

Kingsley High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133317
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	316077
Inspection dates	30 April –1 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Jacque Cook

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	60
6th form	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Bobby Courtney
Headteacher	Ms Pauline Atkins
Date of previous school inspection	26 January 2004
School address	Whittlesea Road Harrow Weald HA3 6ND
Telephone number	020 8421 3676
Fax number	020 8515 8209

Age group	11-19
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a school for students with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Over a quarter of the pupils have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). Nearly two thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, largely Asian and African. A high proportion speak English as an additional language and are at the early stages of language acquisition. There are two travellers and five asylum seekers. The school moved into new accommodation, which is purpose built through a Private Funding Initiative (PFI), in February 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kingsley High is a good school. There are several outstanding features. A parent rightly described the school as a place 'where children are treated as valued individuals...and made to feel they have a place in the world'. This sums up the way staff focus on the progress and well-being of the students so that the support and guidance offered is outstanding. As a result, students' personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also outstanding. Their enjoyment is clear to see in the smiles and laughter in lessons and students, as far as they are able, behave exceptionally well. The personal, social and health education and citizenship (PSHEC) programme helps all students to become aware of how to safeguard themselves, and contributes towards their healthy lifestyle. An outstanding curriculum provides students with excellent opportunities to develop skills that will be useful when they leave school. They become more able to communicate successfully, find out about different jobs and look forward to work experience. The students' 'voice' is developed very well. They gain in confidence and express their preferences clearly, particularly through the school council. By supporting a wide range of charities and learning to be helpful around school and with each other, students contribute exceptionally well to the community. The community spirit is further developed by the strong emphasis on celebrating the cultural diversity of the students, staff and the area around the school. Regular visits are made, for instance, to different places of worship and to many exhibitions. The wide range of languages spoken by staff is used to great effect, particularly when a student who does not speak English joins the school. This helps them to settle in smoothly.

Students make good progress in their work. They achieve well in most subjects, particularly improving their communication skills. Students achieve exceptionally well in art and design and in design and technology. This is because the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects is outstanding. Students' progress in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably since the last inspection. Good subject co-ordination and training have been effective. There are generally no measurable differences between the progress of the various groups of students in the school. However, the school has a proven record of helping students from Traveller families to attend and make outstanding progress.

Robust monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school has contributed to the overall good quality of teaching and learning. Comprehensive induction and appropriate support are provided for staff. Those who are new to special education find this particularly helpful. There is high quality training provided so that expertise for all staff is developed effectively. One result of this is the excellent way most staff use a broad range of means to help students to communicate. Praise and encouragement are used very effectively in every classroom and staff know how students learn best. However, there are instances where the flow in lessons is interrupted by teachers telling support staff what they should do next.

The leadership of the headteacher is inspirational. She has built a strong leadership team with a very clear focus on developing an inclusive school. Considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection demonstrating an excellent capacity to improve further. Overall, leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is very accurate and this leads to clear plans to improve the school further. Monitoring is robust but, at present, it is not possible for targets for students' progress to be set in all subjects because the assessment procedures used do not measure in small enough steps. This makes it difficult to judge whether students have achieved better standards than expected.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The Post-16 provision is good. The excellent facilities, appropriately separate from the main school, are used well. The lifeskills room forms an effective common room where students spend their leisure time and eat their meals. They run an effective 'healthy tuck shop'. Excellent use is made of the local and the wider community. Students attend colleges and go on work experience. They gain increasing independence through being in a more adult environment which prepares them well for when they leave school. The curriculum they study is excellent. It is very relevant and challenging and students gain awards. The quality of teaching and learning is good and, as a result, they make good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Refine assessment procedures so that targets for pupils' progress can be accurately set in all subjects.
- Ensure that support staff are appropriately briefed about their roles before lessons begin.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students make good progress towards meeting their targets on their individual education plans (IEPs). Where targets are not met, this is usually due to ill health. Good teaching using students' senses helps those with PMLD to do well. Cues, such as specific music to signal lessons in different subjects, give structure and familiarity. This routine provides the security that students with ASD need to make good progress. Changes to class arrangements so students are grouped by ability in mathematics, communication and PSHEC have improved students' progress in these subjects. In art and design, students develop an appreciation of the styles of artists such as Klimt and Van Gogh and apply this exceptionally well to their own work. The guided study of design and patterns in design and technology and appropriate levels of support leads to outstanding progress. Mosaic patterned mats and picture frames are beautifully made. Students all gain external awards in Years 11 and 14.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Students develop their confidence extremely well. They learn to work with others and celebrate the range of cultures within their school. At present, they are working enthusiastically on Ghee, their Indian version of the musical Grease, which will be performed at the end of term. They enjoy learning about and joining in celebrations such as Passover and Eid. A parent commented that their child looked forward to going to school and disliked the holidays. As far as they are able, students learn to safeguard themselves. Strangers are greeted appropriately and tools, often with support, are used carefully. Students all participate in healthy exercise. Many use the hydrotherapy pool and take part in movement lessons enthusiastically. They learn about healthy choices and say they enjoy the 'good' food at lunchtime. Student council members serve their school community exceedingly well. Each month they select which student, from class nominations, will receive an award. This enables the winner to decide how a sum of money

