

Kinver High School and Sixth Form

Envile Road, Kinver, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY7 6AA

Inspection dates

14–15 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In recent years, pupils' progress in science and mathematics has been too slow. Leaders' expectations in these subjects are insufficiently clear, and the quality of teaching is inconsistent and sometimes weak.
- In mathematics, teachers do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to develop their own mathematical thinking or apply their knowledge to practical situations.
- Where teaching is weaker, teachers often do not pitch work at the right level for some groups of pupils in the class.
- Teachers sometimes do not provide pupils with feedback about how to improve their work. They therefore do not give pupils enough opportunity to extend their ideas and learn from their mistakes.
- In 2017, pupils left the school having made progress that was below the national average overall, and in some subjects including mathematics and science.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils lags behind that of others. Leaders have not identified clearly which improvement strategies have been most successful. The pupil premium is not well targeted at barriers to learning.
- Leaders have not made the best use of the really effective teaching in the school to improve weaker practice.
- New procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment have good potential, but do not yet provide a reliable picture of pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Much teaching in the school is effective. Standards are high in English, humanities and art.
- The curriculum is well balanced, and extra-curricular activities make a strong contribution to pupils' learning.
- 16 to 19 study programmes are effective. Teaching is strong, and students make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times is good. They have a strong understanding of diverse cultures and the importance of tolerance. Safeguarding is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics and science, by:
 - ensuring that all groups of pupils in the class tackle work that provides an appropriate level of challenge for them
 - making sure that all teachers provide guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, and ensuring that pupils make good use of it
 - giving pupils regular opportunities to reason mathematically and apply their mathematical knowledge in practical situations.
- Deepen the impact of leadership and management on pupils' achievement by:
 - refining the new arrangements for tracking pupils' attainment so that they provide a reliable picture of pupils' progress and future potential
 - basing decisions about the expenditure of the pupil premium on a clear evaluation of pupils' needs and the effectiveness of the school's past actions
 - ensuring that teachers share the good practice which is evident in the school with their colleagues
 - securing the effective leadership of teaching in mathematics and science.

An external review of the school's use of the 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

- Leaders have not secured a good quality of teaching overall, nor established consistently strong progress for pupils across the school. Standards vary considerably between departments. In the core subjects of mathematics and science, both provision and outcomes have been weak since the school opened as an academy, and remain so. Difficulties in recruiting effective permanent staff to these departments have slowed the rate of improvement.
- Leaders have been slow to tackle the underperformance of disadvantaged pupils. They have not checked carefully enough on the impact of the school's actions on these pupils' outcomes. Leaders have not identified clearly what barriers disadvantaged pupils face in their learning. As a result, they have not been able to plan the expenditure of the premium sufficiently precisely to give disadvantaged pupils the best chance of success.
- Over time, the trust has not held leaders to account promptly and rigorously. Although the school is now deriving considerable benefits from its membership of the trust, some well-judged initiatives are relatively recent. Officers of the trust have provided useful support for the teaching of science and mathematics, but their actions to date have not had a decisive impact on pupils' achievement.
- In September 2017, leaders implemented a new system for assessing regularly pupils' attainment in each subject. Teachers are able to record precisely what skills and knowledge each pupil has mastered. They use the results of the assessments to plan support for those pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Because the assessment system is common to all the schools in the trust, it enables teachers to compare their judgements with those of teachers in other schools. However, it is not yet possible to make reliable comparisons between performance in different subjects. There is also work to do to adjust schemes of work and pupils' targets in the light of assessment outcomes.
- Leaders have implemented procedures to monitor the quality of teaching, identify underperformance and intervene effectively. They can point to improvements in classroom performance. Some less experienced staff, however, told inspectors that they would value more guidance. Leaders currently make limited use of the considerable skills of the school's many able teachers in the professional development of their colleagues.
- The school has recently improved the curriculum considerably. Leaders have recognised the needs of some less-able pupils at key stage 3 and provided a greater emphasis on core subjects. At key stage 4, pupils benefit from a broad taught curriculum, and from good careers guidance. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports clubs and creative opportunities, make a major contribution to many pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school.
- Leaders are fully aware of the importance of preparing pupils for their future roles in British society. They introduce pupils to a range of different cultures and traditions, for example through the long-standing link with a school in The Gambia.

