



Kesgrave High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 124849
LEA SUFFOLK LEA
Inspection number 281824
Inspection dates 23 November 2005 to 24 November 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. Alan Alder LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Main Road
School category	Community		IP5 2PB
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01473624855
Number on roll	1600	Fax number	01473612317
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs.Margaret Young
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mr. George Thomas

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 23 November 2005 - 24 November 2005	Inspection number 281824
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kesgrave High School is a popular mixed comprehensive school situated in a town to the east of Ipswich. There are 1600 pupils on roll of whom about 260 are in the sixth form. The school has grown very rapidly in the last ten years. Almost 93% of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number from other ethnic groups is very small. Fewer than 1% of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The proportion with special educational needs, including those with statements, is also low for a school of this size. The school has been awarded specialist school status for technology.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kesgrave High School has many outstanding features and is an effective school. It provides pupils with a good education. Progress since its last inspection has been good and it has the capacity to continue to improve. The school's own self evaluation judged its effectiveness to be outstanding overall. One of the school's many strengths is the standards achieved by pupils. These are outstanding. The progress made by all groups of pupils is at the very least good and by some it is outstanding; it improves as pupils move through the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements, make outstanding progress. Pupils' personal development is also outstanding. The school provides excellent guidance and support. The curriculum includes a broad range of subjects for pupils to study and there is a series of highly successful day conferences to supplement pupils' personal development. In years seven to nine there is pressure on some subjects because they are given insufficient teaching time. The headteacher has a very clear view of how the school should benefit pupils and provides strong leadership. He is well supported by his senior team. Achieving specialist status has made a significant contribution to extending pupils' learning through, for example, the excellent provision of computers as an aid to learning. Financial management is good and the school is well resourced. Buildings are well maintained and attractive. The school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The school evaluates the sixth form as being outstandingly effective. As a result of their lesson observations, discussions with staff and students and looking at examination results, inspectors fully agree with this view. Sixth formers are given very good teaching, guidance and support. The progress that they make and the standards they reach are outstanding. This is particularly impressive because the sixth form has only been in existence for four years.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the progress made by pupils in Key Stage 3. - Review the balance of the curriculum for Key Stage 3 to ensure that all subjects receive the time and emphasis they need.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The standards reached by pupils are outstanding. GCSE results are exceptionally high, though the school's very challenging targets for 2005 have not been achieved. When pupils enter the school in year seven their standards are outstanding. By the end of Year 9 satisfactory progress is made and standards remain outstanding. In Years 10

and 11 progress accelerates. All groups of pupils make better progress than similar groups do nationally. This includes the progress made by both girls and boys, pupils of different abilities and pupils from different ethnic groups. Outstanding progress is made by pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Pupils make more progress in English than they do in mathematics. In the sixth form the progress made by students continues to be rapid. The result is that the standards reached are exceptionally high. Students' examination results are significantly higher than those which are achieved by students nationally. The school exceeded its targets for 2005.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils is outstanding. This confirms the school's own evaluation. Pupils' exceptional enjoyment of their education is evident from their excellent attendance and behaviour. The school provides a controlled and safe environment in which pupils develop and progress well. Pupils have great respect for others and value their relationships with the staff. They hold the school in high regard. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They make a very positive contribution to the community and learn a lot about other people's faiths and traditions. Pupils are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Most either walk or cycle to school. Pupils undertake PE lessons in all years and many participate in sports activities provided within the good extra-curricular programme. Healthy food is provided at lunchtime but its cost deters a wider take-up. Pupils are excellently prepared for their future working lives through activities such as experiencing the workplace of a relative for a day and through a two week work experience. These activities are well supported by local employers. Many students go to universities and they are given excellent guidance on university courses and how to apply. Careers guidance is particularly strong.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress. This matches the school's own evaluation. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Teachers make good use of their knowledge of pupils' strengths and weaknesses when they plan lessons and in the support and challenge they give different pupils in the classroom. This is one of the reasons why pupils of all abilities make good progress. A notable feature of the teaching is the development of mature relationships. This leads to good behaviour and productive discussion work. Pupils remark on the commitment of teachers to helping them in lessons and outside normal hours. Teachers use a good range of teaching approaches and this helps pupils to concentrate and learn. The aims of lessons are made clear so that pupils understand what is expected of them. Computers are

