

The Kingsfold Christian School

Moss Lane, Hesketh Bank, Preston, Lancashire PR4 6AA

Inspection dates

7–9 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is at the heart of this school's success. He is a calm and quietly inspirational leader and everyone within the school community values his strong leadership.
- This is a truly inclusive school where every pupil is valued. Vulnerable pupils and those facing difficult circumstances are supported very effectively. Staff nurture pupils and help them to thrive and achieve.
- Throughout their time in the school, pupils make good progress. They gain qualifications that enable them to move on to further education.
- Despite the school's small size and limited resources, leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad curriculum.
- Opportunities exist for pupils to develop their personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. However, the PSHE education programme is not sufficiently rigorous.
- The school's philosophy promotes respect for diversity. It does not do enough, however, to foster greater understanding of issues relating to sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Pupils benefit from good teaching and have very positive attitudes to their learning. Teachers have very effective relationships with their pupils. These factors, alongside the very small class sizes, contribute significantly to the good progress that pupils make.
- The most able pupils are not routinely given the opportunity to work at the highest level. Key stage 3 pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their extended writing skills.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is exemplary. They are routinely respectful, polite and helpful to their peers and to adults.
- Governors make an effective contribution to the leadership of the school. The chair of governors has the relevant skills and expertise to provide practical support to the headteacher.
- Limited staffing and resources mean that the headteacher has to spend a great deal of his time on routine, day-to-day activities. Consequently, he has not been able to give sufficient priority to the strategic leadership of the school, including the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management further by:
 - using self-evaluation and development planning more effectively to drive improvements across the school
 - sharpening procedures for systematically monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning across the school
 - doing more to foster greater understanding of issues relating to sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Provide a more comprehensive PSHE education programme for pupils of all ages in school, covering a wider range of topics, including sex and relationships education.
- Improve pupils' achievement further by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are routinely given the opportunity to work at the highest level
 - pupils in key stage 3 have enough opportunities to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The positive impact that the headteacher has on this school community cannot be overstated. He is at the heart of all its success. He leads by example in a calm and quietly inspirational way, and staff, pupils and parents speak very highly of his leadership. He has created a family ethos in the school alongside a culture of high expectations. Within this nurturing environment, pupils thrive and are able to reach their potential.
- There is a strong sense that everyone at Kingsfold Christian School, staff and pupils alike, cares for and looks out for each other. The headteacher is honest, open and transparent in all that he does and models this behaviour to his staff and pupils. Consequently, genuinely strong and positive relationships exist across the school.
- This is a very inclusive school that welcomes every pupil. It has a strong reputation for welcoming vulnerable pupils and those who may be facing particularly challenging circumstances. These pupils, in particular, benefit from the small size of the school and the nurturing family ethos. Staff do everything that they can to meet each pupil's needs and ensure that they feel safe and valued. This has a very positive impact on the progress that pupils make.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, with 100% of those who responded to the online questionnaire saying that they would recommend it to other parents. Over a third of parents at the school took the time to respond in detail, explaining how much they value the support that their children receive. Their comments focused on the genuine care that their children receive and the commitment of the staff. Parents commented on how their children feel safe, confident and happy. They also commented on the positive difference that they had noticed in their children if they had moved here from another school where they may have been encountering difficulties.
- Staff are equally positive and proud to work at the school. They feel valued and that the headteacher provides strong leadership. They understand that funds are limited, which means that they are not able to access a great deal of external training. However, they appreciate that they are able to attend training to help them teach the new subject specifications effectively.
- Despite the small size of the school and limited resources, leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad curriculum that gives them experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic education. Pupils in key stages 2 and 3 access some of the curriculum through a series of workbooks. During this part of the day, they work individually at their own desks, taking responsibility for their own learning. Pupils have mixed feelings about this type of work. While they feel that they are learning a lot, they find the process rather boring and repetitive. In key stage 4 and the rest of time in key stages 2 and 3, pupils have the opportunity to learn in different ways with their teacher in a classroom environment.

