



Kings' School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116468
LEA Hampshire LEA
Inspection number 279838
Inspection dates 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005
Reporting inspector Gehane Gordelier HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Romsey Road
School category	Community		Winchester
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Hampshire SO22 5PN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01962861161
Number on roll	1685	Fax number	01962849224
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Bray
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2002	Headteacher	Mrs Susan Lawrence

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 9 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	Inspection number 279838
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team consisting of two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Kings' is a large comprehensive community school located on the outskirts of Winchester. It is very popular and oversubscribed. It serves a community from a wide range of backgrounds. There are very small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language and the vast majority of pupils are of British heritage. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is low. The number of pupils with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average but there are fewer pupils with statements. There are 1685 pupils on roll aged between 11 and 16 and there are more boys than girls. There is boarding provision for 36 boys, a number of whom are from overseas. The school has a unit to support the needs of pupils with physical disabilities and they are fully integrated into the main school. Since July 2003, the school has been registered as having specialist status for Business and Enterprise. Following the retirement of the headteacher who had been in post for 20 years a new headteacher has been in place since in September 2005. She was formerly the school's deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Kings' is an outstanding school, which delivers excellent value for money. This is the school's assessment of its own performance, and inspectors agree. Pupils achieve very well and standards are high. The personal development of pupils is good. This contributes to the good behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils work very hard and are keen to succeed. The very strong work ethic in the school promotes high expectations. Teaching is good and includes some outstanding practice. The curriculum is very good in nearly all respects and exemplary at Key Stage 4. The management of the specialist schools' status has been particularly effective in developing an outstanding curriculum which has been of tremendous benefit to a broad range of pupils. The provision for boarders is good and pupils are well cared for. This contributes significantly to their overall development and enjoyment of school. The overall quality of care, guidance and support for all pupils is excellent. The provision from the department for pupils with disabilities is exceptional. These pupils thrive because of the quality of support and guidance they receive. The provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is good and the school is continuing to make improvements in this area. The senior management team provide outstanding leadership and management. They promote equality of opportunities very well and ensure that the school operates at a very high level of efficiency. They provide excellent guidance and support to staff at all levels. This is instrumental in improving communication throughout the school and maintaining high standards of achievement. The overall quality of middle managers is very good, but a minority of managers are over reliant on the support from senior management to provide curriculum leadership and influence the quality of teaching and learning. The senior management team is highly effective in its self-evaluation. Consequently the team has an excellent understanding of the schools' strengths and areas for development. The overall quality of self-evaluation by middle managers is very good; however, there are a small minority of middle managers who do not focus sharply enough on raising levels of achievement. The leadership team is already developing strategies to improve this. The school is keen to ensure that it continues to develop its commitment to every pupil. It has made good progress in the few areas identified for improvement in the last inspection and is well placed to make further progress.

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure that the quality of self-evaluation within middle management is of an equally high standard by being sharply focused on raising pupils' levels of achievement.*
Provide more opportunities for pupils to contribute their views.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The overall quality of achievement and standards is outstanding. Attainment on entry to the school is just above average. The outstanding curriculum, consistently good

teaching and very strong work ethic all contribute to pupils making very good progress and meeting their challenging targets. As a result, the overall standards pupils achieve in their GCSE examinations in Year 11 are well above the national average. Results in the national tests for English, mathematics and science taken at the end of Year 9 have remained consistently high. The school has successfully improved pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are now similar to those in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils gaining high grade GCSE passes in Year 11 continues to be very high. Significant numbers of pupils in Year 11 score well in AS level courses in geography, history, mathematics and physical education. This represents excellent achievement because these courses are not normally taken until pupils move into Sixth Form education. A small number of pupils take a variety of non GCSE vocational subjects such as automotive vehicle maintenance and repair. Pupils are successful in achieving the full qualification at Level 1. The school has correctly identified one small group of learners whose progress, although good overall, is not as great as that of their peers. The leadership team are currently considering ways of accelerating their progress. The school had previously identified boys as a group of pupils whose progress needed to improve and the strategies to achieve this were very successful. Boys now outperform girls in both the Year 9 tests and at GCSE level.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being is good. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about other cultures and faiths in a range of subjects including, the arts and mathematics and in humanities. Year group assemblies provide appropriate moments of reflection and a thought for the day. This helps pupils to mature into responsible and considerate young adults. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school and are well behaved. They display a positive commitment to learning. They are particularly enthusiastic in lessons which include a practical element and opportunities to work with others. This further enhances their progress and enjoyment of school. Pupils feel safe and are confident that the few incidences of bullying are dealt with effectively. Relationships between groups of pupils are good and the vast majority show high levels of respect and consideration. The school encourages pupils to consider those who are less fortunate than themselves and pupils have initiated fund raising events to support charities and disaster appeals. Pupils take on increasing levels of responsibility as they progress through the school. They are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and be safe. The school has begun a gradual introduction to healthier meals at lunch times. The strong emphasis on obtaining good examination results, good interpersonal skills and work experience contribute significantly to the development of pupils' future economic well-being. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for pupils to contribute to decisions in school which affect them. In a small minority of lessons their enjoyment of learning is reduced when behaviour management strategies are overly severe and when learning is passive. The senior managers have correctly identified additional areas for improvement including the need to refurbish the toilets. Pupils are helping

