

Kelvin Hall School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118103
Local Authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	339143
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Bernard Campbell 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	995
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Humphrey Forrest
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Smythe
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 33 lessons, held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils and spoke to a few parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school improvement plan, governing body reports, the school's monitoring records and safeguarding documentation. They also took account of questionnaires from 384 parents or carers, and 131 students

- the effectiveness of the new leadership and management in bringing about improvement
- the quality and consistency of teaching and assessment across the school
- the effectiveness of the curriculum and care, guidance and support in meeting the range of pupils' needs
- the attainment of students and their progress in all year groups.

Information about the school

Kelvin Hall School has a little higher than average proportion of students eligible for free school meals. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The school is of average size with fewer than average girls and fewer than average minority ethnic students. The number of students joining or leaving the school during the school year is below average. A new headteacher took up post in 2008. The school is a science college and holds the International School and Healthy School awards and the FA Charter Standard.

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

Kelvin Hall is a satisfactory and improving school. The strong and energetic leadership provided by the new headteacher led to a rapid improvement in GCSE results and attendance in the last year. As a result of clear analysis and effective communication by senior leaders, the governors and staff have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and its key priorities. Staff work together with a common purpose. Many systems are new and developing and have not yet been applied widely enough or for long enough to eradicate the variability in performance. Nevertheless, the good pace of improvement is evident across a wide range of the school's work and the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Achievement is satisfactory. Attainment at GCSE is average. In 2009, there was a significant improvement in the proportion of students gaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics. However, fewer gained good GCSEs in science, fewer gained GCSEs at lower grades, and fewer gained the top grades in English and mathematics. Specialist school targets in science and mathematics have not been met. Students currently make satisfactory progress at both key stages in English, mathematics and science.

Students say they feel safe in and around the school. They are happy to turn to staff if they are worried, knowing help is always on offer. Students' behaviour is satisfactory and improving in response to the recently introduced and more stringent approach to managing behaviour. Students have some influence on decisions about school life and the community but this is an area the school has recognised as needing further development. The decline in attendance in 2008 has been reversed and is now broadly average. The amount of persistent absence has also reduced significantly, though the school recognises the need to bring it down further.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The majority of teaching is good and some is outstanding but a significant minority is satisfactory. In satisfactory lessons, tasks are not well enough matched to the assessed needs of individuals and groups with the results that lower ability students are sometimes not sufficiently engaged, and higher ability students are not sufficiently challenged. In satisfactory lessons teachers tend to talk for too long and there is insufficient opportunity for students to work independently on practical and enjoyable activities.

Recent improvements have allowed the pupils to access a broad and more balanced Key Stage 3 curriculum with an appropriate amount of time allocated to English and mathematics. The recent expansion of the Key Stage 4 curriculum has provided students with a greater range of courses and increased opportunities to gain qualifications. The

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science specialism has provided some additional curriculum activities in science but there has been insufficient impact on the whole school.

The school is a caring place, with a wide range of support and guidance systems that provide satisfactory pastoral support for individual students. Records of support for individual students are good, but systems for evaluating progress are at an early stage of development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve progress so that:
 - GCSE results are above the national average
 - students of all abilities make good progress at both key stages.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment from satisfactory to good so that:
 - tasks are more accurately matched to the assessed needs of individuals, especially of lower and higher ability students
 - students take a more active role in their own learning and increase their enjoyment
 - marking is regular and helpful across all subjects.
- Increase the impact of the school's science specialism so that:
 - the school has a visible scientific ethos which inspires learners and the community
 - the school develops a science rich curriculum, especially in mathematics and technology
 - specialist school targets are met.
- Ensure that the implementation of new systems, procedures and curriculum changes:
 - are evaluated well
 - lead to measurable improvements in students' achievement and well-being.

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

In 2008, students underachieved in their GCSEs, especially in mathematics. In 2009, students made good progress in gaining five good GCSEs including English and mathematics. However, students made satisfactory progress overall. This was because some students were placed on a science course which reduced the number of their GCSEs from two to one. This has now been rectified. In addition, some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities did not make sufficient progress because they took too few accredited courses and because there was insufficient monitoring and support for their academic progress. They are now making satisfactory progress as the result of effective action taken to improve the curriculum provision and to monitor their academic progress more rigorously. In lessons, students are cooperative and willing to

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participate and make satisfactory progress. They particularly enjoy practical tasks which engage their thinking and decision making. However, in some lessons, students lack excitement and challenge which results in slower progress and engagement.