- Leaders ensure that pupils across all key stages have access to a range of activities outside the school. Recent visits have included trips to the theatre, museums, a marine centre, a safari park, a castle, a gurdwara and a farm. This is alongside field trips and visits to the local fire and police stations. Pupils' experiences are also enhanced by visiting speakers, such as local political candidates and people working for charities overseas. This extensive range of visits and speakers contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as helping to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have appropriate access to physical education. Pupils in key stage 2 really enjoy their weekly swimming lessons. Pupils can also choose to do extra-curricular activities, particularly within the area of music.
- The school's philosophy promotes respect for diversity. It does this very effectively in terms of religion, race and disability. In relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, this is not done effectively enough. Not enough priority is given to these aspects, particularly within the PSHE education programme.
- Key stage 2 and key stage 3 pupils have weekly PSHE education lessons. While the daily 'devotions' time provides an opportunity for all pupils to discuss a range of issues, there are no formal PSHE education lessons for pupils in key stage 4. Following discussions with the inspector, leaders now understand the importance of this aspect of education for all pupils, particularly in relation to preparing them for life in modern Britain. They also now understand how more effective sex and relationships education contributes to the work that they do to safeguard their pupils.
- The school operates in the context of limited funding, which has an impact on staffing and the quality of the learning environment. Staff do their best to ensure that the rather 'tired' surroundings of the main school building provide an appropriate environment for the pupils. The classrooms in the new church building provide bright and modern learning spaces.
- The very small number of staff has an impact on the leadership capacity within the school. The headteacher has to carry out a range of roles, many of which involve day-to-day tasks. This means that he is unable to focus effectively on the strategic leadership of the school. The self-evaluation document and development plan show that he has an accurate picture of the school, but he has not been able to use these effectively to drive further improvement.
- Procedures for systematically monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school are not strong enough. This is because the headteacher is so busy with other tasks that he has not been able to carry out this leadership role effectively. This has prevented the quality of teaching from improving even further.
- The headteacher has ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

Governance

- The governors are an asset to the school. They provide an extra layer of leadership and effective support for the headteacher and his staff. The chair of governors has the necessary skills and expertise to help drive improvements in the school. Governors are reflective. The most recent audit of their skills shows that they have sharpened their practice over the last few years. They are aware that there is an urgent need to tackle the issues of leadership capacity and progression planning to secure the long-term future of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a very strong focus on keeping pupils safe. Procedures are robust and leaders fulfil their statutory duties effectively. The safeguarding policy is in line with the latest government guidance and is available to parents on request. Staff have received training on their responsibilities and on potential areas of risk for children and young people.
- The single central record of pre-employment checks on staff meets safeguarding requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have very strong relationships with their pupils. The small class sizes mean that teachers know their pupils extremely well and meet their individual needs. Teachers are able to give time and attention to each pupil, which helps them to make good progress.
- Teachers use their expertise and passion for their subjects to enthuse and involve pupils in their learning. Teachers are very clear when explaining aspects of their subjects to pupils and they check their understanding before moving on. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers create a culture in their classrooms where pupils feel safe, comfortable and valued. Pupils are not afraid to make mistakes and are encouraged to be resilient. This has a positive impact on their learning.
- Some teachers use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding, giving them time to develop their ideas in more depth, but this is not consistent across the school. The most able pupils, particularly in key stage 4, are not routinely given the opportunity to work at the highest level.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work revealed that teachers are generally giving feedback in line with the school's policy and this is helping pupils to make progress. Key stage 3 pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their extended writing skills across the curriculum.
- The school has a system to assess how well pupils are progressing. Parents receive regular and clear information about how their children are doing in school. They also have the opportunity to discuss this in more detail at parents evenings.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The nurturing ethos of the school creates an environment in which pupils can thrive. Staff work extremely well with parents to make sure that pupils' welfare needs are met and managed sensitively so that they can flourish. All pupils are well cared for, particularly those who are vulnerable.
- The family ethos of the school means that pupils' personal and social skills are developed through spending time throughout the day with others who are much older or younger than they are.
- Pupils are thoughtful, articulate and confident. Many of them exhibit a maturity beyond their years. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to express how much they value the support that they receive from staff.
- Pupils benefit from a very effective careers education programme that helps them to make appropriate choices about their future.
- This is a school that values individuals. Pupils are respectful of others. Leaders have been successful in creating a culture where pupils feel safe and happy. However, they need to do more to ensure that any pupil would feel confident and comfortable to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave extremely well around the school. They routinely demonstrate the school's Christian principles of kindness, cooperation, respect, personal responsibility and honesty. They are very welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils have a very positive attitude to their learning, which helps them to make good progress. In key stages 3 and 4, lessons are never disrupted by poor behaviour. On occasions, the off-task behaviour of a very small number of key stage 2 pupils disrupts their own learning and that of others.
- The majority of pupils have high attendance levels. Staff work closely with the families of the small number of pupils who have difficulty attending school regularly. These pupils are now spending less time away from school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- When pupils enter the school, which can be at any age between six and 16, they start with a set of diagnostic tests. This provides the school with a baseline from which to track their progress. The achievement data provided by the headteacher in relation to past and current pupils indicates that, throughout the time that they spend in school, they make good progress across a range of subjects.