to raise funds and are contributing ideas for the design of the new facilities. The attendance and punctuality of pupils are good. The school has effective systems to monitor and track pupils' attendance and punctuality and liaise with parents when required. This has helped to improve levels attendance where needed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and inspectors saw some outstanding practice. The best lessons were well structured and progressed at a very good pace. In an outstanding geography lesson pupils were interpreting graphical information about the population growth in India. They were encouraged to consider causes and effects. The excellent level of questioning helped pupils to reflect and develop their thinking skills. Pupils were encouraged to be evaluative and not just descriptive in their responses. The most successful lessons included a good range of teaching strategies to support the different needs of pupils and provided a very good level of challenge. Pupils understood what was expected of them and teachers encouraged all pupils to contribute. This helped pupils to evaluate their learning and recognise what they needed to do to improve. In these lessons the quality of the relationship between staff and pupils was particularly good and pupils felt that teachers were approachable. Any minor low level disruption was quickly, amicably and sensitively resolved. In a small minority of lessons strategies to engage and motivate all pupils were less successful. Opportunities for pupils to share and discuss ideas before responding to teachers' questions or engaging in written work were sometimes limited. As a result, pupils were not sufficiently encouraged to assess their level of progress and were reluctant to ask for additional help. The department for pupils with disabilities is a centre of excellence. The school's separate provision for pupils with special educational needs incorporates a wide and very effective range of teaching strategies. The innovative use of staff and the very effective use of outside agencies serve to ensure that all pupils are very well integrated into the mainstream life of the school. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress are very good. The school makes very good use of a wide range of information to monitor progress and set targets. Pupils' books are marked regularly; however, although all teachers provide regular verbal feedback they don't always provide pupils with sufficient written feedback.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The quality of the curriculum and other activities is outstanding. The school's specialist business and enterprise status has resulted in all pupils studying business and communications as a core subject. The strong drive from the school's senior staff to develop this subject has had a very positive impact on the quality of the curriculum and standards. The study of business and communications is enhancing key skills, knowledge and understanding in other core areas of learning including pupils' personal

development. This has also strengthened the extent to which the school promotes pupils' future economic well-being and the opportunities pupils have to make a contribution to the community. The school makes excellent provision for pupils to learn additional languages. At the beginning of Key Stage 3 pupils are offered the choice of three first languages French, Spanish and Italian. Those pupils who demonstrate particular linguistic aptitudes are offered a further choice of studying Latin, German or Spanish. The school is proud of its long standing tradition of developing accomplished musicians. In 2004, pupils appreciated the opportunity of participating in Southampton's festival of music. Although the provision of ICT has improved since the last inspection, the school recognises that this continues to be an area for development. There are currently missed opportunities in the use made of ICT to help pupils learn even more effectively in different subjects. At Key Stage 4 pupils have a choice of three main pathways; these are matched carefully to pupils' abilities and aspirations. Each option incorporates appropriate vocational opportunities providing pupils with relevant experiences relating to the world of work. There is very good provision for higher and lower achieving pupils. Innovative courses provide pupils with a good level of encouragement to take up further training at the end of Key Stage 4. The school grounds include playing fields, an indoor swimming pool and a wide range of facilities. These together with an extensive range of extra curricular activities, visits outside of the school and residential trips abroad further enrich the curriculum and pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school's view that the quality of its care, guidance and support is outstanding. The school ensures that appropriate procedures are in place for safeguarding pupils. All staff are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure their suitability to work with children. Staff assess levels of risk very carefully both in school and to visits to places of interest. Form tutors play a key role in providing excellent pastoral care. They have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and provide pupils with very good guidance. Pupils particularly appreciate the excellent advice they receive in developing study skills and in reviewing their progress. The very good work with other agencies provides pupils with high quality support including valuable guidance about career options. The school employs additional support staff to further assist pupils with personal issues and there is an established programme of peer support. The very good provision for pupils with SEN and the separately funded outstanding provision for pupils with disabilities significantly enhance the school's overall provision for care, guidance and support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The overall quality of leadership and management is outstanding. The headteacher is extremely well supported by a very strong leadership team. In a short space of time the headteacher has gained the confidence and support of staff, pupils, parents and

governors. She has improved levels of communication and has correctly identified the need to improve links with other schools and the local community. Senior managers are highly effective at evaluating the work of the school. The overall quality of middle management is very good. However, not all managers at this level provide equally strong curriculum leadership. In a minority of areas, there is still an over reliance on senior managers to lead the drive towards higher standards through improved teaching and learning. The senior leadership team contribute significantly to promoting the strong work ethic which is evident throughout the school. They provide very good additional support and guidance where required. This together with the consistently good teaching and outstanding curriculum help to ensure that the overall standards pupils achieve are very high. The governing body is fully involved in the strategic leadership of the school and is committed to its success. Overall governors are effective in their role as critical friend and support the senior staff in moving the school forward. Resources are very well deployed, finances are very well managed and the school offers outstanding value for money.

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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 to thank you for your contribution to the inspection of your school and to share a summary of the findings with you.

My colleagues and I were very impressed with how hard you work, the progress you make and the results you achieve. The school's curriculum and the quality of teaching all contribute to the high standards you achieve. The boarding house is well led and managed and we are pleased that this helps the pupils who are boarders to enjoy being at the school. We agree with you that the staff at the school provide you with excellent care, guidance and support. The support for pupils with disabilities is exemplary and it was great to see how well all pupils are included in the school. The new headteacher and the senior staff have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas in need of improvement. This includes the issues which you raised with us including the need to improve toilet facilities.

Although your school has been judged to be outstanding, we have made a few suggestions to help it to improve even further. They are as follows:- * Ensure that the work of all middle managers has an equally strong focus on helping pupils make even better progress.* Provide more opportunities for pupils to contribute their views. I wish you every success and happiness for the future.