

Kingsmeadow Community Comprehensive School

Market Lane, Dunston, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE11 9NX

Inspection dates

25–26 April 2017

| 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 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In the past, leaders have not implemented the necessary actions to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- The progress made by pupils over time has not been rapid enough, especially in English, science and mathematics. Current assessment information indicates that an improving proportion of pupils are now making better progress. However, this is not yet consistent across the school.
- Leaders do not use funding for disadvantaged pupils effectively. Over time, disadvantaged pupils have not made good enough progress.
- Recently introduced systems to manage the performance of teachers are beginning to make a difference, but variations in the quality of teaching remain across the school.
- Persistent absenteeism for disadvantaged pupils remains high; because of this some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Some middle leaders are beginning to improve the quality of teaching, however not all have an incisive understanding of the progress of pupils in their subject areas.
- Questioning is not used skilfully enough to extend, challenge or deepen the knowledge and understanding of pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently set tasks which sufficiently extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of key subject content. This limits progress, particularly for the most able and most-able disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders' evaluation of the current learning and progress of pupils, in some instances, is too positive.

The school has the following strengths

- Systems to keep pupils safe are strong. Pupils feel safe and are safe in the school.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are smartly dressed and are respectful towards staff and visitors.
- Leaders' recent actions to improve assessment systems are beginning to bear fruit. Teachers have a clearer picture of gaps in pupils' achievement. Consequently, there are green shoots of improvement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the many opportunities they have to experience learning outside of the classroom.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - raising expectations of what different groups of pupils can achieve, in particular disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that leaders, including middle leaders, have an accurate, realistic picture of the school's current performance so that they can plan effectively for further improvement
 - embedding the newly introduced systems for managing teachers' performance to ensure that teachers are held to account fully for the progress made by groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and the most able
 - using pupil premium funding to best effect to enable disadvantaged pupils in all year groups to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils, particularly the most able and those who are disadvantaged, so that it is consistently good in all subject areas, by:
 - ensuring that teachers use the new assessment information effectively to set work which challenges pupils to think deeply
 - ensuring that teachers use questioning effectively to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring all subject areas make best use of homework to enable pupils to make good progress
 - making sure that all pupils take pride in their work and complete work to a high standard.
- Improve the systems and strategies so that the persistent absenteeism of disadvantaged pupils is reduced.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium 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

- Until relatively recently, actions taken by leaders have not been effective enough to quickly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, although the achievement of current pupils is now beginning to improve, the progress made by pupils over time has not been good enough. This is the case particularly for disadvantaged pupils, for most-able disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils.
- Leaders recognise that outcomes over time have not been strong enough. However, they are overly positive about the more recent improvements to pupils' outcomes. They are not incisive enough in comparing pupils' achievement to national benchmarks. This has limited their ability to secure rapid and necessary improvement.
- Leaders can demonstrate their understanding of the impact of pupil premium funding on disadvantaged pupils' progress. For example, additional resources are being used to good effect to improve current Year 11 pupils' outcomes. However, many disadvantaged pupils continue to underachieve in other year groups because teaching does not meet their needs.
- Leaders do not always have high enough expectations of what disadvantaged pupils should achieve. At times, they compare the performance of this group of pupils to similar pupils nationally, rather than to other pupils nationally.
- The extent to which the quality of teaching secures good progress varies between subject areas. Senior leaders have reviewed the quality of teaching and have a better understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses. However, they do not focus sufficiently on evaluating the impact of teaching and learning over time, in particular for the progress of groups of pupils.
- The impact that middle leaders have on the progress of pupils is variable. Where subject leadership is a strength, for example in English, the quality of teaching has improved. More pupils in key stage 4 are well prepared now for the rigours of examinations in English. However, some subject leaders struggle to identify accurately the progress made by different groups of pupils. This limits their ability to plan effectively to improve outcomes achieved by pupils in their subject area.
- The leadership of teaching and learning has recently begun to improve. Processes for managing the performance of teachers have been strengthened. There are clear lines of accountability. Teachers are set appropriate targets and this encourages them to think about how to improve their classroom practice. Staff speak highly of both the quality of professional support and of the training they receive.
- A newly introduced assessment system is being carefully monitored by leaders. Leaders are, rightly, more confident about the reliability of teachers' assessments. This information is now being used well by senior leaders to check on the performance of key groups of pupils and to hold staff to account for pupils' progress.
- As a result of new leadership and the careful use of additional funding, those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who arrive at the school with weak literacy and numeracy skills and need to 'catch up', receive appropriate and targeted support. This enables the vast majority of these pupils to

make good progress, especially in their reading.