- Leaders manage the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities effectively. They ensure that teachers are well aware of pupils' academic needs. Leaders check carefully on their progress, and make sure that the additional money given for their support is spent wisely. They have provided additional training for staff to help the school to provide for a small number of pupils who have significant mental health needs.
- Senior leaders have a sound general grasp of what the school does well and its relative weaknesses. Middle leaders have a good understanding of how they can contribute to the improvement of pupils' outcomes. Nevertheless, their effectiveness in setting and maintaining the school's expectations has varied considerably, particularly in their support for temporary and non-specialist staff.

Governance of the school

- The trust has recently amended its arrangements for governance. The local governing board is now more strongly focused on school improvement. Individual governors are linked with particular aspects of the school, such as the sixth form. They welcome the opportunity to scrutinise the impact of leaders' actions more closely, and thereby to hold them to account.
- The trust, and more recently the governing board, ensures that leaders fulfil all their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Governors check that the school adheres to legislation regarding the safe recruitment of staff. They receive reports on those pupils who are particularly vulnerable, and on how the school is working to care for them. Governors have themselves met with parents and carers of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Governors scrutinise the additional money provided to support the learning of particular groups of pupils. However, leaders' explanation of the impact of the pupil premium has not provided the necessary clarity for governors to be able to hold leaders to account.
- Records show that, in the recent past, governors have often challenged school leaders effectively on the impact of their discussions. Nevertheless, it has taken some time for the local governors and the directors of the trust to be confident that they have made the best arrangements for providing the wholehearted support and the rigorous challenge that the school requires.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a healthy culture of safeguarding. Pupils who spoke with inspectors appreciate the care that they receive from staff, who would 'go the extra mile' to help them, both academically and personally. Staff know the local community well, and have identified particular risks, such as those associated with mental health. In response, they have provided additional training for staff and sought external accreditation for this aspect of their work.
- Staff are vigilant and know how to respond if they believe that any pupil is at risk. Leaders work well with parents and a range of other agencies to protect those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. They have been persistent in

finding the best source of support when others have proved ineffective. Leaders have maintained the safety of the school site during the recent construction work.

- School policies reflect the latest requirements. Leaders make the appropriate checks when staff are appointed. They keep the necessary records about staff and pupils securely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement because it is inconsistent. The gap between the stronger teaching and the weaker teaching is considerable. To a large extent, the weaker teaching is in the core subjects of mathematics and science, although inspection evidence revealed some strong practice in both these areas of the curriculum.
- Where teaching is less effective, some groups of pupils in the class do not complete work that adds to what they already know and understand. Sometimes, teachers do not provide tasks that challenge the most able, or the most able in a particular group. Sometimes, teachers offer pupils work at different levels of complexity, but fail to check sufficiently carefully that pupils of different ability levels are making the right choices. Less commonly, some less-able pupils struggle to understand what they are asked to do.
- Teachers often provide pupils with helpful feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their work, but practice is not consistent. As a result, pupils sometimes lack the opportunity to learn from their mistakes. Equally, teachers sometimes do not check whether pupils have completed their corrections or further work, based on their feedback. In these circumstances, pupils can remain under misapprehensions when the focus of the work moves on.
- Teaching in mathematics covers an appropriate range of topics and develops pupils' abilities to calculate and apply formulae fluently. However, pupils have little opportunity to think for themselves mathematically, or to apply their understanding to practical problems.
- Teaching in science and mathematics sometimes fails to sustain a good pace of learning, and, as a result, pupils' engagement begins to falter. Inspection evidence showed that in science, teaching over time has left older pupils with major gaps in their understanding of important scientific concepts.
- Inspectors observed a good deal of strong teaching, especially in English, humanities and art. Where teaching is effective, teachers plan carefully to set tasks that interest and challenge the most able pupils, and develop the understanding of those pupils with lower starting points. For example, in a lower-ability Year 10 English set, pupils focused on those features of Macbeth's character that are essential to an understanding of the play, and related these to more modern personalities. In a key stage 4 art lesson for pupils of all abilities, feedback helped each pupil to build precisely on their existing skills.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects. They use the technical terms associated with their subject correctly and expect pupils to do the same. At key stage 4, teachers provide pupils with helpful advice about how to maximise their marks in

examinations. Teaching assistants typically question pupils effectively to probe and consolidate their understanding. Homework usually makes an effective contribution to pupils' learning.

