



King David High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104703
Local Authority Liverpool
Inspection number 287010
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Derek Aitken

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Childwall Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Liverpool
Age range of pupils	11–18		Merseyside L15 6UZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 7227496
Number on roll (school)	630	Fax number	0151 7380259
Number on roll (6th form)	181		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Steinbeck
		Headteacher	Mrs Brigid Smith
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–18	20–21 September 2006	287010

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

King David High School is an over-subscribed, Jewish faith based school. While it is smaller than average, the sixth form is a member of the Fiveways Collaboration and is rapidly growing in number. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds and very few have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. One sixth of places are reserved for pupils with musical talents. The headteacher was confirmed in her post in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. These include leadership of the headteacher, the overall quality of provision for the sixth form, standards, and elements of personal development. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well above the national average. They maintain these standards to the end of Year 11. Their progress is especially marked in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form. A high level of success in both English and mathematics at GCSE sets them up well for future study or employment.

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe here. This is reflected in their high level of attendance and very positive attitudes. Sixth formers have ample opportunities to mature and show responsibility. They play an important part in the life of the school, acting as effective 'big brothers and sisters' to the younger pupils. Teaching and learning are good overall and increasingly effective in the older years as pupils and students are prepared very well to meet examination requirements. In some lessons, pupils have too few opportunities to develop as independent learners. They are, however, becoming increasingly aware of how they can improve their work. The curriculum is mostly well matched to meet the needs of learners, including those with learning difficulties, although it lacks a strong vocational element. Care arrangements for pupils have improved since the last inspection and are now good. The school's systems for tracking pupils' academic progress are also improving. The quality of pastoral and academic guidance for the sixth form is exceptional.

The headteacher, within a short period of time, has given a fresh impetus to the work of the school. The introduction of stronger monitoring and evaluation systems is providing a very strong basis for further development. School leaders have an acute awareness of what the school needs to do to improve further and outstanding capacity to bring this about. The efficient and very effective deployment of resources means that this school provides outstanding value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The sixth form is better than the school believes; it is outstanding. The very high proportion of students entering the sixth form and continuing into higher education bears testimony to the outstanding quality of provision. Standards and achievement are outstanding with outstanding performance not only in terms of subject grades but also in terms of progress. Students do exceptionally well compared with similar students in other schools and colleges. In 2005 and 2006, the school was in the top 10% of schools nationally. The collaborative arrangements with other institutions are a significant strength of provision, giving sixth-formers a very extensive range of opportunities and an outstanding curriculum. Students are well taught and assessment procedures are highly effective. The very high levels of care and guidance and the outstanding leadership of the head of sixth form ensure that students' personal development is also of the highest order. A sixth-former remarked that students have

a 'strong bond with their teachers' and this certainly contributes to the high degree of effectiveness.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for independent learning in lessons.
- Widen the range of vocational opportunities for Year 10 and Year 11 pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

There is good achievement by pupils throughout the school. In the case of the sixth form, achievement is outstanding. The majority of the pupils enter the school in Year 7 having achieved standards that are well above average. In 2005, pupils in Year 9 obtained results in English, mathematics and science tests that were well above the national averages. When compared with schools having similar intakes, progress was broadly in line with expectations, although varying across the subjects. The results obtained by pupils in 2006 are highly encouraging with more pupils attaining the higher levels than in previous years.

By the end of Year 11, pupils progress well beyond national expectations. In 2005, the proportion of pupils obtaining 5 or more GCSE passes at grade C or above increased to a school record high of 91%; this rose again in 2006 to 91.4% and no pupil left without gaining at least one GCSE grade. Boys and girls make equally good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and this enables them to achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The personal development and well-being of learners is good with some outstanding elements. Pupils and students like coming to school, as shown by their outstanding attendance. They behave impeccably, even in lessons where they are given fewer opportunities to discuss and learn independently. The revamped school council provides opportunities for them to discuss concerns and to make decisions; for example, councillors were instrumental in reducing chips at lunchtime and in banning fizzy, sugary drinks. The school is now seeking ways of extending their voice further. Sixth formers are invaluable in peer mentoring and in offering extra support in classes to younger pupils with learning difficulties. All learners are very committed to fund-raising and take part very willingly in each other's festivals and celebrations. The new personal, social and health education programme makes a major contribution to learners' outstanding moral and social development. A wide range of educational visits provides pupils with a good knowledge of local and international cultures. Provision for their