- The curriculum gives pupils the opportunity to study a wide range of relevant subjects. Some pupils also engage in the school's sports programme and continue with academic courses. Pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 are involved in a project-based approach to learning; this is benefiting them because they are securing basic skills and developing resilience.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted through aspects of the curriculum and a rich range of extra-curricular opportunities, for example sporting events and community groups. Many pupils take part in activities that enhance their personal development and their understanding of life in British society effectively.
- The school offers relevant careers education, information and guidance and this has resulted in a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils who access further education, employment or training when they leave Year 11.
- The vast majority of parents agree that information they receive about their child's education is valuable and has improved.
- The local authority has provided some appropriate support to the school to improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders, including governors, are passionate about improving the school. Their more recent work to improve the quality of teaching is beginning to show impact on the outcomes achieved by pupils. They recognise that they have more to do to secure consistently good teaching and consistently good outcomes for pupils in all subjects.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed. They use a range of appropriate means to monitor what is happening at the school. They acknowledge that historic outcomes were not good enough and that they are now better equipped to challenge underperformance. They are now providing effective support and challenge to the school. As a result, outcomes for pupils are beginning to improve.
- Governors are realistic and, as a group, they are fully aware of all aspects of the school's performance that require improvement. They are working effectively alongside senior and other leaders to bring about the necessary changes and improvements.
- Governors have grown in confidence through training opportunities and other support which has enabled them to build relevant skills and knowledge. For example, governors have been involved in 'learning walks' and sought relevant training on how to deal effectively with exclusions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's work and its ethos of 'tolerance and respect' contributes significantly to the pupils feeling safe and valued at the school. The strong relationships forged by the staff are fundamental to the school's work in safeguarding the pupils. This is because pupils are confident that staff will sort problems for them quickly and sensitively.

- The curriculum offers suitable and timely opportunities for the pupils to learn about different aspects of how to keep themselves safe. Staff have received relevant training that keeps them updated about potential areas of concern, such as alcohol and substance misuse. Leaders review the curriculum regularly and seek additional training in response to the views of pupils, for example in relation to online safety.
- The school maintains detailed records of safeguarding concerns and works well with appropriate external agencies, when necessary, to keep pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Over time, teaching has not been good enough to secure good outcomes for pupils. Despite recent improvements, the quality of teaching remains highly variable across the school.
- There is considerable variability in the quality of teachers' planning for learning. Some teachers fail to meet the needs and abilities of all pupils. For example, too frequently the most able pupils do not access learning activities that challenge and deepen their understanding.
- Too few teachers adapt their lessons to address misconceptions quickly or to further challenge pupils to extend their knowledge or understanding. As a result, pupils do not consistently make the progress of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and boys.
- In some instances, questioning is not used skilfully nor effectively. Questioning does not challenge pupils and too often it is used to gauge superficial knowledge rather than to extend and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- On some occasions, teachers do not encourage pupils to question and analyse subject content consistently or in any great depth. In these instances, pupils, especially the boys, become restless as the work fails to sustain their interest.
- Some subjects set homework regularly, for example mathematics. In these subjects pupils are confident it contributes well to their learning. However, this is not consistent across all subject areas.
- School leaders have introduced a new assessment system that is starting to bear fruit because it enables teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge effectively. Where teachers are using this information well, teaching is more effective in meeting the needs of pupils. For example, progress has improved in current Year 11. However, not all teachers are using this system to best effect yet.
- The quality of teaching in English, science and mathematics is improving. This year, pupils are improving their depth of knowledge and understanding because teachers are matching work to meet their needs more effectively. This was evident in a mathematics lesson, where a group of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress because they were benefiting from practising their mathematical knowledge and understanding.

