read, were able to do so with fluency and confidence. All demonstrated an understanding of the importance of being able to read, and were able to talk about books they had read.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- On those occasions when teachers do not plan suitably challenging activities, pupils can fail to engage fully in their work. Where this occurs, pupils do not demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils receive wide-ranging opportunities to develop their understanding of how to be safe, including being safe online, road safety and being safe in their relationships. Due to these opportunities, pupils have a secure understanding of how to be safe.
- Those pupils whom inspectors met said that they feel safe at the school. They said that there are people whom they can speak to where they have concerns. Pupils said that they are confident that staff would listen to them and would take appropriate action.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and cyber bullying. Pupils who met inspectors said that bullying at the school is rare. The school's records confirm this to be the case. Pupils said that, where bullying might occur, they are able to speak to members of staff who take prompt and effective action.
- The large majority of parents who expressed a view through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is safe at the school, and that teachers deal effectively with any bullying that may occur.

- Leaders effectively monitor the attendance, welfare and progress of those pupils who are educated elsewhere. They meet regularly with the organisations that provide education off-site to ensure that the pupils are making appropriate progress in their learning. The regular checks senior leaders undertake also ensure that pupils behave well when educated elsewhere.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- While there has been a reduction in the proportion of pupils who are excluded from the school, the proportion of those who are excluded more than once remains above national averages. This is because the strategies that leaders have put into place to support those pupils who display challenging behaviours are not yet fully established.
- Where pupils are not suitably challenged by the work that teachers set, they can engage in off-task behaviour. Such behaviour slows the progress that these pupils make.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school site is appropriate. They conduct themselves in a calm and appropriate manner, and interact well with each other when moving between lessons and during social times.
- Attendance at the school is good. For all pupil groups, the proportion of pupils who are absent from school, including those who are regularly absent, is at least in line with national levels.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, achievement at the school has been below national averages, particularly at key stage 4. The principal, on his arrival at the school, took swift and decisive action to address this issue. As a result, pupils' outcomes in 2016 improved on those of their peers in previous academic years. Pupils' attainment improved, including the proportion of pupils who attained the basic measure of attaining a grade C or above in English and mathematics. The principal rightly recognises that, while improved, pupils' progress in their studies at GCSE in 2016 was not as high as it should have been.
- The school's performance information for current pupils in key stages 3 and 4 indicates that there are increased proportions of pupils who are making the progress they should, across a range of subjects. The books that inspectors looked at confirmed this to be the case. However, the proportion of key stage 4 pupils who make the progress they should is too low in mathematics and science.
- Greater proportions of current most-able pupils are making at least the progress they should across a range of subjects, particularly at key stage 4. This is due to the increased attention these pupils receive from teachers. However, not enough of these pupils are making more than the progress they should in mathematics and science in key stage 4.

- The proportion of the school's current disadvantaged pupils who are making the progress they should in key stages 3 and 4 has increased significantly, particularly in English. This is due to teachers' increased focus on these pupils' outcomes, and the effective use of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils who are falling behind. However, as leaders rightly recognise, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who make the progress they should in mathematics and science in key stage 4, although improving, is still not high enough when compared with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress in their learning. This is due to the close support these pupils receive from their teachers, and the small-group support that they receive outside lessons. Those pupils in the school's specialist provision make strong progress due to the support that they receive, which is appropriate to their individual needs.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make strong progress in their learning. This is due to the intense support they receive in developing their communication and numeracy skills.
- Nearly all pupils who arrive at the school having previously fallen behind in their communication and numeracy skills are able to catch up rapidly. This is due to the support they receive through the Year 7 literacy and numeracy funding. Those pupils who do not catch up quickly enough receive further support.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leadership of the sixth form is good. The head of sixth form has high expectations for the students. He ensures that all students receive appropriate advice and guidance to ensure that they embark on the most appropriate courses based on their prior attainment and their career aspirations. Through regularly checking students' progress, the head of sixth form is able to ensure that students receive the support they require to make the progress they should in their learning.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Students have excellent relationships with each other and with their teachers, and are committed to their studies. Where learning is most effective, students receive close support from their teachers to ensure that they are secure in their understanding. They engage well in class discussions, considering the views of others and contributing their own ideas. For example, in a Year 13 English literature lesson, an inspector observed that students were confident in presenting their ideas to each other on the concept of 'love through the ages'.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. In 2016, students' progress across most subjects improved towards being above the national average, in both the academic and work-related courses. There was also an increase in the proportion of students who attained the higher grades in the academic subjects. In terms of both attainment and progress, this represented a significant improvement on those outcomes achieved in 2015. This was due to the closer support students received, particularly in ensuring that they were completing appropriate courses.

