

President Kennedy School and Community College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103736
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	336144
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Mark Sims HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
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	1401
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Crisp
Headteacher	Mr Peter Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2007
School address	Rookery Lane Coventry West Midlands
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 35 lessons and saw 32 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students and spoke to representatives from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at its priorities and policies, including the assessment policy, analysed recent test results and the school's own analysis of data, scrutinised child protection and safeguarding documents, read 111 parental questionnaires and studied student surveys.

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

- the effectiveness of provision in mathematics and whether it is raising the achievement of students
- the impact of leaders at all levels to improve the quality of teaching
- how useful marking is to inform students how well they are doing and how they can improve
- the success of measures to improve attendance and reduce the level of exclusions.

Information about the school

President Kennedy School is much larger than the average-sized secondary school. It is situated on the outskirts of Coventry. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above the national average, as is the percentage of students who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average, but the proportion with statements is average. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average as is the level of social deprivation. The proportion of students at President Kennedy who have changed schools during their secondary education is higher than that found in most schools and the school admits a large number of new arrivals from overseas. The school has specialist status in humanities and has achieved Healthy School status and the Sportsmark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

President Kennedy is a rapidly improving school and overall provides a satisfactory standard of education. The school offers an exceptional level of care, guidance and support to all its students but particularly those at risk of becoming vulnerable. As one parent said, 'The student support team have delivered a high standard of intervention to help my children reach their potential.' The effectiveness of the school's promotion of community cohesion is outstanding. In turn the students themselves make an excellent contribution to the community and the extent of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very high. . The school's specialist status has contributed to their outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, significantly through providing more opportunities for students to reflect on and discuss moral, ethical and social issues. They do so enthusiastically in lessons. One parent spoke for many others when she said, 'There is a good spirit at the school. You can sense it when you visit. My child thrives here.'

Despite the poor state of the buildings, staff do their very best to make classrooms attractive learning environments. Nevertheless the cramped and dilapidated conditions are an impediment to learning. To their great credit, students show respect for their school building through the absence of graffiti and vandalism. One parent summed up the views expressed by many others saying, 'The school building looks like it is falling down. It needs rebuilding so that children have the same privileges as those in other schools.'

Satisfactory teaching and learning ensure that students make the expected progress given their broadly average starting points when they join the school in Year 7. By the end of Year 11, they attain broadly average standards, measured by the proportion of students who achieve five good passes at GCSE including English and mathematics. Over time, GCSE results have risen sharply and, given the accuracy of the school's tracking of students' progress, are on course to improve further. The school has accurately identified groups that have not done as well as they could in the past, particularly low-attaining students, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, students on free school meals and girls. Recent GCSE examination results have shown significant improvements for most of these groups. The school recognises there is more work to do to raise the achievement further of higher attaining students. The effectiveness of partnerships with outside agencies and other providers is good overall because achievement is satisfactory. There are a number of outstanding features of partnership work, not least through the wider range of courses on offer to students. . In lessons there is a wide variation in the quality of marking and verbal feedback across and within subjects from outstanding to inadequate. In the best lessons teachers give

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students the opportunity to make decisions about their learning and work in groups on active tasks but this is not consistent.

Behaviour is good and is characterised by warm and friendly relationships between staff and students. Student ambassadors are making a very important contribution to key aspects of school life including teaching and learning. Learning ambassadors observe lessons, look at exercise books and talk to teachers, which has led to improvements in the classroom. Year 9 students recently worked with students from a special school to plan activities together. Students have worked with the local community to raise funds for numerous charitable causes.

