

Inspection of a good school: Kingsmead School

Bridge Street, Derby, Derbyshire DE1 3LB

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 September 2021

Outcome

Kingsmead School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Kingsmead School is a safe and welcoming place. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to the school. This is because of the respect and care staff show them. Parents say that the school understands and provides for the different needs of their children.

The 'RESPECT' values of the school shape the way staff and pupils relate to each other. Expert staff help pupils to calm down when they are struggling to control their emotions. The school's vision of a 'good today, better tomorrow' means that pupils know they will always have another chance to get things right. This creates a positive and safe environment in which pupils can learn. They know staff will not give up on them. Pupils say bullying rarely happens and if it does, staff act quickly to help resolve issues.

Leaders have provided the right resources for the pupils' often complex needs. There is a sensory room and a much-loved therapy dog, Wilf, who is an important member of staff. Lessons and topics have been carefully chosen to keep pupils interested and to stretch their thinking. Pupils enjoy working with staff who know the best ways to help them learn.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. It is shaped by the leaders' clear understanding of their pupils, all of whom are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have made extensive changes to the curriculum to make sure it is suitable for everyone. For example, in mathematics, they have created detailed plans to ensure that pupils learn key information at the right time. In English, pupils study shorter books so they are not overwhelmed by the text. However, they also have the opportunity to read classical literature, such as 'A Christmas Carol'. They study books from a diverse range of authors, like Marcus Rashford and Bali Rai.

Some subject plans are more detailed than others. Where plans are detailed, pupils know and understand more. Leaders are making sure planning for all subjects contains the same attention to detail.

Teachers check learning carefully each lesson. In this way, they identify gaps in learning and any misconceptions pupils may have. Teachers then address these. They understand what pupils' next steps are. Sometimes, teachers do not always make sure the targets they set pupils are as precise as they should be. This makes it harder for pupils to know if they have been successful or what they need to do next to build on their success.

A number of pupils at the school are reluctant readers. All staff work hard to help them enjoy reading. They do this by giving pupils lots of opportunities to read about topics they are interested in. After lunch, everyone 'drops everything and reads'. Reading intervention schemes help pupils catch up with their reading. Not all staff have had the reading intervention training they need. This can lead to an inconsistent approach during the reading sessions.

Leaders have focused on the personal development needs of pupils and the curriculum reflects this. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Leaders are aware of the risks pupils face outside the school and online. They have created a detailed programme that teaches both pupils and parents how to manage these risks. The personal development programme at the school teaches pupils important life skills, such as how to use public transport. Staff take pupils out on visits to local public places and restaurants to help them get used to these environments. Pupils enjoy many opportunities at alternative provisions. Some take part in different sports, like boxing. Pupils are also involved in music production, while others enjoy fishing.

Disruption to learning can happen very quickly but it is soon dealt with by staff in a consistent way. Nearly all the lessons visited during the inspection were calm and productive.

Staff say that the school is well led and managed. The majority who expressed a view said they feel well respected, and that leaders are mindful of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive high-quality training in safeguarding. Staff understand their responsibility to report any concern, however slight. Leaders keep accurate records and analyse concerns to look for trends and patterns. They are quick to act, involving other agencies when needed.

Safeguarding leaders work effectively with a range of external agencies so that pupils get the support they need. Leaders carefully check that any alternative provisions they use are appropriate and safe for their pupils. Leaders ensure that the school and the alternative provisions all use the same safeguarding systems so that school leaders know immediately if there are any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff who deliver reading intervention are trained in the new reading catch-up scheme. Until this occurs, not everyone can deliver interventions consistently, leading to pupils experiencing a range of sometimes confusing strategies. As a result, pupils do not become confident readers as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills to be effective in supporting pupils to become fluent readers.
- Targets that teachers set pupils are not routinely precise. As a result, pupils are not always clear if they have been successful or what they need to do next to build on their success. Furthermore, leaders are not able to analyse accurately the effectiveness of all the interventions and strategies used to support pupils in their learning. Leaders should ensure that all academic and behavioural targets provide pupils with the precise guidance and support to enable them to be successful and to enable leaders to judge effectively the impact of any support pupils receive.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 5 and 6 May 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	135345
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10199747
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	93
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sandra Fletcher
Headteacher	Michael Pride
Website	https://kingsmead-derby.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Kingsmead School is an expanding special school that forms part of a larger integrated provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. There are 93 pupils on roll at the school, compared to 62 at the last inspection in 2016.
- At the previous inspection, the special school was operating on the same site as the pupil referral unit. The special school moved to its current location on Brighton Road, Alvaston in 2018. The special school and the pupil referral unit share the same leadership team but have different unique reference numbers.
- Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan. An increasing proportion have learning needs in addition to their social, emotional and mental health difficulties. These include moderate learning difficulties, a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders.
- The vast majority of pupils are boys. Some have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools. Most have had a disrupted education and have missed considerable schooling. Pupils can arrive at any point during their secondary education.
- Kingsmead School uses a range of alternative providers through a service it provides called 'Junction 16'. The quality of these provisions is assured through a rigorous process. Pupils have access to a wide range of alternative provisions which include Baby People, CAST Angling Project, Catharsis Therapy, Derby City Boxing Academy, G-Music, Inspirative Arts, The Island, Nisai, Pony Partnerships and YMCA.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited two alternative provisions the school uses.
- Inspectors heard children in different year groups read books.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses to the school's parent survey, spoke with parents on the telephone, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with staff, pupils, and parents and carers.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Edwards

Ofsted Inspector

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