widely used across the school but there is inconsistency in the extent to which they are used by pupils in lessons. In the sixth form students are encouraged to learn independently and they respond maturely to the atmosphere of enthusiasm that teachers generate. Assessment procedures are outstanding. Assessments are rigorous and frequent. Test and examination data are analysed extremely well to check that pupils are making enough progress. Pupils are made very aware of their progress and what they should do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school provides a good, broad curriculum that meets the needs of its pupils. A wide range of courses are offered, but there is a limited choice of vocational subjects at GCSE and in the sixth form. Statutory requirements are met. Good provision is made for citizenship in discrete sessions, and through other subjects. Religious education is taught effectively through day conferences in Years 10 and 11 and through general studies in the sixth form. Movement around school's large site is reduced because the school has a three period day. This means that little teaching time is lost. The time allocated to science in years 7 to 9 is very generous. For some other subjects, including mathematics and modern foreign languages, there is less time than in most other schools. Achievement is lower in these subjects. Very good resources and computer hardware enhance the curriculum, for example in design and technology lessons where good use is made of them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care, support and guidance is outstanding. The school makes a very positive contribution to pupils' achievement and personal development. This leads to the high levels of pupil autonomy and independence that are so evident throughout the school and which help pupils to make good progress. Child protection procedures are well known by all staff and are implemented effectively. Risk assessments are completed diligently and ensure that students learn in safety. Preparations for pupils joining the school are thorough. Students feel safe and very well looked after and know how to get advice and support if they need it. There is a well established structure of house councils that feed the views of students into the main school council. Relationships with parents are outstanding, and questionnaires show that most feel fully involved in the education of their children. There are outstanding links with various support agencies and all groups work together very effectively to ensure that good progress is made by pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership in establishing the school's character and principles. These are fully endorsed by staff, parents and students. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team. Together they have very successfully managed the recent growth of the school and the establishment of the sixth form. Leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding and have resulted in outstanding achievement. Recent improvements to the school indicate that leadership and management contribute very well to the school's capacity to improve. Heads of faculty are reflective and teamwork is of a high order. The work of faculties is rigorously supported and monitored by the senior management team. There are outstanding systems for supporting and monitoring the performance of pupils. Pupils' progress and work are regularly reviewed and the outcomes are used effectively to monitor the impact of teaching and to judge how to further improve it. Information technology is used very effectively as a management tool. Staff are well supported and induction of new staff is extremely thorough and well organised. The quality of self-evaluation is good. Teachers regularly observe one another's lessons in their faculty. Lesson observations by the senior management team have until recently been reduced as a result of the expansion programme. Parents and students are consulted regularly. Faculty heads review their work each year. The school's self-evaluation would be strengthened further if it drew together a summary of its strengths and weaknesses in preparation for the annual school improvement plan. Governance is good. Governors know the school well, including its strengths and weaknesses. They have been fully involved in overseeing the school's recent strategy for growth, but have little involvement in establishing the main principles underlying the annual school improvement plan.

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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?	2	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
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?	2	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

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

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?	2	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
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	insufficient evidence

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

Thank you for being so helpful during our inspection. We met and spoke to quite a number of you both in meetings as well as in lessons. The strong message that came across from you was that you are very pleased with your school and what it provides for you and that you are happy there. A very high proportion of parents were also very complimentary. I'd now like to let you know what we thought. We found many things at Kesgrave which were outstanding. The most important of these is that you learn very well indeed and your examination results are exceptionally good. This is because you are well taught, you behave well and the school keeps a close eye on how you are all getting on in your work. If you aren't making enough effort your school does something about it! We also found that your attendance is outstanding and so is the way in which you develop as people. Your school cares for you very well and provides very good help when it is needed. There are not many recommendations we need to make for improvements, because things are going well. We feel that pupils in Years 7 to 9 could make more progress and get even better marks in their tests at the end of Year 9. We also feel that some subjects in Years 7 to 9 could do with a bit more teaching time to help with this. Fortunately we think that this can happen without having to make the school day any longer! Keep up the very good work and thanks again for your help.