is spent to improve facilities in school. They take this task very seriously. During the year, students raise money for many charities including the local hospice and Wearing Pink for Breast Cancer. Students' increasing independence helps to prepare them very well for the future. They improve their basic skills and explore the world of work. Students in the Post-16 provision mix well with other students during their sessions at college. Many students develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and those with behaviour difficulties learn to conform to what is expected by the staff. Attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Although the quality of teaching and learning is good overall, there are instances of satisfactory and outstanding teaching and learning. In all classrooms, praise and encouragement are used highly successfully to make learning enjoyable for the students so they try hard. Strong relationships are built with the students by staff who have in depth knowledge of how best to ensure learning takes place. This enables them to spot when behaviour is likely to deteriorate. They intervene early and use specialist techniques consistently. Most staff are skilled in using a variety of additional communication strategies. Signing, symbols and visual or aural cues, such as specific objects enables students to understand and respond effectively. ICT facilities are used well, including switches and electronic whiteboards. Lesson planning is detailed and assessment procedures are good. Often several activities are organised so students work at suitable levels of difficulty. In one session, students with PMLD distinguished between lumpy and bumpy by feeling items, while the most able wrote the words. Occasionally, the pace of a lesson slows when too long is spent in a whole class activity. There are also instances where students' learning is interrupted because teachers have to tell support staff what they need to do next.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum is very well planned so that students' learning continues from year-to-year and needs are met very well. Specific specialist strategies and additional means of communication are included that successfully support learning. There are many opportunities for students to learn about different cultures. They prepare and eat food from different countries, including India and China, and explore traditional dress and places of worship. Much of what is taught, especially in the PSHEC curriculum, prepares students extremely well for life when they leave school. They follow courses that are very practical and lead to recognised awards. College attendance, work experience and mini enterprise activities such as making and selling smoothies, broaden their knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is further enriched through the use of the community. Many visits are made to exhibitions of art, including sculpture, and students explore buildings and amenities in Harrow as well as using the local shops. A wide range of physical activities are organised at break and lunchtime and there are two after school clubs. However, outside there are no large pieces of play equipment for students to use. This limits the potential for developing independence and confidence at these times.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Staff take great care of the students and safeguarding procedures are rigorous. Vulnerable students and their needs are identified and they are monitored effectively. There are very good links with the multi-disciplinary team and the arrangement to hold clinics in school is greatly appreciated by parents. Additionally, annual reviews are now arranged for Mondays when therapists are in school and available to participate. Links with the Connexions service are very good. There are excellent arrangements for the induction of students. This is particularly important for those who may not have been attending school, such as asylum seekers and those from travelling families. Effective liaison with the education welfare service and strategies such as home visits quickly build strong relationships with parents and carers. This leads to much improved attendance and the students are able to learn. Non-English speakers settle in quickly because, where possible, staff who speak their mother tongue work with them. Students' progress towards their targets on their IEPs is tracked well and the outcomes of procedures to improve behaviour are monitored closely. The school celebrates students' success very well with awards and celebrations including an annual event, which is now very well supported by students and their families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and spearheaded considerable improvements that have increased the progress made by students. The move to the new building has been successfully managed and the increased range of specialist accommodation has broadened the curriculum. The staff have become more skilled through excellent training and they are committed to setting high expectations for the students. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures have been introduced and, where necessary, changed. For example, a new format has been devised to check how well students are achieving their targets on their IEPs. This has increased the success rate considerably. However, although students' progress is monitored well, there are no mechanisms to assess whether students are doing better than expected. The need of a detailed measure to assess and set targets in curriculum areas has been identified by the school and a suitable means to do this is being sought. The behaviour of a few students was causing concern, so staff have been trained in new behaviour management techniques which are consistently and effectively used. Further high quality staff training has improved standards in ICT. Staff are now proficient in finding opportunities for students to practice their skills in lessons other than separate ICT sessions. Subject co-ordinators have effective roles. The views of students are taken into account. They are delighted that their requests for more theme days and music outside have been granted. Parents and the local community are being involved in the work of the school. Parents, for example, played a large role in the Eid celebration. There are good links with local primary schools and closer liaison is planned with the secondary schools. This, and the inclusive philosophy of the school, contributes well to overall community cohesion. The leadership team are effective and are responsible for the applications for the Healthy School and the Basic Skills awards which are well advanced.

Governance of the school is good. Governors visit the school and question the leaders where appropriate.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ 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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
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	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	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 to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
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, 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

13 May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Kingsley High School, Harrow Weald, HA3 6ND

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I had a lovely time looking at your work, seeing you in lessons and talking with school council members. As you and your parents told me, Kingsley High is a good school and there are several things that are outstanding.

This is what I liked about your school:

- you make good progress in your lessons because you are taught well
- your progress in art and design and in design and technology is outstanding
- you enjoy your lessons and try to look after yourselves and keep healthy
- you are helped to make your views understood very well
- your behaviour is exceptionally good
- what you are taught, is outstanding and you learn about things that will help you when you leave school
- the staff look after you outstandingly well
- your headteacher is inspirational and the school is led and managed well
- staff are well trained.

This is what I have asked your school to do now:

- improve the way your progress is measured so staff know when you have done really well
- make sure your support staff know what they will need to do before a lesson starts.

With best wishes

Jacque Cook

Lead Inspector