

Inspection of school: Kingdown School

Woodcock Road, Warminster, Wiltshire BA12 9DR

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 November 2022

Outcome

Kingdown School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Kingdown School appreciate the high expectations the school has of them, and most rise to meet them. Pupils and students in the sixth form know that their teachers want the very best for them. The school motto 'believe, aspire, achieve' is evident in everything that the school does.

Pupils behave well so that learning is not disrupted. This means that classrooms remain positive and purposeful. Most pupils say that staff use rewards and sanctions fairly. Pupils feel safe when they are at school. Pupils say that if bullying occurs, there is someone they can talk to about it. They have confidence that staff will resolve any concerns. Students in the sixth form support younger pupils as The Diana Award anti-bullying ambassadors.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their character. There are many clubs on offer and opportunities to take on leadership roles. These include being house captains, house council leaders and sports leaders. Older students can become 'Bold Voices' ambassadors who lead on combating sexual harassment.

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

The school has an ambitious, well-designed and well-sequenced curriculum. Leaders are keen to ensure that the curriculum continues to develop. Most teachers are well-qualified subject specialists. They work together to provide high-quality resources to support learning.

The school has improved its approach to assessment. Pupils say they are more confident about their learning as a result. They say they have a more positive outlook on future challenges. Sometimes teachers' use of assessment does not check whether pupils have understood an idea or method. This means that teaching is not always suitably adapted.

Leaders have taken action to improve the curriculum in some subjects, such as modern foreign languages. This has encouraged more pupils to take up subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate.

There is a sharp focus on those who are at the early stages of learning to read and those who have fallen behind in reading. For those that struggle the most, teachers support pupils to build up their understanding of phonics. For others, trained staff lead group reading to support pupils to build up fluency and confidence.

Leaders work hard to meet pupils' individual needs. The special educational needs coordinator identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Teaching is successful in supporting these pupils to follow the curriculum successfully.

Following the return of all pupils to school after the national lockdowns, leaders quickly identified that some pupils struggled to manage their own behaviour. This caused disruption to learning. In response, a new system to manage behaviour was introduced. Now, there is little disruption to learning. This means that staff can teach the intended curriculum as planned.

The school's offer for pupils' broader development is comprehensive. Physical education is a real strength of the school. Sixth-form students have senior leadership opportunities to support younger pupils. The school has a strong personal, social, health and education curriculum. This includes topics such as relationships and sex education, healthy eating, citizenship and the importance of tolerance. Pupils say that they are not only given information but can ask questions and discuss. This helps them to understand what it means for them.

The school is well led and managed. There is confidence from staff in school leaders. There is strong moral leadership in every aspect of senior leaders' work. The trust and school governance support leaders well with this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders encourage staff to report any concerns. There is rapid identification of pupils who need support. This means early help can be provided and managed.

Staff are trained in safeguarding. There are careful checks when recruiting new staff. Leaders have strong systems to deal with concerns about staff if they arise.

The school has suitable policies in place to raise awareness among staff and parents about the dangers of sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not always used well. In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment to find out why some pupils have an insecure understanding of curriculum content.

Staff need to make better use of assessment so that they check the impact of the curriculum and adapt it accordingly.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2013.

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.

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	137230
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10240110
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	1,510
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	233
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Middleton
Headteacher	Robert Price
Website	www.kingdown.wilts.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been two headteachers since the previous inspection. The new headteacher works closely with a new acting head of school.
- The school uses five unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the

curriculum with subject leaders, visited a selection of lessons, met teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss support for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of other staff, including early career teachers, support staff and site staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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