



# King James's School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107754  
**Local Authority** Kirklees  
**Inspection number** 287906  
**Inspection dates** 10–11 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Sara Morrissey HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	St Helen's Gate
<b>School category</b>	Community		Almondbury, Huddersfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		West Yorkshire HD4 6SG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01484 223930
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	798	<b>Fax number</b>	01484 223934
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Brian Stahelin
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Lamb
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 September 2002		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

King James's School is smaller than average and serves an area of largely private housing on the outskirts of Huddersfield. Students' attainment on entry is above average and has risen in recent years. A low proportion of students is eligible for free school meals and a smaller than average number of students speaks English as an additional language. The school achieved specialist school status in science in 2004 and has also gained the Gold Healthy Schools Award. It is part of the Kirklees Collegiate, which links the school with the local technical college and neighbouring secondary schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

King James's School is an improving and inclusive school where standards are rising quickly. Its overall effectiveness is satisfactory with some strong features. These contribute to the good reputation that the school enjoys within the local community. Students generally act as good ambassadors, displaying pride in their school. They appreciate the dedicated care, guidance and support that promote their personal development and well-being and prepare them well for the future.

Standards have risen impressively in recent years and are higher than the national average. Achievement is satisfactory overall relative to students' starting points but varies between subjects and key stages. Although there are pockets of good and even outstanding practice, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and does not support or challenge all students to extend their learning. As a result, they do not make consistently good enough progress. The school has recognised this and has begun to set more ambitious targets to raise achievement further.

The headteacher provides good leadership, a clear vision and strong direction for school improvement. Self-evaluation has enabled senior and middle leaders to identify accurately the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, actions are not all sufficiently prioritised, or evaluated rigorously enough, to maximise their impact on outcomes for students. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not used systematically nor is it rigorous enough to improve consistently the quality of learning. Partnerships with parents and external agencies are good and links with the community have been extended and enhanced as a result of specialist college status. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge and the school manages limitations in accommodation and resources effectively, providing good value for money. Staff are committed and work well together as a team. The school has tackled areas identified in the last inspection and is well placed to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement so that standards improve further, particularly in English and information and communication technology (ICT).
- Improve the quality of teaching to accelerate the pace of students' learning and ensure good progress in a higher proportion of lessons.
- Prioritise and evaluate rigorously actions in the school improvement plan in order to maximise their impact on students' outcomes.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that students' overall achievement is satisfactory. The students' attainment on entry to the school is above average and has risen in recent years. Standards are high and rising quickly, although there are fluctuations and differences in achievement between subjects and key stages. Recent

initiatives have meant that the school has exceeded its targets in certain subject areas. Where this has happened, students have made good progress.

During Key Stage 3, students make satisfactory progress overall. However, test results at the end of Year 9 in 2006 show significant improvements in mathematics and science. Challenging targets were exceeded and high attaining students in mathematics made very good progress. A similar trend of improvement has not been established, and progress is not good enough, in English. However, there are positive signs that new strategies to remedy underachievement in English are being applied effectively.

The proportion of students attaining five or more higher GCSE grades is above the national average. Students' achievement in Key Stage 4 is satisfactory overall, although there are fluctuations between subjects that generally reflect variations in the quality of teaching. New strategies in place to challenge the most able students, including those who are gifted and talented, have contributed to recent improvements. The school has also closed significantly the gap between boys' and girls' achievement through the use of targeted strategies, for example the successful completion of coursework. However, senior leaders recognise that the GCSE results in some subjects, including ICT, are too low. The proportion of students who achieve good GCSE grades including English and mathematics has risen significantly in recent years, although senior leaders agree that this could be improved still further. Appropriate measures have been implemented to tackle these specific concerns. Lower achieving students, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress but are not matching the rapid improvements made recently by other students.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school works hard to promote students' personal development and well-being, which prepares them well for the future. Behaviour throughout the school is good, despite the difficulties that the site presents. There is little indoor space at break and lunchtimes. However, students commented favourably on the high visibility of the headteacher and other staff around school. They are supervised well, so there is little disruption. The majority of students behave well in lessons and are keen to learn: a small minority can become disruptive, especially when teaching is dull or uninspiring. Supportive systems are in place to deal with these very few students to ensure that their needs are met. Students are encouraged by the rewards and sanctions applied on a stepped basis. Attendance rates are good and above the national average. The inclusive nature of the school means that very few students are ever excluded, even on a short term basis. Incidents of bullying are few. Students are very clear that they would tell an adult and have confidence that appropriate action would be taken. They make a positive contribution to the community and find creative ways to raise money for charity, for example, recycling mobile phones. Older students are encouraged to become senior prefects to act as role models and support younger students. Safety is taken seriously and comprehensive risk assessments are carried out to ensure that an exciting mix of activities, events, visits and trips can take place. Students respond to these additional activities enthusiastically and benefit greatly from the range of cultural

and spiritual experiences on offer. Lessons include elements of social and moral education which help students to develop and mature. Sport is used to encourage teamwork and leadership as well as developing awareness of health and fitness. Students are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and this is reflected by the availability of water and healthier food on sale in the dining hall.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The school keeps detailed assessment information about students, but this is not used consistently by all teachers to plan effectively for individual needs. There are examples of good and outstanding practice, where work is well planned with a variety of briskly paced activities that provide both support and challenge for students. The best lessons are characterised by good relationships between students and teachers and positive attitudes to learning. Students are actively involved, learning is made enjoyable and as a result they make good progress. In less effective lessons, planning is weaker and teachers do not address the full range of students' learning needs. Teachers dominate too much and sometimes provide a low level of challenge. Students become passive learners and take little active part. Consequently, they lose concentration and the pace of learning slows. Where classroom management is weaker, behaviour deteriorates and in these lessons insufficient progress is made. At times, limited resources for additional classroom support reduce the rate of progress for students with special educational needs.

