

King's Norton Boys' School

Northfield Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B30 1DY

Inspection dates

26–27 September 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
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 good school

- Leaders responded to the areas for development identified at the last inspection with urgency and thoroughness. As a result, there have been significant improvements in leadership, teaching and outcomes.
- The headteacher has developed effective teams at many levels. Staff share the headteacher's ambition for pupils. As a result, this is a successful and harmonious school.
- Governors are effective and committed. They have been crucial to the school's success.
- Parents and teachers are unanimous in their view that pupils are safe at school.
- A relentless focus on improving teaching has been successful. High-quality teaching is now evident in many areas of the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Excellent relationships between teachers and pupils lead to purposeful lessons. Pupils enjoy their learning.
- The very large majority of pupils achieve well at the end of key stage 4 across many subjects. Current pupils are achieving well in key stages 3 and 4. Leaders know this because they have reliable and accurate tracking systems.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, and attendance for almost all is high.
- Pupils are polite, personable and friendly. They are advocates of, and ambassadors for, their school. All those spoken to were proud to be members of this community.
- The curriculum supports pupils and they gain relevant qualifications. Moreover, leaders have implemented a diverse programme of extra-curricular activities. These allow pupils to explore different opportunities.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is still too low.
- Progress at A level has not been good enough. Too many current students in Year 13 underachieved in AS courses.
- Year 13 students have not had sufficient health education.
- Governors have not ensured that the website includes all relevant and statutory information.
- All those who left Years 11 and 13 in 2017 moved into appropriate education, employment or training.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve outcomes for pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and students in Year 13 by ensuring that all staff:
 - support pupils whose absence has been relatively high to ensure that they catch up
 - make certain that students in Year 13, especially those who underachieved in Year 12, reach their potential.
- Improve the quality of pupils' personal development and welfare by:
 - continuing to develop strategies to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - ensuring that Year 13 students receive all relevant health education.
- Meet statutory responsibilities on what to publish on the school's website.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The relentless ambition of the headteacher is impressive. He has raised expectations, prioritised and sequenced necessary changes. Foremost among his aspirations is that all pupils should achieve strong outcomes. The headteacher has the full support of other leaders and governors.
- Senior leaders work well with subject leaders to bring about improvements. Senior and middle leaders track the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and make changes where necessary. Leaders set challenging targets for teachers to ensure that pupil outcomes are high. Support is available where required. For example, the headteacher worked with the science department. As a result, outcomes in science have improved markedly.
- Leaders track pupils' progress towards 'expected achievement' grades. They also monitor the quality of work produced by pupils. This involves external moderation at key stages 3 and 4. Leaders have an accurate understanding of current standards and the quality of teaching because of these programmes.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum which meets pupils' needs and promotes good achievement. Pupils study a broad range of appropriate subjects. They develop an understanding of a wide range of topics within these subjects. Leaders have established clear expectations. These ensure that teachers' delivery of the curriculum is successful.
- The school curriculum is effective in its coverage of safeguarding, current affairs and fundamental British values. Appropriate activities take place in assemblies, tutor time and lessons. For example, pupils learn about online safety in information technology. Religious education lessons focus on the need for tolerance and understanding of different faiths and cultures. Pupils explained how they learned in history that Henry VIII's break with Rome in the sixteenth century mirrors issues around 'Brexit'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of the school. Pupils have the necessary skills and positive attitudes to live in, and contribute well to, modern Britain.
- Leaders have a strategic and outward-facing approach to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and teaching. Middle leaders talk about a beneficial partnership with the Bishop Challoner Teaching School Alliance. There has also been productive work with Birmingham Education Partnership, including enhancing school self-evaluation.
- Leaders have implemented a diverse programme of extra-curricular activities which pupils enjoy. There are frequent trips organised, including overseas visits, regular musical concerts and productions. Many sports are available and there are music, art, chess and homework clubs. Leaders are not yet tracking attendance at these events. They cannot, for example, give numbers of more vulnerable students participating.
- Leaders and governors check the impact of extra funding. The aim is to improve achievement and attendance of certain groups of pupils. Leaders' actions have not had sufficient impact. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors feel there should be better returns from this funding.
- New leadership of special educational needs is bringing enthusiasm and a realistic understanding of what needs to improve. Senior leaders are providing appropriate

support. Attendance and achievement for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are still too low.