- Where expectations are high, pupils of all abilities respond with energy and enthusiasm. Teachers' questions challenge pupils to deepen and extend their thinking, and they are given the opportunity and encouragement to explain their ideas both orally and in writing.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders and governors place a high value on developing well-rounded young people and do so effectively. Extra-curricular activities contribute greatly to pupils' self-confidence. Pupils have the opportunity to serve the community and the school. For example, Year 11 pupils act as reading buddies for Year 7 pupils in a scheme from which both parties derive clear benefits.
- Through tutor time, taught lessons and days on which the normal timetable is suspended, pupils learn, for example, about the importance of mental well-being and sexual health, and about how to keep themselves safe from a variety of risks. They can recall the guidance well and see its relevance. Pupils benefit from effective careers guidance, including work experience and mock interviews at key stage 4.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is very rare, and that they have confidence in the staff to resolve any issues promptly. They feel entirely safe in school. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and, in Year 7, visit Sikh and Hindu places of worship. Leaders do not tolerate racism or homophobia.
- Leaders ensure that the small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are safe and undertake activities that are well matched to their skills and aspirations. They check regularly on their attendance and progress.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils understand how their attitudes to learning contribute to their academic success. They arrive at lessons promptly and ready to learn. Pupils wear their uniforms with pride, and play their part in looking after the school's facilities. During the inspection, pupils' behaviour on the corridors and at social times was polite and orderly.
- Pupils concentrate well in the large majority of lessons, persevering even when the work is not particularly engaging. They treat the staff and each other with courtesy and respect, and collaborate effectively when asked to do so. Pupils told inspectors that their learning was only rarely disturbed by others' behaviour, typically when the class was taken by a temporary teacher.
- Pupils' overall attendance is in line with the national average. The attendance of

disadvantaged pupils is improving slowly, but still lags behind that of their peers.

- Leaders recognise that the school has admitted a small number of pupils whose behaviour is more challenging. At the same time, pupils told inspectors that teachers' expectations for behaviour are now stricter. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions has risen. Leaders have responded constructively by ensuring that pupils are reintegrated effectively when they return from exclusion and by providing individual support. Records show that the frequency of incidents of poor behaviour is now starting to fall.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement mainly because achievement in the core subjects of mathematics and science has been weak, and progress in these subjects remains inconsistent. Across the school, many pupils are not learning as effectively and rapidly in science and mathematics as they might.
- In 2017, pupils left Year 11 having made progress overall that was below that of pupils nationally. Their progress was also below average in mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. Progress was considerably weaker in 2017 than it had been for the cohort that left the school in 2016.
- In both 2016 and 2017, disadvantaged pupils left the school having made progress that was significantly below average. Last year, Year 11 disadvantaged pupils attained approximately a grade lower in mathematics and in science than they should have done. These outcomes reflect the ineffective use of the pupil premium to overcome barriers to learning, including the low attendance of a small number of disadvantaged pupils.
- Information supplied by the school shows that disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving. Inspectors generally found no difference between the quality of work produced by disadvantaged pupils and that of their peers. Nevertheless, there is still a noticeable gap between disadvantaged pupils' attainment in mathematics and that of other pupils in the school.
- At key stage 3, the Year 7 catch-up premium and the adaptation of the curriculum have boosted the progress of low prior-attaining pupils, and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in Year 7 and Year 8. Again, improvements are stronger in English than in mathematics. The progress of older pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is improving, but remains variable.
- The newness of the school's procedures for recording and tracking pupils' attainment means that it is too soon to draw firm conclusions from the early findings. Nevertheless, inspection evidence supports leaders' view that pupils' progress across the curriculum is generally increasing.
- Inspectors observed work of a very high quality in art, humanities and English. In these subjects, pupils are achieving well, because teachers have high and consistent expectations of what they can achieve. For example, Year 10 history workbooks showed that pupils of all abilities are making strong progress. Work for the most able pupils challenges them to deepen their understanding. At the same time, carefully designed tasks enable less-able pupils to gain a secure basic grasp of the topics.

