



Kingsbury High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101559
LEA Brent LEA
Inspection number 276538
Inspection dates 22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006
Reporting inspector Anne Wellham HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Princes Avenue
School category	Foundation		Kingsbury
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		London NW9 9JR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02082049814
Number on roll	1974	Fax number	02082063040
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms R Hausmann
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr C Chung

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two HMI and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsbury High is one of the largest secondary schools in the country. It has a sixth form of just over 400 students. It is heavily oversubscribed and draws most of its pupils from the local community, an area of wide ethnic diversity. The majority of pupils are from an Asian British, Indian background and three quarters have English as an additional language. Other significant ethnic groups include White British, Pakistani, African and Black Caribbean. Until two years ago the school selected 15% of its pupils on the basis of their ability. Kingsbury is based on two sites, 0.6 miles apart. The school has a unit for pupils with visual and hearing impairment and, as a result, the percentage of pupils with statements of educational needs is slightly higher than average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average as is the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has specialist status for mathematics and computing.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is genuinely multicultural, providing all of its pupils with a harmonious and supportive environment. Pupils and staff from a wide range of cultures value and respect each other. The pupils are proud to be part of the school and enjoy the wide range of extra curricular activities on offer. Overall standards are above average with good examination results at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The progress that pupils make from their starting points is satisfactory although not all groups of pupils achieve as well as they could. Groups of pupils, including able boys and female students in the sixth form, do not make the progress they should. Pupils of Indian heritage make less progress than their counterparts in other schools nationally. Although teachers and departments track the progress of pupils this is not done consistently across the school. In science the achievement of younger pupils is below average. Strategies to raise achievement have had some impact in subjects where there is strong leadership. Pupils are polite and articulate. They are keen to do well and behaviour is good. They enjoy lessons where teachers use a variety of learning styles and they can participate in different activities. However, the positive climate for learning is not fully exploited by all teachers and in some lessons pupils are not sufficiently engaged and they do not make sufficient progress. Pupils are passive in lessons where they are given too few opportunities to express themselves or develop their arguments fully. Since the last inspection the curriculum has been broadened by introducing vocational courses and extending the choice of options at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The school has achieved specialist status for mathematics and computing since the last inspection which has led to improved standards in mathematics, improved access to information and communication technology (ICT) across the school and support for the community. However, the school has not met all specialist school targets for ICT. The school has the capacity to improve further. The leadership team is experienced and committed and is well supported by the governing body and some dynamic middle managers. However, although the school has introduced procedures to monitor and evaluate its work, they are not consistently applied and self review does not always lead to effective action to bring about improvement. The school was able to identify clearly the correct areas for development through self evaluation but inspectors did not agree with the school's judgements that it was good in all aspects of provision. The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

A high proportion of Year 11 pupils enter the sixth form and nearly all those who enrol in advanced level courses in Year 12 complete two years. A range of suitable academic and vocational courses at GCE advanced level is supplemented by one intermediate level course. Preparation for university entrance is good; about 98% of those in Year 13 enter higher education when they leave. The performance of students at GCE A level is good. The percentage gaining A to B grades has been rising steadily to well above average at 58% in 2005. Value added measures are also good, with students

making above average progress. Sixth form students are highly committed and keen to learn and are well supported. Teaching in the sixth form is effective and students progress well. Students have regular tutorials and rigorous reviews of their work and of their achievement related to their targets. Sixth form students' entitlement to an effective framework of support for their work is published and monitored.

What the school should do to improve further

* Use a greater variety of teaching styles to engage all learners and ensure they make good progress* Improve pupil tracking to identify under achievement and improve the progress of different groups of learners in all subjects, and particularly in science* Meet specialist school targets for ICT to ensure that it is delivered effectively across the curriculum for all pupils

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Standards in national tests are above average nationally although pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are improving at GCSE level and the percentage attaining five or more higher grades rose to 75% in 2005. At GCSE level there is a considerable difference between pupils' performance in subjects. In 2005, pupils did well in communication studies, mathematics and English but less well in design technology, music and physical education. In Years 7 to 9, standards in mathematics and English were good but standards in science were average or below what they should have been. Given the above average attainment on entry to the school, achievement overall is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and hearing impairment make good progress. However, several other groups of pupils, including able boys and female students in the sixth form, do not make the progress they should. Pupils of Indian heritage make less progress than their counterparts in other schools nationally. In science, progress has been exceptionally low for younger pupils; this is recognised by the school and appropriate action is now being taken. The school meets most of its targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well being is good overall. Many pupils participate in the very wide range of enrichment activities and are keen to organise fundraising events. Several activities involve pupils taking responsibility and working in local primary schools. Pupils develop good skills to help them prepare for their future employment. Sixth form students have opportunities to adopt leadership roles: these include formal responsibilities as senior prefects and as leading members of the school council. They may also become involved in voluntary work in the community helping younger children and in local residential homes or becoming Millennium Volunteers. Pupils feel safe and free from intimidation and bullying. They speak positively about the impact of