- The quality of teaching for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has improved and is securing good outcomes for this group of pupils. Thorough information provided to staff by the coordinator for special educational needs has ensured that all adults understand the needs of the pupils they teach and support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' safety and their physical and emotional well-being are promoted strongly through the effective care systems. The head of pastoral care and her team know the pupils well and keep a close eye on them. Relationships between staff and pupils are a strength of the school.
- Pupils at the school feel safe and they feel valued. They take pride in their appearance.
- Almost all parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, stated that their children were happy at the school. All stated they believed their children were safe at the school.
- There is a strong ethos of tolerance and respect. This is demonstrated by the rare instances of bullying that take place at the school.
- Pupils are confident that staff deal with any issues which arise in school. They appreciate the time they receive during the tutorial period to discuss issues which affect them, such as online safety.
- Pupils comply with the requests of adults in school, however, not all demonstrate consistently strong attitudes to learning. Some pupils are over-reliant on the teacher or teaching assistant to push them to make progress in their learning. At times, some pupils do not take pride in presenting and completing their work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to staff, each other and visitors.
- Pupils move around, inside and outside of the school, safely and responsibly. They are punctual to lessons and prepared to learn. The school's system to monitor behaviour is having a positive impact because key staff are able to see concerns quickly and deal with them swiftly. In lessons, pupils behave well and respond promptly to the instructions of adults.
- Fixed-term exclusion rates have significantly reduced. The internal isolation zone is proving an effective resource when used; this allows pupils to continue with their studies so they do not fall behind. Leaders recognise that permanent exclusions have been too high. However, records demonstrate that leaders at all levels are taking appropriate action to improve pupils' behaviour and reduce the levels of exclusion.

- Pupils' attendance overall has improved and the vast majority of pupils attend regularly. For example, pupils who have been absent are subject to a 'back to school' interview and this is having a positive effect on pupils' attendance.
- Pupils who are persistently absent, in particular disadvantaged pupils, remain a problem for the school, however, they are using a wide range of strategies to encourage those pupils to attend more regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Historically, outcomes at the school have not been good enough, especially in English and mathematics and for disadvantaged pupils. The progress made overall by Year 11 pupils in 2016 was well below the national average compared to pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- The progress of the most able pupils is not consistent across the school and some most-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is because the extent to which teaching develops and deepens their knowledge, understanding and skills is variable.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is variable. Leaders' work has resulted in significant improvements to the progress made by disadvantaged girls in key stage 3 and for all disadvantaged pupils in Year 10. However, disadvantaged boys in key stage 3 and the most able disadvantaged in some year groups are still not achieving as well as their peers nationally.
- In English and mathematics, there is evidence to show that achievement is beginning to improve. The standards reached by Year 11 pupils in 2016 improved on the previous year. Current pupils' learning and progress is improving in English and mathematics across year groups. This is because middle leaders are now held to account by senior leaders more rigorously for pupils' performance in their subject area.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve in line with other pupils with similar starting points. Current assessment information indicates that their progress is improving. This is due to strong and improved leadership of this area, which has led to carefully targeted, highly effective support for pupils.
- Pupils who enter the school below the expected standard are well supported and are now making good progress. This is because of structured literacy and numeracy sessions during the school day.
- The proportion of pupils that leave the school and do not go on to education, training or employment is low.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 108410 |
| Local authority | Gateshead |
| Inspection number | 10031995 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 603 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair | Sarah Diggle |
| Headteacher | Doug Pettitt |
| Telephone number | 0191 460 6004 |
| Website | http://kingsmeadow.org.uk |
| Email address | dpettitt@kingsmeadow.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21–22 April 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a much smaller than average secondary school. There are more boys than girls at the school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- Almost all pupils are White British. There are very few pupils whose first language is not English.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across both key stages and across a range of ability groups. They carried out other visits to areas of the school to look at particular aspects of the school's work and scrutinised examples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors held meetings with leaders, managers and other staff at the school and with representatives of the governing body.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils in groups, in lessons and around the school. An inspector also listened to some pupils read.
- The inspectors attended a staff training session and three department meetings.
- The inspectors checked the 25 responses on Parent View and looked at the text comments submitted by those parents.
- The inspectors looked at inspection questionnaire responses returned by staff.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation summary, policies and records relating to safeguarding, records relating to the pupils' behaviour, the school's own assessment information and other information about the work of the school.

Inspection team

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