spiritual development has improved since the last inspection with a prayer room set aside for the Islamic pupils within the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, including the sixth form. Pupils are keen to do their best and they enjoy their lessons. The high degree of mutual respect between teachers and pupils results in lessons being conducted in a harmonious atmosphere and teachers provide generous extra individual support. Teachers are knowledgeable about their subjects and new initiatives are making an increasingly positive impact on pupils' learning. In the outstanding lessons, the teacher has infectious enthusiasm, sets a high level of challenge and pace, and this is reflected in pupils' sustained concentration and excellent progress. Skilful questioning and the continuous assessment of learning lead to pupils having a thorough understanding of the work and they are actively involved in the development of ideas. In less effective lessons, there is an absence of sparkle because teachers dominate and provide too few opportunities for pupils to explain or take an active part in thinking things out for themselves. Assessment data is now being used better to enhance performance, set targets and track progress. It is particularly effective in the sixth form. Targets are known by pupils and they are made aware of any weaknesses and what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school provides pupils in Years 7 to 11 with a good curriculum. It meets statutory requirements and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and education for citizenship. Cross-curricular provision for literacy and numeracy is excellent, but current arrangements do not ensure that information and communication technology (ICT) provision is effective for a minority of Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. There is a good range of academic pathways for Year 10 and Year 11 pupils. The school is currently conducting a review of the curriculum in order to provide greater flexibility in Key Stage 4 to include vocational courses. Work related learning is, however, being increasingly promoted in most subjects and there is an increasing number of enterprise opportunities. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and music, and most pupils take an active part in one or more activity. Enrichment opportunities for sixth formers are excellent.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils. Pupils feel safe from bullying and most believe they can share any concerns with a teacher or one of the sixth formers, who support them in their form classes. Induction systems for Year 7 pupils are good. The latter say staff quickly ensure they know all the procedures for staying safe. The narrow corridors are potentially hazardous but pupils' sense of good order minimises the risk. However, recording systems for health and safety do not yet conform to best practice. The excellent guidance given to pupils before embarking on their GCSE and A level courses is a significant factor in their achievement. Support is well matched to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress is effectively tracked to ensure they achieve challenging targets.

Appropriate use is made of external agencies. Parents and carers are very appreciative of the school but would welcome closer ties to help them support their children more fully. Procedures to monitor performance, set targets and track progress are proving to be more effective. They are outstanding in the sixth form.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management are good overall and outstanding in the sixth form. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and colleagues have welcomed her vision and enthusiasm in the drive to provide the best possible education for the pupils. The leadership team are all having a positive impact on raising standards; they have willingly accepted new challenges and overcome severe staffing difficulties. The head of sixth form refers to 'having a passion' for his area of responsibility and this is reflected within the work of the school across all areas. Governors are very supportive and discharge their responsibilities with sensitivity. The school development plan gives clear direction and links to all aspects of the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

Subject leaders are willingly accepting increased accountability for evaluating and improving the work of their departments. Several curriculum areas are extremely well led with some outstanding practices. Systems for tracking pupils' progress have been established and are constantly being refined. The use of data to set pupils' targets has been introduced across the school and is particularly effective at sixth form level where the demands of collaboration with other schools have been met. The extent of collaboration is exceptional and viewed by the local authority as a model of good practice.

Excellent results have been achieved despite the loss of many funding opportunities and working in cramped accommodation.

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?	2	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
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	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
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	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?	2	2
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?	2	1

¹ 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.

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	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
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

Thank you for making us feel welcome in your school and for being helpful when we asked you questions. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about the things you like doing. Your enthusiasm impressed us as did the high standards you reach in your work. We spent a lot of time talking to your headteacher and other staff and looking at the work of the school we came to the following conclusions: your school provides you with a good education and the sixth form is outstanding.

We consider the following to be particularly effective:

- the high standards, particularly at the end of Years 11 and 13
- your understanding that you need to work hard to reach these standards
- how well you get on with your classmates and the teachers
- your enjoyment of school life, including extra-curricular activities
- the exceptional curricular opportunities on offer for sixth formers
- how well the headteacher and her senior colleagues are developing your school.

Some areas of the school's work need developing further. We have asked the headteacher and the staff to:

- ensure that you get the chance to contribute fully in lessons and learn independently
- build up a good range of vocational courses for Year 10 and Year 11 pupils.

Thank you for helping us. Please share this letter with the other pupils and students. We hope you will continue to enjoy learning and helping your teachers to make King David High School an even better place to be.