

# Kingstanding School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103628
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	286711
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joyce Cox

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	32
6th form	24
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Cardinali
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joy Hardwick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Old Oscott Hill Kingstanding Birmingham B44 9SP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 3608222
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 3666394

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<b>Age group</b>	11–19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

### Description of the school

This is a small day special school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). The majority of pupils have severe or profound learning difficulties. An increasing number have additional medical, complex and life challenging needs. Pupils usually have a statement of special educational need (SEN). Some pupils may be placed at the school for assessment if they are new to the county. Around 80% of the pupils come from a White British background and the remainder come from minority ethnic groups. A very small number speak English as an additional language. Six pupils are looked after by the local authority and a much larger group receive respite care provision.

The school is undergoing reorganisation as part of the local authority's SEN strategy development and may possibly be re-designated as an ASD provision. The school has secured many awards for its work including the Team Teach Gold Standard Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark and is currently working towards Healthy School Status, a Rights Respecting Award and Investors in People.

### Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Kingstanding is a good school. Since the headteacher's arrival in 2004 the school has rapidly improved because of the effective action taken by the school's good leadership and management. These measures have improved the quality of teaching, pupils' personal development, especially their behaviour, the curriculum and academic guidance. Effective self-evaluation correctly identifies the school's strengths and areas for development. The headteacher and staff are strongly committed to continuous improvement, and effective teamwork has been established. Despite a lack of clarity about the school's future role, staff morale is high and the headteacher has been proactive in planning for possible options by setting up a distinct ASD/SLD provision.

Although standards are exceptionally low because of pupils' complex learning needs, their achievement is good throughout the school because teaching is good and the effective curriculum is skilfully adapted to suit individual needs. Due to a shortage of information and communication technology (ICT) resources, pupils have limited opportunities to develop their technology skills. The calm and enjoyable atmosphere that prevails in lessons ensures that pupils remain interested in their work, do their best and learn effectively. The positive experiences pupils have in lessons and the good support they are given improve their confidence and self-esteem. The majority of pupils with PMLD now make good progress and achieve well. They have very caring and consistent handling together with good teaching. However, sometimes older PMLD students have to spend time without adequate stimulation and on these occasions their learning is less successful.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The majority of pupils are sociable and helpful and get on well with each other and with the adults who teach and support them. The elected school council acts on behalf of pupils and students to help bring about changes to sports days and school rules that benefit all. Pupils learn about the importance of exercise and eating and drinking sensibly. Many say they love coming to school; they trust the adults and are confident that help will always be provided. The care, guidance and support given to pupils are good. Every effort is made to ensure that communication is as effective as possible so that the needs and wishes of individuals do not go unrecognised. Procedures for safeguarding students and ensuring their health and safety are robust and reviewed regularly. Intimate care is given in a manner that preserves the dignity of those receiving it. The school keeps very comprehensive class and key stage achievement records. However, the system to help staff check pupils' and students' progress is not efficient enough to ensure that staff can respond quickly to any concerns that may arise.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership, is exceptionally clear about the direction the school should take and works tirelessly to bring about improvements. The school has forged good working relationships with other local providers and agencies, which have impacted very positively on curricular developments. Issues raised by the last inspection have been effectively tackled. Governors are supportive and are effectively developing their role in evaluating the school's work. The leadership of the school is ambitious and successful, and is well placed to bring about further improvement.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the sixth form is good. Although students' attainments are well below national averages because of their learning difficulties and disabilities, they achieve well and make good progress in learning. Teaching and learning are good and the curriculum provides a good range of suitable activities. Students make good progress within accredited modules of work, which are validated by external moderation. The personal development of students and their behaviour are good because of the staff's very skilled management. Students enjoy their activities greatly and act in a safe manner. They say how much they enjoy activities such as sailing and rock climbing. Good links with the local college and work placements contribute strongly to economic awareness and community participation. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good and the head of sixth form, although comparatively new in post, has, with staff support, brought about recent improvements in the curriculum and teaching.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve ICT resources so pupils have more opportunities to practise their ICT skills.
- Ensure staff provide all PMLD students with sufficiently stimulating learning experiences.
- Improve assessment so that the outcomes can be used more efficiently in responding to individual needs.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards are exceptionally low, but achievement is good because of the carefully adapted teaching and the good care and support pupils receive. They do well in improving their communication and personal skills. Pupils with ASD make good progress, particularly in developing essential social skills, because of the skilful teaching they receive from the talented and experienced staff. All pupils' progress has improved since the last inspection as underlying weaknesses in the curriculum have been successfully addressed. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and the very small number of pupils speaking English as an additional language achieve as well as others due to effective support. The school has also introduced a range of accredited courses, and older students now leave with a good range of awards celebrating their achievements in academic and personal skills.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Older students know how to keep themselves safe and healthy. This is because there is thoughtful and sensitive management of teaching students about physical changes they may experience as they mature. Pupils contribute to the community by helping to serve lunch and by raising funds for charities such as the Operation Christmas Child Appeal. They understand the difference between right and wrong and how to behave well. Pupils are polite and as they mature they are given suitable responsibilities. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously. Pupils enjoy school and have a positive attitude to learning. Attendance is satisfactory, though restricted