- Students receive wide-ranging opportunities to secure their personal development and welfare, and to develop their understanding of life in modern Britain. They are able to take on positions of responsibility within the school. For example, students provide support for younger pupils who have fallen behind in their literacy skills. Through these opportunities, students are able to act as effective role models to younger pupils.
- Students know how to be safe, including how to be safe online and how to live healthy lifestyles. Students who work with key stages 3 and 4 pupils receive effective training on safeguarding. This enables them to understand how to provide support for pupils who may be experiencing difficulties.
- Levels of attendance are above average. This is due to the head of sixth form's close monitoring of students' attendance, and the closer support students receive in choosing their sixth-form courses.
- Due to the effective support they receive, the proportion of students who secure a grade C or above in GCSEs English and mathematics is high. In 2016, all students who did not have a grade C or above in either GCSE English or mathematics attained at least this grade while in the sixth form.
- Students receive effective careers advice and guidance as they prepare for their next steps after the conclusion of studies in the sixth form. All students who completed their studies in 2016 progressed to appropriate higher education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training.
- The proportion of students who leave the sixth form during the academic year has reduced significantly. This is due to the improved advice, guidance and support that students now receive prior to arriving in the sixth form.
- Students benefit from a range of work experience opportunities as part of their studies in the sixth form. These opportunities enable them to explore their future career interests, and enable them to prepare more carefully for their next steps.

School details

Unique reference number	139957
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10021390

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,138
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wayne Norrie
Principal	Andrew Burton
Telephone number	01536 741 857
Website	www.kingswoodsecondaryacademy.org
Email address	enquiries@kingswoodsecondaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	21–22 April 2015

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Kingswood Secondary Academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school.

- The school is sponsored by the Greenwood Dale Foundation Trust. The trust is responsible for the school's governance. The school has an 'academy advisory committee'. This consists of a small group of parents and staff. However, the multi-academy trust holds all legal responsibilities for the school.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is smaller than average.
- The number of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or with an education, health and care plan is much higher than average. The school provides a specially resourced provision for six pupils aged 11 to 16 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. In this provision, the pupils have autistic spectrum disorders.
- The school works with one alternative provider, the CE Academy, which provides pupils with education off the school site.
- The principal who was in place at the time of the inspection left the school at the end of the summer term in 2015. His replacement, the current principal, took up the substantive post in January 2016. There was an acting principal in charge of the school in the autumn term of 2015.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards for pupils' achievement at key stage 4 in 2015.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 lessons and three parts of lessons. The lead inspector conducted two observations jointly with the principal. Inspectors also observed form time and two assemblies. An inspector listened to pupils read, including some most-able pupils.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books from across all year groups within lessons and as a separate activity. They conducted the separate activity with subject leaders.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the alternative provider which pupils from the school attend to be educated elsewhere.
- The lead inspector held a range of meetings, including with the principal, members of the safeguarding team, including the designated safeguarding lead, the achievement lead and a selection of staff. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, as well as the trust's regional educational director.
- Other inspectors held a range of meetings with the school's leaders, including the behaviour and achievement lead; the teaching and learning lead; the head of sixth form; the lead who has oversight of the pupil premium and Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding; subject leaders; pastoral leaders; the special educational needs coordinator; the looked after children designated teacher; the PSHE coordinator; and the professional development lead.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils from across all year groups, both formally and informally.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in and between lessons, and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, behaviour and attendance, achievement, the external review of the school's provision, governance and safeguarding. The lead inspector checked the school's single central register.
- Inspectors considered the 53 parental responses to Parent View, including free-text written comments parents completed.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 48 staff and the eight pupils who responded to their respective online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Fulbrook	Ofsted Inspector
Dorothy Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Clive Worrall	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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