

Inspection of Kingsmead School

Kings Avenue, Hednesford, Cannock, Staffordshire WS12 1DH

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Kingsmead School. Leaders promote the school values of resilience, innovation, mindfulness, and employability (RIME) effectively in all aspects of school life. As a result, pupils develop into respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society.

Behaviour in lessons and at social times is very good. Bullying is extremely rare. If it does happen, staff deal with it effectively. Pupils feel valued and know that staff want the best for them. Pupils enjoy school, attend regularly and feel safe.

Leaders have high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils follow a broad, balanced curriculum. Specialist teachers deliver lessons well in all subjects, across all year groups. As a result, all pupils in Year 11 last year went on to education, employment or training. Most students in Year 13 went on to higher education.

All pupils have access to a rich set of experiences. The school offers over 60 clubs in a wide variety of activities. Trips include to the Black Country Museum and Winter Wonderland. Pupils value these opportunities. Leaders listen to pupils and value their opinions. For example, pupils on the RIME panel decide which bids for cross-curricular projects they will allocate funding to.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the subjects that pupils study. Pupils follow a wide range of subjects at key stage 3. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study the full range of subjects. This prepares them well for the choices they make at key stage 4. A full range of academic and vocational subjects are offered at key stage 4 and key stage 5. Leaders match these well to pupils' abilities and interests. As a result, many pupils in Year 11 stay on to study in Year 12. While the number of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate (a specific set of subjects at GCSE level) is low, leaders are taking effective action to address this.

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Leaders check regularly how well the curriculum is being taught. This leads to improvements. For example, weaknesses in pupils' writing in history has been improved with support from the English department.

Teachers use assessment information well to identify gaps in pupils' learning. This includes the use of personal learning checklists. Consequently, all pupils achieve well. Pupils speak about how retrieval practice and feedback sessions in lessons help them to learn and remember more. In the majority of lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' understanding. However, occasionally, teachers miss the chance to use questioning to deepen pupils' understanding and knowledge.

Leaders give high priority to improving pupils' reading. All pupils follow a reading programme. Extra help is given to those who need it. For example, governors and sixth-form students listen to pupils read.

Staff get advice about how to support learning for pupils with SEND from one-page profiles. However, sometimes this advice is not precise enough. Education, health and care (EHC) plans are not always reviewed in a timely way.

Staff apply the school's behaviour policy well. There is an appropriate use of rewards and sanctions. Pupils say that sanctions are fair. Staff help pupils to reflect on their own behaviour. As a result, the number of suspensions is low. Pupils value the rewards they earn. They engage well in their learning.

Pupils say they appreciate how much 'extra' they get at Kingsmead. Student leadership programmes are well established. For example, all pupils can take part in the 'Kingsmead Edge' programme. This leads to a leadership qualification based on the RIME values. All students in Year 12 take part in academic coaching of younger pupils. Pupils receive effective careers information, education and guidance. This begins in Year 7. Students in the sixth form follow the principles of the sixth-form charter well. This prepares them effectively for the next stage in their education. As a result, many students go on to study at prestigious universities.

All staff speak highly about the support they get from leaders. This includes those who are new to teaching. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. For example, staff say that staff meetings are purposeful. As a result, staff morale is high.

Trustees and governors are committed to the school and its pupils. They provide an effective balance of support and challenge to leaders. For example, they hold leaders to account for the management and allocation of the school's budget.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff take pupils' welfare seriously. For instance, leaders asked pupils about areas of the school where they felt less safe. As a result, lighting in areas of the school has been improved.

Staff report concerns about pupils, confident in the knowledge that leaders will deal with them effectively. All staff receive regular and appropriate training. Leaders have found creative ways to ensure that safeguarding is at the forefront of everyone's minds. This includes having a school safeguarding song.

Appropriate checks are completed on all adults who work at, or visit, the school.

Pupils say they feel safe. Parents agree.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The information provided in a pupil's one-page SEND profile is not sufficiently clear and concise. Also, the monitoring of SEND provision is not robust enough to always ensure the timely completion of the annual review of pupils' EHC plans. Leaders should ensure teachers are provided with clear advice to support the learning of pupils with SEND and that there is better monitoring of SEND provision. This will help to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

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	142313
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10201041
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1180
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	165
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Chris Hunt
Headteacher	Maria Mincher
Website	http://www.kingsmeadschool.net
Date of previous inspection	January 2018

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, including the chair, trustees, the chief executive officer and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, history, mathematics and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited lessons in other subjects and reviewed pupils' work in those lessons.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times during the day about the wider aspects of school life.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of school documents and looked at information on the school's website.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record and the procedures for the recruitment of staff. She also met with the school's safeguarding team, including the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Lesley Yates, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Bassett	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Considine	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Epton	Ofsted Inspector
Marie McMahon	Ofsted Inspector
Alexander Laney	Her Majesty's Inspector

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