- Strong teaching in English includes the effective promotion of reading, both for research and for pleasure. During the inspection, several pupils read aloud in class with good fluency and expression.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Since September 2016, 16 to 19 study programmes have been organised across the trust's five schools. Students have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of academic courses and a smaller number of applied ones. Each school has been able to offer those subjects in which teaching is strong. Inspectors' discussions with sixth-form students and key stage 4 pupils showed that they do not see the need to travel between sites as a significant impediment. The new arrangements have therefore brought greater choice and courses of better quality.
- The leadership of the provision is strong. There are clear arrangements in place to monitor the quality of teaching and students' progress. Because the sixth form is small, teachers know their students well; they are willing to provide individual support when required.
- Students told inspectors that teachers in the sixth form provide them with work that is sufficiently challenging. They have clear targets and are confident that they know how to achieve these. Teachers provide feedback that identifies in detail students' next steps to improve their work. During the inspection, sixth-form teaching was characterised by particularly effective questioning that explored and deepened students' understanding. Teachers explained clearly the criteria by which students' work would be judged.
- The school provides students with a good range of non-qualification activities to complement their formal studies. Their study programmes meet all requirements. Students learn in an age-appropriate way about how to keep themselves safe, and staff encourage them to take part in sport, and creative and social activities. Students have the opportunity for voluntary work in the community and to raise money for charity. All students benefit from work experience.
- Leaders can point to a wide range of activities, such as visits to universities and presentations by visiting speakers, designed to help students choose the next steps in their careers. However, students who spoke with inspectors said that careers advice and guidance in the 16 to 19 provision would benefit from further development.
- In 2017, students left the sixth form having made progress that was average overall. Almost all had followed academic courses. Information supplied by the school shows that current students' progress is at least in line with the national average. Those students who have not attained a standard pass in mathematics benefit from regular lessons in the subject. They have the opportunity to re-sit the examination and, in January, a high proportion improved their grade.
- In the summer of 2017, several Year 12 students chose not to continue their studies into Year 13. Leaders recognised that these students had been too ambitious in their chosen courses and helped them to find more appropriate options in the school or elsewhere. Leaders have responded by tightening the entry requirements for courses in the sixth form. All those who left Year 13 in 2017 achieved their intended destinations.

- Students' attitudes to their studies are good. They concentrate well in lessons and work hard. Students' attendance is high, and they are very rarely late.

School details

Unique reference number	141342
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10042842

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	575
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	32
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Harris
Headteacher	Chris Rogers
Telephone number	01384 686900
Website	www.kinverhigh.co.uk
Email address	office@kinverhigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Kinver High School and Sixth Form converted to academy status in March 2015. It is one of five secondary schools in the locality that are sponsored by the Invictus Education Trust. Formal authority resides with the board of trustees, and local oversight is exercised by a local governing board. In January 2018, the trust amended the frequency and focus of the meetings of the local governing board and dispensed with its two committees.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school, but the roll is increasing. The sixth form is small.
- The trust's five schools collaborate in managing their 16 to 19 study programmes, and

students move between sites to follow the courses they deem best suited to their aspirations.

- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and receive support from the pupil premium is well below the national average.
- At key stage 4, a few pupils access part-time alternative provision to follow work-related courses in construction and hairdressing. These pupils attend Kidderminster College and Wightwick Hall School.
- In 2017, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress for pupils by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 35 lessons. Two observations were conducted jointly with a senior leader. Inspectors also observed pupils during tutor time and visited the internal exclusion room. They took note of pupils' conduct between lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, other leaders and class teachers. The lead inspector met with members of the local governing board and the chief executive of the academy trust.
- Four groups of pupils, three chosen at random and one by the school, met with inspectors. Inspectors spoke with a great many other pupils informally.
- The inspection team looked at many pupils' workbooks in their visits to classrooms. With a senior leader, they scrutinised in depth the mathematics and science books of pupils drawn from different classes. The lead inspector gave careful consideration to information about pupils' current academic performance.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents. These included development plans and evaluations of the school's progress; the reports of recent visits by consultants working for the trust; the headteacher's report to the trust board; minutes of governors' meetings; school policies; surveys of pupils and parental opinion conducted by the school; and reports to parents. Inspectors scrutinised in detail records showing how the school supports vulnerable pupils.
- The inspection team took account of the 105 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, comments made using the free-text service and representations from individual parents. They also considered the 37 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Hickerton	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Rob Steed	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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