- The numbers in Year 11 over recent years have been very small so it is not possible to comment on their outcomes in terms of percentages or trends. However, these pupils left the school having made good progress from their different starting points and attaining good GCSE grades which enabled them to move on to further education. Information about past pupils also shows that the majority have then gone on to continue their education at university.
- As the school does not receive additional funding for disadvantaged pupils, the headteacher does not identify this group within school. However, the high expectations made of all pupils and personalised support that they receive mean that pupils who may be disadvantaged make rates of progress in line with those of others elsewhere.
- The high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well in this school. This is because they benefit from the highly personalised support that they receive.
- Observation of pupils' learning and scrutiny of their work provide evidence of the good progress that pupils in all key stages make. However, although teachers have high expectations of their pupils, there is not enough focus on ensuring that the most able pupils go on to attain the highest possible GCSE grades.
- Pupils learn to read well. Staff understand the importance of developing independent reading skills as early as possible. This enables pupils to progress more effectively in all areas of the curriculum. Most pupils in key stage 2 are reading at a level above that typically expected for their age.

School details

Unique reference number	119844
DfE registration number	888/6019
Inspection number	10026005

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	39
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Hesketh Bank Christian Centre
Chair	Mr Nicholas Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Lamin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1,980–£3,564
Telephone number	01772 813824
Website	–
Email address	stevelamin@yahoo.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 November 2006

Information about this school

- The Kingsfold Christian School is an independent day school. It is attached to the Hesketh Bank Christian Centre. It caters for boys and girls aged six to 16 years.
- The school was registered in October 1987. It is located on a two-acre site and the buildings provide accommodation for both educational and church activities.
- The school is registered for up to 60 pupils. There are currently 39 pupils on roll.

- The school aims are to provide a good education, teaching a range of academic subjects and life skills, underpinned by biblical teachings. It aims to encourage each member of the school community to make the best of their abilities, working in a partnership between children, staff and parents. The intrinsic philosophy of the school community is to help children value themselves and those who have different personalities, backgrounds and cultures, promoting a respect for and interest in diversity, and preparing them for life in a global society.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector toured the school site, accompanied by a senior member of staff.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning across the school. She observed pupils' conduct in lessons and at other times during the school day.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and the chair of the governing body. She spoke to five members of teaching staff following observations of their lessons. She met formally with three groups of pupils and spoke to others at other times during the school day. The inspector listened to a small number of pupils reading aloud.
- The inspector scrutinised a sample of pupils' work from across all three key stages.
- The inspector reviewed documents to confirm compliance with the independent school standards and provide other inspection evidence. These documents included: various policies; health and safety records and other safeguarding information; data relating to past and current pupils' achievement; self-evaluation and improvement plan; minutes of meetings; and the admissions and attendance registers.
- The inspector took account of the 13 responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey. The inspector also considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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