



Office for Standards  
in Education

# The King's School

## CONTENTS

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### [Introduction and summary](#)

[Purpose and scope of the inspection](#)

[Information about the school](#)

[Summary of main findings](#)

[What the school does well](#)

[What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations](#)

### [Compliance with the regulations for registration](#)

[1. The quality of education provided by the school](#)

[The quality of the curriculum](#)

[The quality of teaching and assessment](#)

[2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils](#)

[3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils](#)

[4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff](#)

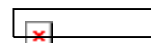
[5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation](#)

[6. The quality of information for parents and other partners](#)

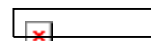
[7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints](#)

### [School details](#)

## Introduction and summary

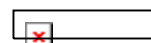


## Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

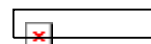
## Information about the school



The King's School is an independent, Christian school for boys and girls, founded in 1981. The school is part of the ministry of Basingstoke Community Churches, a group of six local churches with over a thousand members. All pupils are from families attending these churches. The King's School is based on very clear principles, which reflect the Christian beliefs of Basingstoke Community Churches. These principles are clearly stated in the information given to parents of the pupils when they apply to join the school. While admission to the school is open to pupils, irrespective of race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, either one or both parents must be committed members of this church group and recommended by their church pastors. There is a core staff and a large number of voluntary staff. The school is held in Church premises in Sarum Hill, Basingstoke. A range of buildings and outdoor spaces provide suitable teaching, administration and play facilities. There are 165 pupils on roll, 83 girls and 82 boys, aged seven to sixteen years.

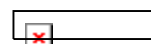
Basingstoke Community Churches Trust believes that: 'As part of our investment in the next generation, we are committed to training and equipping our children in Godly principles and values. This extends to the provision of a church school to educate children to General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) standard.'

## Summary of main findings



This is a very good school. Pupils are happy and well prepared; they emerge confident and ready for continued success in the next stage of their education. The school succeeds in its expressed aim and sometimes exceeds it; some pupils achieve above GCSE standard in certain subjects and are ready for more advanced work.

## What the school does well



- The school's Christian philosophy successfully underpins much of its good practice;
- some lessons are of outstanding quality and the very good teaching enables pupils to make very good progress;
- the active involvement of the parents provides a set of relationships which contributes to the school's successful achievement of its aims;
- the school has benefited from effective and committed leadership; and
- it enables pupils to work confidently and independently, preparing them successfully for the next stage of their education.

### What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations

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The school fully complies with the regulations.

### Next Steps

Whilst not specifically required by the regulations, the school may wish to consider the following points in its drive for further improvement:

- Ensure consistently high quality assessment and marking using the best practice already available in the school.
- Review the current use of accommodation for technology, music and year six.

### Compliance with the regulations for registration

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### 1. The quality of education provided by the school

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#### The quality of the curriculum

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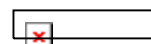
The school has a strong and active Christian basis to all its activities. The church sees itself as a learning community and the King's School is a part of this process. This is central to its curriculum and colours its approach to each and every subject. The school's curriculum policy is supported by an appropriate range of forecasts and schemes of work, which document how the school implements its curriculum policy. It does this effectively, not least by the direct involvement of many parents in the work of the school.

The school's curriculum is based broadly on the National Curriculum but does not follow it slavishly. It is successful in providing very good opportunities for pupils to experience the main areas of learning, although currently its technological content is relatively thin. This is an area the school wishes to address when circumstances allow. Pupils have excellent opportunities to acquire skills in

speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The school's rich provision for personal, social and health education reflects its particular Christian aims and ethos.

The school has effective careers guidance involving Connexions and all pupils are given the experience of interviews, with useful feedback provided. The provision matches the requirements of the pupils at this school. The curriculum not only offers opportunities for pupils to learn and make very good progress but provides its pupils with valuable skills, knowledge and understanding to prepare them for the next stage in their education.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**



Overall the quality of teaching is very good. Staff know their pupils very well and relationships are open and friendly. Throughout the school there is an atmosphere of trust and a willingness to learn pervades.

Teachers expect their pupils to work hard and behave sensibly. Lessons are conducted in a purposeful way. They provide good opportunities for pupils to increase their knowledge and understanding, to acquire and practise new skills and work independently and collaboratively. In the main, lessons are well planned and are taught confidently. Pupils undertake a range of practical and investigative work. Examples observed included a Year 6 science class where pupils developed hypotheses on the effectiveness of different ways of folding filter paper and Year 8 pupils cooking sweet and savoury dishes.