Leadership and management are good at all levels and the school's self-evaluation is accurate. In recent years students have done better in GCSE examinations in English than in mathematics and science and the school has recognised and addressed this. However, recent changes in the provision and management of mathematics have been too recent to see a significant impact in results. There is a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching. Subject leaders are held to account for the performance in their subjects who in turn hold teachers to account. Leaders have successfully tackled the issues of students' persistent absence and exclusions. Attendance is now much improved and is satisfactory overall. The previously high rate of exclusions has fallen sharply in the last year through a range of successful intervention strategies. The curriculum is good because of the wide range of courses available to most groups of learners but more needs to be done to ensure more higher attaining students can reach the highest possible grades and levels. Given the significant improvement in standards and changes that have strengthened the leadership team, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and achievement further by:
 - ensuring that provision for higher-attaining students is extended to enable more of them to achieve the highest possible grades or levels in their courses.
- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently provide a high quality of written and oral feedback so that students know how to reach the next stage in their learning
 - sharing the very best examples of teaching throughout the school so that students regularly have the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning through working independently.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Learning and progress in lessons are closely linked to the quality of teaching. Students themselves have very good attitudes to their learning and when given the opportunity to work in groups and on practical activities they flourish and consequently progress well. When they do not have these opportunities in other lessons, their attitude is still positive

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but they do not make as much progress because of the slow pace of the lesson and lack of challenge. The achievement of lower attaining students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with their peers and the school has worked successfully to meet their needs. The performance of girls is improving but is still behind the national average for girls at GCSE. The school does a good job in meeting the needs of new arrivals learning English as an additional language and these learners make rapid progress. The school recognises there is more to be done to raise the achievement of higher-attaining students to reach the highest possible grades.

The large majority of parents and students themselves say that the school keeps its students safe. Students say there is very little bullying or racism but any incidents that do occur are reported and dealt with swiftly and efficiently. Good relationships make a significant contribution to learning. Students have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. Their engagement with and participation in physical education (PE) is good. Students take part enthusiastically in a range of extra-curricular activities. The school is a harmonious place where students show care and consideration for each other and the wider community. The school ensures that students are prepared well for their future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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

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How effective is the provision?

At its very best teaching is skilfully planned to provide a range of engaging activities. Students respond well to pair and group work. They are fully engaged in their work when they are offered opportunities to work together, and take responsibility for their learning, for example, using evidence in history to make decisions. Elsewhere, however, teachers exert too much control on lessons and this limits the creativity and independence of learners. In these lessons teachers' use of questioning does not sufficiently build on what students already know to progress their work further. Marking of exercise books and verbal feedback in lessons is of variable quality. The subject specialisms of history and English, and PE set very high standards of feedback to students. In these subjects students have very precise guidance on how to improve to reach the next level or grade.

The curriculum offers a range of pathways for learners. Future improvements are being carefully planned in response to the school's desire to provide more opportunities for higher attaining students. The needs of the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well. The school has developed a wide range of key life skills courses to support students with different abilities and interests, and courses linked to future careers, for example, linking a language with business studies. As well as the wide choice of sports, there are numerous after-school clubs, visits and cross-curricular projects, for example, science and geography project days. Information and communication technology is used well across the curriculum; there is further scope to develop literacy and numeracy through other subjects.

The school has invested heavily in increasing the staff for intervention and support, which is much appreciated by parents. According to one, 'We are particularly pleased with the way the school has supported our children's needs.' Each tutor group has two adults allocated. As a consequence of the school's efforts, attendance has improved and the number of exclusions has fallen significantly; the number of call outs of senior leaders to lessons has also fallen. Transition arrangements are secure with good individual arrangements for those at risk from becoming vulnerable through the student support centre. New arrivals learning English as an additional language receive an effective induction programme. Their needs are quickly identified and appropriate support is provided.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

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How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders and middle leaders have high expectations of staff to secure further improvements. Systems are clear and well established for the monitoring of teaching and learning by all leaders. Leaders at all levels are analytical and effective in using data to bring about improvements in teaching. Where senior leaders have identified weaknesses in teaching, they have taken robust action to bring about improvements. Leaders set challenging targets for students to achieve but there is not a sufficiently consistent whole-school approach to assessment.

Processes for audits, plans and evaluation of community cohesion are thorough. The school has maintained excellent links with local schools, community groups and a school in Ethiopia. The school is an active partner in North West Federation. This has broadened students' choice by a wider range of courses and in the sixth form has led to outstanding achievement of students in their most recent examinations. The provision for work-related learning has been extended. There are very strong links with local universities and through the school's specialism the school's very strong commitment to partnership work has been extended. The school has very positive links with most parents and carers; for example, the headteacher conducts a surgery every week which parents can attend.

