

# Kingstone High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116939
<b>Local Authority</b>	Herefordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326496
<b>Inspection date</b>	8 July 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Richard Masterton

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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	644
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jan Baker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher King
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Kingstone Hereford HR2 9HJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01981 250224
<b>Fax number</b>	01981 251132

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- What are the characteristics of pupils who do not achieve as high as might be expected and in what subjects is their progress most restricted?
- What are the aspects of school provision that have not enabled some pupils to make good progress?
- Have leadership and management been fully effective in recognising and rectifying any weaknesses in school provision?
- Do governors provide a constructive and powerful challenge towards securing school improvement?

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given through its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Kingstone High School is situated in a rural location some five miles outside the city of Hereford. It is smaller than average for a comprehensive school. Pupils travel from a wide area to the school, with about one third now coming from the city. Nearly all students are White British and an average number have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A smaller-than-average proportion of pupils is eligible for free school meals. The school has specialist language college status and has an extended schools programme. An acting headteacher has led the school for the academic year 2008/09.

A private pre-school setting not managed by the governing body operates on the site and this was inspected separately.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Kingstone High is a rapidly improving school and its overall effectiveness is good. Governors instigated urgent action to secure necessary change and, under the effective leadership of the acting headteacher, a decline in behaviour and standards has been reversed. Pupils are now justifiably proud of their school and of their achievements. Parents recognise the improvement and have confidence in the school.

Pupils' standards on entry are broadly average. In 2008, GCSE results were about the national average and represented satisfactory progress and achievement. Determined that standards should be higher, school managers put in place measures to improve learning and carefully measure pupils' progress. Regular and accurate assessment of their work, together with the GCSE results of subjects taken early and modules already completed, show that the standards of the oldest pupils over the last 12 months have continued a trend moving sharply upwards to levels that are above average. Progress is now good for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils' standards in their individual subjects meet their challenging targets and those linked to the language college specialism. In addition, many more pupils are acquiring good accredited knowledge and skills through the broader vocational curriculum.

The personal development of pupils is good. They enjoy learning cooperatively and this extends their achievement. They learn of other traditions and religions and have many opportunities to appreciate the cultures of other countries. However, they have limited opportunity to meet their peers from schools in different social contexts to Kingstone. Pupils enjoy the way that teachers encourage them to discuss fundamental questions as their understanding of the world grows. Their commitment to helping each other in class, giving support to younger pupils in the mixed-age tutor groups and their willingness to take on general responsibility is outstanding. Attendance is much higher than average. Pupils are courteous and considerate. They have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and they follow the school code of conduct on behaviour, which is applied consistently by staff. Very effective initiatives taken by managers have improved behaviour and have reduced the number of exclusions from school. Where lapses occur, pupils concerned are helped in school; their education is not interrupted and this is contributing to higher achievement. Absence and exclusion is now substantially improved. Pupils are very health conscious and a large proportion take additional exercise outside timetabled physical education lessons. They are taught how to work safely. They feel secure in school, knowing that it is unlikely they will experience bullying and that if any does occur it will be swiftly dealt with. Pupils are well prepared for their future employment or study, including those leaving with limited qualifications. They are equipped with useful literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and the social maturity to work with others.

Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the general experience for pupils is that they are taught well. Lessons attract their interest and commitment. They are well planned with varied learning activities. Pupils respond positively and try hard to reach the shared objectives for each lesson. Their progress is regularly measured and any pupils falling behind are quickly identified. However, not all teaching yet takes the fullest account of pupils' individual starting points and capacity to learn quickly and this is restricting the more rapid progress some pupils could make. The curriculum is very rich and extensively personalised. The programme in the first three years meets national requirements and is supplemented with many additional activities and visits. Older pupils study from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. The

language specialism of the school helps to make the curriculum outstanding as it is used very well to provide a stimulus for learning and enrichment across all subjects. Community cohesion is promoted through the languages curriculum. Pupils welcome the challenge that language learning gives them, appreciate learning about other countries and greatly value contact with pupils abroad, including some in China, although their language is not currently offered by the school. The growing number of vocational subjects is making an important contribution to pupils' achievement. Care, guidance and support are also good. Pupils are helped effectively with their transition from primary school and when they prepare to leave. Teachers and assistants provide very effective care and support for pupils at risk of falling behind, including those who transfer late from other schools and those who sometimes find difficulty in behaving responsibly.

Leadership and management are good. Governors' work is strong. They provide a direct challenge to the school and precipitated urgent action for improvement. The acting headteacher and senior managers, through their accurate and objective evaluation, identified exactly all the measures needed to bring about the improvements expected. This is seen in the way that the whole ethos in the school has moved to learning and to mature and responsible behaviour. The curriculum has been broadened to the advantage of pupils, especially those able to benefit from vocational courses. The expectations for pupils and of their teachers are now firmly based on pupils reaching and surpassing challenging targets. The management of middle leaders is much stronger. The impact of the school self-evaluation has been exceptional. Pupils are fully safeguarded. There is a clear track record of the school's capacity to improve.

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

- Develop teaching methods to ensure that classes cater for students of all abilities.
- Develop ways to share the best teaching practice, particularly that seen in vocational classes.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### Achievement and standards

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

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

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

## The quality of provision

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

## 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	2
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



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

9 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Kingstone High School, Herefordshire, HR2 9HJ

I would like to thank you all for the way that you welcomed me to your school, with many of you going out of your way to say hello and tell me about your work. You gave me some of the most important evidence I needed and I am very grateful.

You enjoy coming to school and are proud to attend. I understand why. The work of your acting headteacher and his staff has made a real difference in recent months. Their good leadership and management have brought about the positive changes you told me about and you have responded very responsibly. The teaching you receive is good. You are making good progress and exam results are improving. Your current standards, measured by your teachers, are now above average and this means that your progress is good. This is the benchmark for a good school. The curriculum you enjoy has features that make it outstanding, particularly those linked to the school's specialism in languages which so influences many aspects of what you are taught. You are given good support and guidance and those of you at risk of falling behind are quickly noticed and helped – another reason why your standards are rising. You are very health conscious and I was delighted to note the large number of you who take steps to keep fit in addition to what is expected of you in physical education lessons. I was even more pleased to see how well you help each other and make such a valuable contribution to your community both in and beyond the school. You are well looked after and taught how to work safely. The school ensures that you have the qualifications and working skills to be successful when you leave. Kingstone High is a good school.

To help your school be even more effective I have asked that teachers take more account of your individual starting points and capacity to learn quickly when planning their lessons. I have also indicated that the school should develop more links with other providers to extend the curriculum and perfect its teaching methods. Please play your part by continuing to help each other. It really does make such a difference, enabling everyone to enjoy their learning and succeed.

Yours faithfully

Doug Masterton

Lead inspector