The staff have a wide subject knowledge and expertise. The voluntary staff make significant contributions to the teaching and are highly valued. Non-specialist staff teach well planned lessons; for example, one with a good insight into the problems pupils face, promoted a knowledge and understanding of ratios by Year 11 pupils. The specialist teaching and the efficient use of voluntary teachers' expertise clearly help pupils to attain good standards.

In a high proportion of the lessons observed the teaching was judged to be good with no weaknesses. The best lessons benefit from careful planning and a structured form. They proceed at a brisk pace with teachers having high expectations of the pupils to think for themselves and build on their previous knowledge and experience. Pupils are motivated to learn and are helped by being given interesting subject matter presented in a variety of teaching styles. There is effective use of teaching resources such as the overhead projector, the CD player for oral language development and computer projection of circuit diagrams.

All staff make frequent and regular assessment of their pupils' progress. They work hard in assessing the level of understanding of their pupils in order to move them forward. Effective and accurate assessment is used throughout the school, through a range of methods such as informal assessment, end of year tests, homework and examination guidelines. Half-termly effort and attainment grades are used to build an accurate picture of each pupil's achievement. Teachers mark work diligently. Their mark books provide information about pupils' attainment, effort and sometimes behaviour which give a clear picture of their progress over time. However, there is a need to ensure consistent high quality assessment and marking, using the best practice already available in the school.

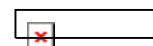
The identification of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is carefully undertaken by the experienced SEN co-ordinators. Parents are involved at an early stage, further diagnostic tests are undertaken and outside professional help accessed if needed. Appropriate decisions are then made as to the timing and nature of the support required. This system works very effectively and the early intervention is beneficial to the pupils. The school is also effective in identifying more able pupils,

some of whom take GCSE earlier and proceed to work at more advanced levels.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**



The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. It is a significant strength of the school. Each of the four strands has an important and influential impact on pupils' work, attitude and behaviour.

The emphasis given to pupils' spiritual development is the basis of the school's foundation and is woven through the curriculum. Through regular assemblies, class tutor time, biblical studies and opportunities for prayer the pupils develop a respect for themselves and others. The twice weekly full school assembly combines these elements through the use of prayer, music and celebration.

The school's clear behaviour policy and simple, effective rules enable pupils to learn to take responsibility for their own actions and distinguish right from wrong. The importance given to establishing good relationships at all levels throughout the school demonstrates how the school values and respects individuals for themselves. The school is committed to strong, moral Christian principles as interpreted through the Bible.

There is a very strong sense of community shared equally by staff and pupils who relate extremely well to each other. Assemblies, tutor periods, the house system and visits to the local community play an important part in the effective provision for the pupils' social development. Year 11 pupils take a leading role in tutor periods, helping and supporting a younger class; this was demonstrated when the Year 11 pupils baked a cake to celebrate a younger pupil's birthday, emphasising that it was for everyone's birthday.

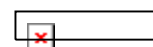
The school provides opportunities to promote the pupils' cultural development and their appreciation of cultural diversity. Through work in, for example, art, biblical studies, sociology and history, pupils gain a good understanding of their own and other cultures. For example, Year 11 pupils discussed the nature of social deviance and its relevance to the multicultural nature of society today.

A significant majority of parents felt that the school helps their children to become mature and take on responsibility.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils**



The school is effective in promoting the welfare of its pupils. The anti-bullying policy outlines the procedures to be followed by staff or pupils if bullying does occur. It would benefit from more detailed review of its prevention. The child protection policies are shared with the community of churches and the person nominated to be responsible for child protection is a member of the

church. The school has yet to establish contact with the local child protection committee and the local social services to ensure that they are aware of these policies and can link, if needed, to the procedures they outline. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy which relates well to Department for Education and Skills (DfES) publications. The school adheres to its good policy on First Aid. It has recently made appropriate provision for the care of sick pupils. The school's four First Aiders are well deployed. The local Fire Officer has approved the fire risk assessment. The fire drill book is exemplary; it contains a good summary of recent fire drills, including their date, time, duration and evaluative comments on their efficiency.

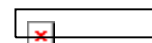
The school's policy on promoting good behaviour is effective. Staff are well deployed to ensure good supervision of pupils. The school keeps satisfactory written records of sanctions for the relatively rare serious disciplinary offences in a separate incident book. The admission and attendance registers are maintained in line with the regulations.

