

King Solomon High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102861
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	335981
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Samantha Morgan-Price HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	860
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Diana Lazarus
Headteacher	Mr Spencer Lewis
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
School address	Forest Road Barkingside Ilford IG6 3HB
Telephone number	020 6498 1300
Fax number	020 8498 1313
Email address	info@kshsonline.com

Age group	11–19
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2009
Inspection number	335981

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 40 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and students. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement plan, departmental self-evaluations, data and information about vulnerable students, records of lesson observations, curriculum information and school achievement data. Inspectors also evaluated parent and carers, staff and pupils' questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of all groups, especially the more able, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and students for whom English is an additional language, to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging and meets the needs of all students
- teachers' use of assessment information and marking for improvement throughout the school to identify whether it is used effectively to match lessons to the needs of all students and to inform them how to improve
- the effectiveness of monitoring and support systems to enable students to achieve well, especially more vulnerable students
- the effectiveness of the middle leadership in embedding ambition and bringing about improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average mixed Jewish secondary school, although the school in 2009 admitted students from other faiths. There has been a fall in the school roll. Almost all students are from White backgrounds. A small number of students have English as an additional language or are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school gained the status of a specialist technology college in 1995 and took on an additional specialism in Humanities (English and geography) in April 2006.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

King Solomon High school is a caring school. Students are overwhelmingly of the view that the school is a safe and supportive environment, where leaders and teachers care about their well-being. One Year 13 student said:

'I love coming to the school, I feel a part of the school's community and felt settled since starting in Year 7, I have had support from teachers especially senior staff and Mr Lewis and will be sad to leave at the end of the year!'

The headteacher has worked tirelessly since his appointment two years ago to improve the standard of education students receive and his work has been successful. The procedures for safeguarding students' well-being are outstanding and partnership arrangements that successfully support the well being and achievement of more vulnerable students are exemplary. The anonymous emails system works effectively to enable students to report any concerns they may have. Students enter the school with average attainment in Year 7; they make good progress, which in the main is due to good teaching and a good curriculum, to attain GCSE grades that are above average. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress; this is due to the outstanding care, guidance and support they receive. Students for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Standards in some subjects are high; however, standards in English have been average over some years. In 2009, the proportion of students who attained five or more high grades at GCSE improved significantly on the previous year. The higher proportion of students who attained five or more A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, also demonstrated good improvement. Results in 2009 were the best ever for the school. The school achieved its attainment targets in all of its specialist subjects. Over the last two years, students have attained high standards in mathematics and design and technology. The proportion of students who achieved the higher GCSE grades of A* or A in these subjects was also high.

Some students make outstanding progress, although observations during the inspection confirmed that students overall make good progress. Students who are more able do not make the progress they are capable of. They are not sufficiently challenged to achieve targets set in lessons to enable them to do their best. In the best lessons, questioning was open-ended and challenged students to think, argue and respond well. Consistently good lessons were observed in the school's specialist humanities subject geography, as well as in sociology and history. In these lessons, a variety of teaching resources were used to engage students in very active learning, and students made good or outstanding progress as a result of this. Teachers in these lessons used assessment information to enable students to make progress and learn effectively.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Students' data on their performance are available to teachers, although some do not use the data precisely enough so that more able students are provided with greater challenge. In some of the weaker lessons observed, teachers talked for too long which inhibited the students' ability to work independently. The presentation of students' work and the quality of marking and advice given by teachers to enable students to improve their performance is inconsistent both across and within subjects.