- Leaders have developed an effective system to manage the performance of staff. Through this, teachers know leaders' expectations. Leaders offer good support systems for teachers who need it. The overwhelming majority of staff feel their professional development is effective. They feel leaders encourage, challenge and strengthen their professional development.
- Leaders' actions motivate staff and make them feel respected. Middle leaders were involved in developing a new assessment system. They feel that this programme improved effectiveness and reduced teachers' workload.
- Leaders have ensured that catch-up funding for literacy and numeracy supports Year 7 pupils. Pupils who access this programme make rapid gains, particularly in reading.
- Leadership of the sixth form has not been effective over time. Students have not made good progress in academic subjects. Leadership is now stronger with a sharper focus upon students making good progress. Leaders understand that there is much to do to enable students in Year 13, especially those who underachieved in Year 12, to reach their potential.

Governance of the school

- Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They portray a great sense of pride in it and its role in the local community. While governors support leaders effectively, they also offer appropriate challenge. For example, governors manage the performance of senior leaders, and middle leaders present data directly to governors.
- Many governors have formal links with key areas. These include in safeguarding, behaviour management and special educational needs. There is a dedicated governor overseeing support for disadvantaged students.
- The governing body has reviewed its effectiveness and practices since the last inspection. It is now stronger. There has been careful recruitment of members with specific skill sets. Governors have good knowledge of strategic management, education and finance.
- Governors understand the precise, short-term steps needed to improve their school. They have also set longer-term goals to ensure sustainable impact. These include recent decisions to close the sixth form and increase numbers in Year 7.
- There were some non-compliance issues in relation to the website.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, are very clear about the importance of safeguarding. They understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Staff recruitment and records meet statutory requirements. Staff training is timely and effective. Suitable systems are in place for checking on vulnerable pupils. Child protection matters have a high priority.
- Safeguarding systems were checked by inspectors in relation to work experience. There is a formal agreement with a company to risk-assess placements. There are also clear procedures for communication with parents. All necessary insurance requirements are in place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. This is because of effective leadership at all levels. Consequently, there are high expectations and improved outcomes for pupils of all abilities at GCSE. This is particularly so for most-able pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have secure subject knowledge. This contributes to useful explanations of topics and concepts and is demonstrated particularly in English, mathematics, science, government and politics, music and art. Also, relationships between teachers and pupils are strong. As a result, pupils are willing to both contribute in lessons and seek support if they require it.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are knowledgeable about pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils make strong progress because of the good support they receive.
- Teachers use questioning well to probe, correct any misconceptions and share good ideas. They establish levels of pupils' understanding and know what pupils need to do to move their learning on. Teachers encourage pupils to develop more sophisticated answers.
- Lessons are frequently planned well. Teachers take note of pupils' previous learning, their capability and potential. Pupils are set different tasks depending on their abilities. In most lessons this is successful.
- Systems for monitoring the quality of teaching are effective. School analysis shows an improvement in teaching over time. Leaders quickly tackle any underperformance in teaching and provide appropriate support. Leaders have a good understanding of what makes learning effective in lessons.
- Most pupils mainly enjoy their learning and say regular homework supports them. Many pupils' books are well presented and show that they take pride in their work. Pupils say they like the school's encouragement of peer-to-peer support. This occurs within lessons. It also involves older pupils mentoring younger pupils.
- On the very few occasions when teaching is less effective, a small minority of pupils can become disengaged. At these times, when work is not well suited to their abilities, pupils go off task. They are quickly engaged again by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Teaching in post-16 academic courses is less successful. It has not secured good outcomes for students. Leaders have recently focused on making teaching match that in the lower school. Teachers are expected to use similar systems as at key stages 3 and 4. It is too early to assess the impact of this.
- Parents receive accurate information about how their child is progressing. Most parents say information provided about their child's performance is useful. Parents also feel their children are well taught and make good progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school promotes values such as self-discipline, teamwork, resilience, initiative, vision and endeavour. Leaders aim to develop pupils as successful learners and citizens. Inspection evidence confirms that these 'STRIVE' values underpin leaders' and teachers'

work at the school. There is a stated commitment to democracy, rule of law, liberty, respect, tolerance and kindness. These are also evident from first-hand inspection observations.