Governors ensure that all statutory requirements are complied with. There is a well-organised committee structure which is significantly involved in planning, monitoring and evaluation. It influences the direction of the school, providing support and challenge, although at present it does not have sufficient direct contact with subject leaders. The effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements is good. All requirements are met and policies and procedures are updated regularly. The school's child protection work has had a significant impact on individual children who were at risk of being vulnerable and has led to improved attendance and achievement for them. The school is effective in tackling discrimination and is rightly proud of its commitment to equal opportunities and the very harmonious relationships that exist between different groups of students. Through its rigorous use of data, the school identifies individuals or subjects that are underperforming and takes swift action. This is leading to improvements in mathematics and has had a significant improvement on the performance of low attaining students and those with special educational needs and/ or disabilities.

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

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Consistently good teaching and the high quality of partnerships have led to broader choice in a wider range of courses. Students make good progress in their learning overall. In their examinations in 2009, achievement was outstanding as students went on to achieve above average standards from a low starting point at the end of Key Stage 4. The sixth form is led and managed well. Leaders use data effectively to track progress and are continuously looking for improvements in provision through additional courses. Teaching is monitored closely by leaders. Teachers use assessment well to inform students how well they are doing and how they can achieve higher grades. Students are guided and supported well and interventions ensure students keep on track. Students have excellent opportunities to take responsibilities, for example, through student voice and charity work. A student council is about to be set up.

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

Most of the very small number of parents and carers who responded to the survey said that they are happy with their children's experience at President Kennedy. In particular, a very large majority said that the school keeps their children safe and informs them about their children's progress. This view was summed up by one parent who said, 'I am very happy with the school and my children's progress.' A small minority of parents did not agree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns, helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle or deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour but this was not the view of the large majority of parents and inspectors did not find

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evidence to support their view. A few parents commented on the lack or rarity of homework and inconsistencies in the quality of teachers and inspectors agree that provision of teaching is of variable quality.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at President Kennedy School and Community College 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1401 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	19	77	69	11	10	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	21	19	82	74	5	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	31	68	61	8	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	25	71	64	8	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	23	21	75	68	12	11	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	21	64	58	17	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	14	66	59	24	22	1	1
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)	32	29	66	59	7	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	21	73	66	10	9	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	15	67	60	20	18	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	11	69	62	18	16	5	5
The school is led and managed effectively	20	18	74	67	12	11	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	23	72	65	10	9	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



9 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of President Kennedy School and Community College, Coventry, CV6 4GL

You will know that we recently came to inspect your school and I thought you would want to hear what we have said in the report. Thank you very much to those of you who took the time to speak to us to give us your views or help us when we got lost.

Your school provides a satisfactory standard of education overall. Your leaders do a good job in leading the school and working within the limitations of the building. The school provides you with an exceptional quality of care, guidance and support, particularly those of you who find learning difficult. You play your part in the outstanding way you take responsibilities as school ambassadors and the way you get on well with each other, especially with those from different backgrounds. The school is a very harmonious place. Your behaviour is good and attendance is improving.

The curriculum gives most of you the opportunity to follow courses that suit your needs and interests, especially given the extensive range of partnerships with other providers. Most of you make the expected progress in your learning given your starting points to reach average standards by the end of Year 11 and those of you in the sixth form make better than expected progress because of the high quality of teaching, support and guidance you receive. There are a few things we have identified which we think will help the school to improve further:

- provide more opportunities for those of you who find learning easy to achieve the highest possible grades or levels
- make sure all teachers regularly let you know how you are doing and how to improve your work
- share with all teachers the very best lessons which let you get involved in practical activities and make decisions so that you regularly experience high quality teaching and learning.

I hope these will help the school and that you will all play your part by having the opportunity to provide feedback to teachers. I would like to wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector

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