The school has prepared an initial, well-considered draft document outlining the early stages of its planning strategy in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

**Yes.**

**4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**



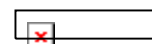
The school is part of the ministry of Basingstoke Community Churches, which is a registered charity. There is an Executive of nine members chaired by a trustee of the church, who are church elders, school staff, parents, the church administrator and the headteacher. Responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school is with the headteacher, who works at the school for three and a half days each week, and with core staff.

There are 78 members of staff comprising parents, grandparents, parents of former pupils, a former pupil and members of the church. Twenty-one are core staff, ten work full-time and the rest are part-time. The majority of these staff have a recognised teaching qualification. The voluntary teachers hold a variety of qualifications, including teaching qualifications, but are all valued for their contributions. All the staff have been subject to checks with the Criminal Records Bureau to confirm their suitability to work with children. The staff are members of the church and sound procedures have been carried out for their recruitment.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

**Yes.**

**5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation**



Most classrooms are appropriate in size for effective teaching and learning. However, music is at times taught in three very small rooms, with many keyboards in use. Moving this activity to the larger hall would be more appropriate.

The current Information and Communication Technology (ICT) room is very small, and the desktops

do not allow sufficient space for work alongside the keyboard. The room is not large enough to enable pupils to work away from the computers so there is a tendency for pupils to be distracted by playing with the keyboard during other work. There are plans well under way to convert the adjacent room to a new ICT room. There is currently no specific designated accommodation for technological work.

The current location of the Year 6 classroom segregates these pupils from the rest of the juniors but does not integrate them with the Key Stage 3 pupils. It may be beneficial to relocate this class closer to the junior classes.

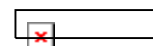
Classrooms are well maintained, clean and tidy, and in many cases they are attractive, especially the two year bases recently decorated by the Year 11 pupils. All of the premises are well provided with appropriate furniture and fittings for the school's purposes.

The use by the church and the 'Footsteps' group activities are well segregated from the school where necessary.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

**Yes.**

**6. The quality of information for parents and other partners**



The school is founded on the principle that parents are responsible for their child's education and they are encouraged by the school to be fully involved practically; many of them help teach at the school. Good, open communication is central to the life of the school.

The school provides parents with a Parent Information Pack, which is helpful and detailed. There is a church website, which includes information on the school. There is no formal prospectus and communication is through church notices, special meetings, interviews and visits to the school. A regular school letter, parents' prayer evenings and ongoing informal contact between the school and parents is a feature of the school. The school and parents sign partnership agreements, which are reviewed at middle and senior pupil level, undertaking a shared responsibility for pupils' development.

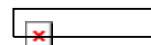
An exceptionally high proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire sent out to them before the inspection. They showed very high levels of satisfaction with nearly all aspects of the school. For example, 99% agree that the teaching is good and their child is making good progress at school, while 100% agree that staff expect the children to work hard and do their best and the school helps their child to become more mature.

Reports are issued mid-year and at the end of the school year. They are clear and detailed, and contain information on pupils' academic progress and personal development. There are several formal consultation sessions where parents may discuss their child's progress; in practice, parents frequently speak informally with staff. Family involvement and support, both at home and at school, are seen as key features of the school. Full exchange of information between the school, home and the church is seen as normal practice.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

**Yes.**

## 7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints

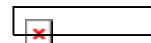


The school's procedure for handling complaints is included in the Parent Information Pack; it is known as a Formal Review. This clear and effective policy meets all the regulations.

### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

**Yes.**

## School details



Name of school:	The King's School		
DfES ref number:	850/6003		
Type of school:	Christian		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	7 - 16		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 82,	Girls 83,	Total 165
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys ,	Girls ,	Total 0
Number of boarders:	Boys ,	Girls ,	Total 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Total 0		
Annual fees (day pupils):	Contributions		
Address of school:	The King's School		
	Sarum Hill Centre		
	Basingstoke		
	Hampshire RG21 8SR		
E-mail address:	tks@bccnet.org.uk		
Telephone number:	01256 467092		
Fax number:	01256 473605		
Headteacher:	Mr Paul Davis		
Proprietor:	Basingstoke Community Churches		
Chair of the governing body:	Mr Jon Smith		
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Jill Bainton		
Dates of inspection:	23 - 26 February 2004		