the school's anti-bullying policy, which is a model for other schools. These positive attitudes ensure a community where all cultures are celebrated and valued. However, approaches to pupils' spiritual development vary considerably across the school. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily although the food offered at lunchtime is unpopular with some pupils and the quality is variable. The 'Move It' programme is increasing pupils' participation in sport. A small number of parents have concerns about pupils' behaviour but the inspection found that behaviour is good. Pupils move sensibly around the site; however some still arrive late to school or to lessons during the day. Attendance is average; the school is aware that many parents still arrange extended holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and make use of a variety of resources to exemplify and demonstrate their teaching. Pupils know what they are expected to do. They enjoy lessons where they are actively involved, for example in an art and design lesson where pupils were using imagery as a stimulus for creative thinking. Many staff are long-serving and use their experience well to establish a good atmosphere for learning in the classrooms; for example, in business studies by providing varied opportunities for pupils to participate. Pupils behave well but are often passive in lessons when they are given too few opportunities to express themselves or develop their arguments fully. In science younger pupils have been given too few tasks that entail an investigative approach and this was consequently a weakness in the pupils' performance in the Year 9 national tests. Teachers do not always take full advantage of the 75 minutes allocated for lessons. Lessons often start well but lose momentum if the teachers lack sufficient strategies to maintain a good rate for learning. In some subjects there is too much reliance on setting arrangements to ensure work is matched to individual needs and marking does not give specific guidance to pupils on how they could improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum makes satisfactory provision for all pupils and has some good features. It offers booster classes after school for younger pupils and activities for gifted and talented pupils. All pupils are taught ICT but the extent to which it is used by teachers is variable and curriculum targets for specialist status have not been met. There are some innovative vocational programmes at Key Stage 4 which benefit those pupils for whom traditional academic programmes are unsuitable. The choice of GCSEs has widened. In the sixth form there is a satisfactory choice of academic and vocational courses at GCE advanced level but only one intermediate level course. A wide variety

of visits enriches the provision including a residential course for Year 7 pupils. Pupils enjoy and support a good range of clubs and activities outside lessons, including all major sports, photography, mathematics, debating and geography-in-action. The school offers sixth form students an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts. Although the school has broadened the curriculum the benefits to pupils are not thoroughly evaluated across all departments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that this is good overall. Some elements of care and support are exemplary. There is excellent monitoring of the welfare and progress of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and vulnerable pupils. The school has successfully promoted a number of anti-bullying strategies. These include the very good use of peer mediators and 'restorative justice' counselling. When required, the school makes use of effective links with an extensive range of professional support agencies and individuals. Systems for child protection and for health and safety are well established. Pupils benefit from good guidance regarding option and career choices. Their academic progress is monitored and they are set targets to improve. In subjects such as art, science and the humanities such information is effectively used to inform teaching and pupils have a clear idea of what they have to do to improve. However such information is inconsistently used by managers and teachers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher provides satisfactory leadership, allowing considerable freedom to senior managers and middle managers to develop their areas of responsibility which limits accountability. The sixth form is well managed, although some aspects of self-evaluation and strategic development are not fully effective. Middle managers and heads of department are not given clear enough guidance on how to monitor their areas, with the result that practice is uneven. What strategies are in place vary in rigour and are not systematic; for example the monitoring of teaching within subject areas. Whilst leaders have a general understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, there is no common method of self-evaluation and review. Leaders have established a favourable ethos with good relationships and an orderly environment. Parents think highly of the school. Governors are supportive and committed and hold the school to account well. The school improvement plan covers many areas, but like the self-evaluation processes that feed into it, it lacks focus and key priorities. The budget is monitored closely and resources are allocated with best value in mind. The school's outreach work has strengthened links with local primary schools, for example in running gifted and talented groups in mathematics. The combined strengths of leaders have led to improvements in performance in recent years, and there is a capacity for further improvement.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	3
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing on behalf of the inspection team to let you know the judgements we made about your school. We enjoyed meeting groups of you, talking to your teachers and visiting lessons. We were impressed with your politeness and courtesy. Your views are very important and helped us to understand some of the good aspects of your school and to identify some things that could improve.

* We think your school provides you with a satisfactory education and a safe, caring environment in which to learn. Pupils from different cultures get on well together and respect and value one another. The staff, sixth formers and pupils work hard to make sure that bullying and racism rarely happen.* Most pupils are very keen to do well and want to do their best. Your parents and teachers also want you to do well and they help you achieve high results in examinations. Even though the results are high there are some groups of pupils who do not do as well as they could.* Your school is good at helping pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities* There are a lot of extra curricular activities, especially for sport, and these are very popular and enjoyable. Sixth formers play an important part in the school as senior prefects and leading members of the school council. They also helping younger pupils in the school and local primary schools by running sports clubs.* You enjoy lessons most when teachers use different ways of involving you by asking your opinions or by making you think for yourselves.* Some of you are unhappy with the quality of food in the canteen and think that it is too expensive.

To make your school even better we think your school needs to: * Encourage some of your teachers to use a greater variety of teaching styles to involve you more in the lessons.* Encourage teachers in all subjects to be consistent in tracking how much progress you are making so that you know what to do to improve.* Make sure all pupils and all subject areas take advantage of ICT resources.