- Pupils are courteous and well mannered. They are respectful of visitors and very friendly toward them. They respect the environment, ensuring there is minimal litter and no graffiti. Pupils move purposefully to lessons.
- Teachers celebrate pupils' achievements through updated and well-maintained displays. The environment fosters a clear sense of community and belonging.
- Assemblies are very effective. They reinforce the school's expectations about pupils' personal development. Inspectors observed two assemblies with consistent messages linking hard work and achievement. These assemblies provide a well-structured start to the day. Pupils who met inspectors said they enjoyed them.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop leadership skills while contributing to the wider life of the school. For example, some pupils are anti-bullying ambassadors, and others are prefects or school council members. Pupils can become eco-ambassadors and historical archivists. Many pupils wear badges or ties signifying these positions of responsibility. They do so with pride and are enthusiastic in explaining their roles.
- Inspectors met with some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils were very positive about their experiences. They felt safe and well looked after. Pupils appreciated the amount of support staff gave them. Pupils said there were many clubs and activities in which they could get involved.
- Children looked after are well supported. There are key staff who know them. Processes to manage these pupils as they transfer into school are very effective. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. This includes recognising the risks associated with extremism.
- A small minority of pupils have attitudes which do not always support good learning. When work is too easy or too difficult, some pupils go off task, although teachers can re-engage them quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Overall attendance is improving. It is above national averages and has been so for three years. Attendance is particularly high in the sixth form. There has also been a reduction in pupils being regularly absent from school. Pupils receive rewards for high attendance, good behaviour and making positive contributions to school. They are also rewarded for participation in sports clubs, scouts and other community activities. These commendations are popular with pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors, 'Our school is against bullying'. They say bullying is rare and dealt with quickly and effectively by staff. Pupils say any poor behaviour is 'nipped in the bud'. Older pupils feel that behaviour has improved. Lower overall exclusions and repeat exclusions reducing over time confirm these views.
- The absence rate of a small group of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is still too high. Their progress is weaker than that of their peers. Leaders are working on these issues. There have been some successes and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving. Leaders accept that there is more to do to support these pupils. The new leader in charge of special needs is aware of the need for close liaison with pastoral leaders.

- Although reducing, the number of exclusions of disadvantaged pupils is still higher than other pupils. The exclusion rate of a very small minority of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is also higher than their peers and is not falling. Leaders are aware that reduced exclusions will improve pupils' progress.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative programmes off site. Arrangements to check their welfare, attendance and progress are effective.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes are good because leaders, supported by governors, have taken effective action. They have raised aspirations, improved teaching and developed subject leadership. Current pupils of all abilities in key stages 3 and 4 make good progress in a wide variety of subjects.
- There is a strong culture of achievement. Assemblies reinforce this with clear messages given to pupils. These include 'Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow'.
- Most pupils who left Year 11 in 2016 achieved well. Pupils who spoke English as an additional language made exceptionally strong gains in their learning. Unvalidated data indicates that pupils of all abilities who left Year 11 in 2017 made good progress. Progress was faster in English and mathematics than in some other subjects in 2017.
- Pupils who had higher prior attainment made particularly good progress. In English in 2017, for example, unvalidated data indicates that more pupils achieved the new higher grades of 7 to 9 at GCSE than the national average.
- Pupils' secure and consistent progress is based on high attainment in crucial subjects. In 2016, pupils gained good grades in the group of qualifications known as the English Baccalaureate. This included pupils of all abilities and disadvantaged pupils. Their attainment was well above the national average. Unvalidated data for 2017 also shows good performance in this area, with 34% of pupils gaining a strong pass. This is because of the headteacher's commitment to pupils gaining meaningful qualifications. Most pupils study a modern foreign language and a humanities subject. This prepares them well for post-16 study and university courses. Pupils feel they have a good choice of subjects in their option pathways.
- Disadvantaged pupils' achievement lags behind that of other pupils nationally. Current pupils are, however, making better progress than in the past. Securing higher outcomes for disadvantaged pupils is a priority for leaders. For example, teachers all have plans which identify these pupils and any specific learning needs they have. Disadvantaged pupils receive priority in lessons and in the order that teachers mark work.
- The progress of a small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was slow in 2016. It is improving but is not yet as rapid as that of other pupils. This is partly related to higher levels of absence for these pupils.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. They respond well to teaching strategies and enjoy challenges presented by teachers' questioning. They have access to an appropriate curriculum. There is some variation in quality, practice and performance between departments.
- Leaders have concerns about standards in geography and design technology. Strategies to address these are ongoing, and governors are checking the impact through receiving reports from middle leaders.