Students' work is generally marked regularly, although not always with clear guidance for improvement. Assessment procedures are thorough: students know what grade they are working at, and their target, and appreciate the termly mentoring sessions to discuss their progress. The school has identified inconsistencies in the opportunities for peer- and self-assessment and recognises the need to share best practice to raise all teachers' expectations.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all students. In Years 7 to 9 the curriculum meets statutory requirements. In Years 10 and 11 a range of pathways, within the school and in collaboration with four local schools and Huddersfield Technical College, offer a variety of qualifications and work-related learning. Year 10 students also benefit from work experience and enterprise activities. Personal, social and health education is well planned and in conjunction with religious studies includes provision for citizenship.

The school's specialist status has increased the variety of school-based activities, trips and competitions as well as extended transition projects with partner primaries in science and mathematics. ICT resources have also been enhanced across the school,

although there are inconsistencies in the use of interactive facilities to enhance teaching and learning. There are a number of extra-curricular activities, with sporting opportunities being a particular strength. Provision for more able students includes early entry to GCSE statistics in Year 9 and the opportunity to study media studies and environmental science at Key Stage 4.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school places great emphasis on providing good care for its students. For example, parents and students commented on how much they value the support their form tutor provides, particularly when they join the school in Year 7. Students are monitored regularly to ensure that any additional support required is provided. The Inclusion Unit works effectively with students who have specific needs. Good systems for child protection are in place. External agencies are used well to provide additional guidance and support, for example, the careers and health services. A few parents felt that communication about their child's individual needs could be improved, although the majority agreed that they were well informed about their child's progress. Students are aware of their targets and know what they need to do next. Additional support and guidance for boys at risk of underachieving has had a positive impact on examination results in 2006. Overall, most students leave the school ready to tackle the next phase of their lives with confidence. The school prepares students well for the next stage in their education, providing study skills sessions, access to vocational training, further education courses and personal mentoring. Good guidance and support in specialist subjects have increased interest in, and the uptake of, science and mathematics subjects post-16.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides good leadership. He has communicated a clear vision, shared by all staff, that values every child and focuses on raising achievement and standards. As a result, the rate of improvement in standards has accelerated overall. Several key staff appointments by the school have strengthened the capacity of senior and middle leader teams. Members of the senior leadership group work effectively together. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school as a result of a regular cycle of monitoring and have worked collaboratively to produce the school improvement plan. Individual senior staff are accountable for the implementation and review of specific priorities which focus appropriately on raising achievement and standards. However, actions are not all sufficiently prioritised, or evaluated rigorously enough, to maximise their impact on outcomes for students. For example, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not sufficiently or consistently focused on identifying and implementing the learning styles that accelerate students' progress so that more is good.

Most middle managers have a clear understanding of their role and all are held to account by senior leaders. The monitoring calendar, produced in consultation with

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middle leaders, has increased the rigour of their review procedures so that they have a sound understanding of what works well and recognise specific areas for development. Middle leaders share good practice through regular meetings and a strong emphasis on staff development has contributed to improvements in targeted areas, supported well by the local authority. Good management of the specialist college has had a positive impact on extending links with the community and on raising achievement in science and mathematics. Positive steps taken to increase links with primary schools have resulted in increased student numbers on roll.

The school runs smoothly on a daily basis and staff show strong commitment, working together to achieve shared aims. The governing body fulfils its duties appropriately. Established committees review different aspects of the improvement plan and governors are attached to different subject areas. The school works hard to overcome limitations in accommodation and the quality of resources. Robust management of finances ensures that funds are linked closely to students' needs and the school provides good value for money overall. It has good capacity to improve further.





## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
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	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	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 welcoming us during our recent inspection of King James's School. We appreciated the time we were able to spend talking to you about your work and life in general at your school. I have summarised our main findings below.

We think that King James's has some important strengths and is an improving school. Many of you are proud of your school. You attend regularly and your behaviour is generally good. We were impressed with the way in which the good care, support and guidance that you receive has resulted in the great majority of you becoming confident and courteous young people, well prepared for the next steps by the time you leave school.

The standards you reach are high, as they should be, because many of you are very capable and want to do well. You have a wide range of interesting courses to follow which meet your needs well. However, results vary quite a lot between subjects. Those of you who we talked with told us that you enjoy lessons most and learn best when you are actively involved in practical activities or made to think for yourselves. However, you also told us that this does not happen often enough and you quite often find the work too easy.

We have agreed with Mr Lamb that he will work with teams of teachers and staff to identify which activities help you to learn well. These can then be used more often in lessons, which will help you to make good progress and achieve as well as you can in all subjects. This will, I am sure, push up school standards even further and build on the recent successes in areas like mathematics and science.

We are confident that King James's School will go from strength to strength because of good leadership by Mr Lamb and the staff who are responsible for different aspects of the school's work. You have an important part to play in this improvement by getting actively involved in your learning and maintaining high standards of attendance and behaviour.

With best wishes for your future success.