Effective tracking systems and line-management structures have enabled senior leaders to scrutinise the performance of subjects more closely. Senior leaders hold heads of departments accountable for subject performance well. The school knows its communities well and has worked hard to provide a harmonious school community. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and it clearly identifies further improvements required. Heads of departments have a good understanding of the performance of their students and have improved their departmental quality assurance systems, especially in English. This has resulted in improvements in students' attainment, the quality of teaching and learning, and the better, although not yet consistent, use of assessment data. School data indicate that students are on track to achieve further improved results in modern foreign languages and English in 2010. These actions have enabled the school to demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of more able students by:
 - improving teachers' use of assessment data to enable students to be effectively challenged in lessons
 - sharing teachers' good practice in marking and target-setting to ensure that students know how to improve their performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Overall, students make good progress in lessons. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress and are supported extremely well. More able students are beginning to be set appropriately challenging work, but the measures put in place are yet to have full effect and are not evident in all subjects. As a result, more able students are still underachieving. Students' use of peer- and self-assessment in some lessons is highly effective. The majority of students know their National Curriculum targets and how well they are achieving against them. In the best lessons, learning is more active and students enjoyed the variety of activities set. In some satisfactory lessons, teachers use a limited range of activities to motivate students. In these lessons, students quickly become inattentive and the rate of progress made is slower. Students' behaviour is good; they attend well and they hold due regard for their peers and other members of the school community. Some students voiced concerns over the behaviour of a small minority of students who are disrupting the learning of others. Inspectors did not observe poor behaviour in lessons or around the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Students know how to adopt healthy lifestyles and there is good participation in extra-curricular sports activities to improve their physical well-being. They are aware of who to turn to if they need help. Students contribute well to their school and local community. They act as youth leaders and volunteers in a variety of community settings that include, for example, elderly residential facilities and local primary schools. The student council are active in conveying the views of their peers and have been involved in the interviewing of potential teaching staff, including the headteacher. Students acquire good literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills; their oracy skills are exemplary. They develop good business and entrepreneurial skills by running a number of small businesses that include the 'my bank' initiative which enables them to become involved in saving and banking activities. Students welcome the opportunities to improve their skills in design and technology and they achieve very well in this subject. Students' spiritual and moral development is very good and they have an excellent understanding of what is right or wrong. However, their understanding of what it means to be a part of a multicultural society is limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

In many of the lessons observed, there are good relationships between teachers and students, and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. The effective planning of lesson activities in good or better lessons ensures that students are engaged quickly. Probing questions by teachers enables them to accurately assess how well students make progress and there is good support for less able students.

The curriculum offered to students is meeting their needs well. There is good provision for numeracy, literacy and ICT. Students can attend ICT workshops outside lesson times. In Key Stage 3, the suspended timetable for one day per term to develop personal learning and team skills is working well. In Key Stage 4, there is an alternative curriculum available for a small number of students for whom the full GCSE option range is not appropriate. This is undertaken in partnership with the Redbridge Business Partnership. Since the last inspection, the school has broadened its vocational provision and the recent introduction of media studies has been well received by students; however, there is limited student participation on vocational courses. The school has enhanced its gifted and talented provision including supporting students with artistic and sporting talents. There are some effective university partnerships to encourage more able students to apply to the more prestigious universities. The extended school's provision offers a good range of extra-curricular activities.

Identifying each individual student's needs and removing specific barriers to learning has enabled students, especially those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to receive excellent support. Actions to support more vulnerable students have been extensive and varied. Support has included: purchasing specialist advice for students with specific behavioural issues; holding small literacy groups to support reading and writing development; and developing off-site provision for students requiring specific vocational courses. There are good transition arrangements for Year 7 students entering the school and good advice and guidance for students in Year 9. Strategies put in place to improve students' behaviour and levels of attendance are having a good effect.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and his leadership team have worked hard to improve students' outcomes particularly in the last two years, since when students' levels of attainment in GCSE have risen. The leaders and managers have worked well to remove the barriers to