- Sixth-form academic outcomes are not as good as at key stage 4. While attainment is improving, students' progress has been weak over time.
- Pupils speak highly of careers advice and are well prepared for next stages in their education, training or employment. Last year, all pupils moved on to suitable destinations.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The sixth form is to close in the summer of 2018 and current Year 13 will be the final students. Leaders are wholeheartedly committed to seeing these students achieve highly. They are aware that, to do this, standards in the sixth form need to improve. Leaders know that their ambition is not yet being matched with strong outcomes and consistently good teaching.
- In 2015 and 2016, students' progress in academic subjects was weak and had declined over time. In 2016, progress was particularly low for the most able students. Small numbers of students on vocational courses made above-average progress in both 2015 and 2016.
- Unvalidated data indicates improving attainment for students who left in 2017. A-level results moved closer to the national average. Leaders estimate that progress will be better because of this.
- Results at the end of Year 12 for some current Year 13 students were disappointing. These included results in both internal and external examinations. A minority of students failed or did not reach their target grade. Study programmes are in place to help students catch up but it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of these.
- There is insufficient health education in the sixth form. Students spoken to felt that these aspects were delivered well in the lower school. Nonetheless, it is an omission and leaders know they need to rectify it with urgency.
- At its best, the quality of teaching now matches the strongest seen in key stages 3 and 4. Relationships are positive and, together with the secure subject knowledge of teachers, students' learning is largely enhanced. As the quality of teaching consistently matches that in the lower school, students' progress will be even more secure.
- Certain aspects of the 16 to 19 study programme are delivered well. There is a comprehensive programme of work-related activity, for example, which includes work experience for all. There are also visits to school by members of the business community. Very small numbers of students who retake GCSE English and/or mathematics are successful.
- Students enjoy their sixth-form experience. Their attendance is high and their conduct impeccable. Students appreciate the support they are given and participate in the wider life of the school.
- Students are supported in making applications to university and to secure training or employment. All pupils spoken to had a clear path mapped out for next year.
- Leaders are now more focused on the sixth form and are aware that standards need to improve. They are monitoring the quality of teaching and current outcomes to ensure that students are on track to achieve.

School details

Unique reference number	103562
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10037168

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	663
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Collyer
Headteacher	Paul Woodhouse
Telephone number	0121 628 0010
Website	www.kingsnortonboys.bham.sch.uk/
Email address	enquiry@knbs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 December 2015

Information about this school

- King's Norton Boys' School is a smaller-than-average secondary school. It is currently an 11–18 school with a mixed sixth form. Governors and leaders made the decision to close the sixth form from the end of the summer term in 2018.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly similar to the national average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- A very small number of pupils currently attend off-site provision at Southside Learning and Bournville College.
- 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.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum, pupil premium, Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up premium, governors' information and duties on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and lessons across a range of subjects and all year groups, including some joint observations with school leaders. Pupils' books and folders were looked at during this time.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils formally and chatted to a number at social times. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and governors. The lead inspector met with a representative of the Birmingham Education Partnership and spoke with a representative of the Bishop Challoner Teaching School Alliance.
- Inspectors scrutinised information about the school's performance and a range of other documents. These included safeguarding records, the school's self-evaluation and governors' minutes.
- Inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire. There were 68 parent responses and 37 from staff.

Inspection team

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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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