by some serious medical conditions. Students develop workplace and related skills satisfactorily through engaging in group activities and participating fully in college and work experience opportunities. They have few opportunities to practise their ICT skills due to limited resources.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teachers are highly competent at adapting activities to meet individual needs. They successfully use many alternatives to the spoken word to aid communication and are good at supplementing what they say with sign language, symbols and pictures. Lessons are often active and exciting, with staff joining in enthusiastically. For example, they joined the pupils in designing and making tasty wraps to take on a visit to a donkey sanctuary. For the most part pupils with PMLD receive good teaching with good numbers of staff to help. However, on a few occasions, some older PMLD students are left unattended and do not benefit from activities to stimulate their senses and increase their awareness of the world around them. Talented teaching assistants and teachers work closely together as an effective team and this is recognised and appreciated by parents, who feel the staff are 'always welcoming and have their children's best interests at heart'. Relationships are very strong and many staff, supported by high quality training, have attained local and national recognition for their particular skills in managing behaviour. These skills ensure that any occasions of challenging behaviour are forestalled or minimised effectively.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Staff work hard to make learning interesting, relevant and challenging. Many additional activities are available to widen pupils' and students' interests and experiences, including sailing, rock climbing, gardening and tap dancing. Good use is made of local facilities. Pupils visit nearby shops and library to practise the skills learned in school. Individual education targets are used well in many areas of learning, for example in raising awareness of healthy living, keeping safe and preparing for life after school. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are developed in many curriculum activities but there are limited chances for pupils to improve their ICT skills. There are strong links with the local community and increasing links with local mainstream schools and colleges so that facilities and expertise can be shared to benefit all pupils. The 'Moving On' programme has been successfully adopted for the older students to prepare them for life after school. All pupils are encouraged to become as independent as possible. Some students visit local mainstream schools for short periods of time so that they can benefit from more specialist facilities, for example in art, drama and PE. Close association with local providers and agencies enhances the curriculum and effectively promotes pupils' and students' personal development.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school succeeds in making sure that all pupils are well cared for, kept safe and effectively guided and supported. Health and safety and child protection procedures are rigorous and effectively applied in supporting vulnerable pupils. Arrangements for managing intimate care needs have improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils are particularly well cared for if they experience the death of a fellow pupil. Staff are good at assessing how well pupils are making progress in their personal development and in their academic learning. They regularly discuss pupils' progress with senior leaders, and decide what needs to be done next. A great deal of valuable assessment information is gathered. However, the system for analysing the information is quite time consuming. It is not easy to quickly see the progress pupils make, and so staff cannot respond rapidly if any underachievement should arise.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The outstanding leadership provided by the headteacher has been crucial to the school's forward thrust. She has a passionate determination to provide the best possible education for the pupils regardless of their complex learning and medical needs, and is effectively supported by her deputy and senior staff. They have successfully engendered a good team spirit and high morale amongst the staff after a very difficult period when the school had difficulties retaining senior leaders. There is a clear commitment to raising achievement and this has driven the rigorous procedures for checking and improving school performance by the leadership team. Effective development planning has led to rapid and significant improvements in many aspects of provision. The school recognises that there is more to do, particularly in the improvement of the ICT provision and in simplifying the way the school measures pupils' progress. In addition the provision for a small number of older PMLD students is not as good as for other pupils and students. Governance is good. Governors actively and enthusiastically support the school and increasingly hold it to account for its performance. Many parents comment on how much the school has improved in recent years, particularly in the 'opportunities and facilities it offers the pupils'.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
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	3	

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
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	2	
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 June 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Kingstanding School, Birmingham, B44 9SP

We enjoyed our visit to your school very much. We really liked watching some of the things you do and joining you for lunch. Most of your parents think that you go to a good school and we agree with them.

There are lots of great things about your school.

- You are good at working hard, helping each other and listening to your teachers, and you do well in your lessons.
- The staff care about you very much. They are good teachers and they make sure you are safe at school.
- Your headteacher and other staff are very clever at running the school and making sure you have a good time and do well.
- Anybody who needs extra help is always given it.
- You behave well and older students enjoy sailing and rock climbing.
- For all these reasons you make good progress.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors have lots of good ideas to make your school even better and we agree with them. We think that it would also be good if there were more computers for you. It is also important that those of you with PLMD receive as much help and attention from adults as possible. We also think that it would help if staff had a quicker way of finding out how much progress you make throughout the school. You can help by working hard, behaving well and taking care of each other.
- It was good to see that you are happy at school and doing well. We hope the older students enjoyed their leavers' Prom.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Joyce Cox and Jenny Taylor (Inspection Team)