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

students' achievement especially for more vulnerable students; the school promotes equality of opportunity well. However the school recognises that there is still more work to be done to improve the achievement of more able students. Governors are knowledgeable about the school's performance, its key priorities and the challenges leaders face. They work well with the school and have assumed effective link roles to support improvements in many areas of the school's work. Leaders and managers have been highly effective in ensuring that robust measures for safeguarding are embedded throughout the school. The use of data by senior leaders and heads of department is good. It has enabled them to implement effective and targeted intervention that has brought about improvement particularly in English. The results in modern foreign languages have shown good improvement on the previous year, although the level of students' participation in these subjects is yet to improve. Actions have been put in place by heads of departments to improve this. The low attainment of students on some sciences courses has also improved. Alternative courses are offered to lower ability students as an alternative to a single science and, although standards are lower, a higher proportion of students achieved their challenging target grades in 2009.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good and there are many effective partnerships that involve other faith communities. The organised events for the school's 'respect week' gave students good opportunities to reflect on the way they treat others. Leaders recognise that a more thorough evaluation of the impact of their many actions will enable them to identify more precisely areas which are underdeveloped, particularly in relation to their links with different ethnic and socio-economic groups within the community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Sixth form

Students entered the sixth form in 2007 with low attainment in their GCSEs; many of these students did not attain the higher grades. Inspectors observed that overall, students make good progress in their subjects. Data from the school indicate that students are currently on target to attain standards in 2010 that will demonstrate an improvement on the previous year. Standards in 2009 were average; the proportion of students who attained high grades at A level fell on the previous year, although results were in line with the school's own predictions. Students make an excellent contribution to the lower school by acting as mentors and buddies as well as assuming responsibilities within the local community. Working with the charity 'World Jewish Relief', some students made an excellent contribution to supporting the work of the charity in providing relief aid for Ukrainian students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Students make good progress due to the good teaching and good curriculum that promotes achievement. Since the last inspection, there has been an increased breadth to the curriculum so students can now take vocational courses. The good support and guidance allows students to make informed decisions about their future. Ninety five per cent of Year 13 students in 2009 progressed to higher education. The leadership and management in the sixth form are good. The head of sixth form is working hard to develop the good practice and improve standards further.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who responded were of the view that the school was a safe environment and that their children enjoyed school. The majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed the view that the school supported their children to have a healthy lifestyle and that the school met their children's particular needs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at King Solomon High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 26 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 860 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	42	13	50	0	0	1	4
The school keeps my child safe	13	50	13	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	6	23	13	50	5	19	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	16	15	57	3	12	1	4
The teaching is good at this school	3	12	17	65	2	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	5	19	14	54	5	19	2	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	3	12	19	73	2	8	1	4
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	19	14	54	2	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	5	19	19	73	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	19	16	62	3	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	12	17	65	3	12	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	7	27	15	58	2	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	31	14	54	2	8	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 December 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of King Solomon School, Ilford, IG6 3HB

I am writing to let you know what we thought about your school. We would like to thank you for helping us when we came to find out how well you are getting on. We particularly enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to some of you. We have judged that King Solomon is a good school. We judged that your headteacher, senior managers, governors and other staff within the school are working hard to improve the quality of education that you receive.

We know that the majority of you feel that the school is an extremely safe environment. The school works hard to provide a safe and caring environment and has ensured that there are excellent safeguarding procedures in place.

You achieve well, and the excellent care, guidance and support, good teaching and the good curriculum that the school provides enable you to make effective progress in developing personal skills, such as the ability to make a positive contribution to your school and the local community. Those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve outstandingly well. We did note that many of you who are more able do not achieve as well as your peers. Inspectors noted that there were many good examples of where you act as mentors for younger year groups, and of your work with local primary schools and other community groups. The excellent partnership links the school has made within the community have helped to improve your attendance and behaviour and have enabled some of you, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to gain outstanding benefits. The school is a harmonious one: leaders and managers have done really well to achieve this.

To make things better still, we have asked your school leaders and managers to:

Improve the achievement of those of you who are more able by:

- improving how your teachers use the good performance data they hold on you to enable you to be effectively challenged in lessons
- sharing the good practice of some of your teachers in marking and target-setting to ensure that you all know how to improve your performance.

You can play your part by letting your teachers know if the work is too easy for you or if you are not sure what to do to improve it.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Samantha Morgan-Price

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.