Students are polite and friendly. Occasionally, more especially for lower ability students, there is low level chatter and a lack of attention which slows the pace of learning. Students have a good understanding of how to improve their health and respond well to the school's health education programmes. The after-school physical activities are popular with students. Uptake of healthy school meals has risen to an average level as a result of the school's new policy of keeping students on site during lunchtime. Students' application of basic skills is satisfactory. They develop personal, learning and thinking skills well in some areas of the curriculum but a whole-school approach has not yet been developed. Students develop a good understanding of post-16 options and a high proportion goes in to education, training or employment. Students' respond positively to the programmes designed to increase their understanding of culture, religion, ethics and society and as a result their development is good. They have good opportunities to broaden their horizons by engaging with students from other countries through the school's many international links.

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	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

Teachers know their subjects and manage students well so that most lessons are orderly and purposeful. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and concentration. In almost all lessons students are clear about what to do because objectives are shared with the class. Many teachers use information and communication technology, such as interactive whiteboards and data projectors, competently to enliven the lessons and clarify explanations. In the good and outstanding lessons, students make good progress because activities and tasks are exciting and well matched to the needs of individuals and groups, the pace is fast, as students learn from the teacher and each other, and assess their own progress.

In the significant minority of lessons that are satisfactory, the teacher does not fully match the work to the range of students' needs and some students are insufficiently challenged. Teachers expect different outcomes for students but do not provide graded activities for them. Teaching assistants are not used sufficiently in class to support and lead groups of learners with common needs. Teachers sometimes talk too much and this slows the pace of the lesson. Students generally work together well when asked, but in some lessons potentially fruitful collaboration is not encouraged, and opportunities for greater progress are lost. Many teachers check how well their students are learning during the lesson, but they do not always assess students' learning accurately enough to know how best to move all students forward. Marking and assessment are strong in English but inconsistent across other subjects.

Good collaboration with local schools and colleges has supported curriculum development and increased access to off-site courses. Increased numbers of students study vocational courses that meets their needs and interests. However, there is no opportunity to undertake work experience which limits students' understanding of the world of work. The curriculum is satisfactory in meeting the additional needs of students through an appropriate range of specialist groups with enhanced staffing. Students' personal development is enhanced by the good provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education. Students have good opportunities to learn a range of languages. The scope for developing expressive skills is limited by the absence of drama from the timetable. Provision for extra-curricular activities in sports and music, which are popular with students, is good. There are good opportunities for residential visits and the good impact on the curriculum of the International School links has been recognised nationally.

The support for vulnerable students, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is satisfactory and improving. Systems have been thoroughly overhauled to ensure that students' academic needs are met as well as their pastoral needs. A new tracking procedure provides a much closer check on the rates of progress students are making and students at risk of underachieving are identified much faster. Improved procedures for checking on students who are absent and better provision of accredited courses at colleges has improved attendance. The induction arrangements for Year 7 students are good and the good collaboration with the Connexions service ensures that

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students make a good transition to post-16 education, training or employment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has successfully communicated a clear vision and priorities for school improvement which have begun to drive change at all levels. In the recent past, there have been considerable changes in leadership and management at all levels and many of the current leaders are new to their post of responsibility. Improvements in management systems have had a positive impact on strengthening the framework for accountability between senior and middle leaders and have increased the rigour of procedures for planning, monitoring and evaluation. Expectations of students' progress and attainment have been raised, and data are being used more effectively by subject leaders to identify underachievement and to plan intervention to ensure equal opportunities. More rigorous and systematic procedures for monitoring the link between students' progress and the quality of teaching have been introduced. A teaching and learning group has been set up to extend the development of coaching but it is too early to judge the impact. New strategies to improve the management of behaviour have got off to a positive start.

The governors are very supportive and increasingly well informed of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They have recently strengthened their procedures for monitoring students' achievement and the curriculum. Governors made a significant contribution to the recruitment of the new senior leadership team. They are fully involved in supporting the headteacher in the highly demanding process of planning the new school. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and meet government requirements. The single central record is thorough and fully up to date. Records of bullying and racist incidents do not systematically date incidents, which limits the scope for accurate evaluation of trends.

Partnerships make a good contribution to the achievement, personal development, health and well-being of students. Good links with schools and colleges and Connexions have effectively supported the development of the Key Stage 4 curriculum. A wide range of external agencies is involved in supporting vulnerable students. The school has a good understanding of its religious, ethnic and socio-economic characteristics and it is a cohesive community. The school is outward-looking and community activities are regularly reported to the governing body. International links and understanding are

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strong. A strategic plan and evaluation of the school's actions on community cohesion are not yet in place. The school has positive relationships with parents and carers and most are satisfied with the information they receive about their child's progress. Channels of communication for parents and carers to contact the school are clear.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are positive about all aspects of the school. Parents were most positive about the safety of their children, the quality of teaching and the information they received about their child's progress. They were least positive about behaviour, the school's response to their concerns or suggestions, and the help they receive to support their children's learning. A few parents gave additional comments. A few parents raised the following concerns: some misbehaviour in a minority of lessons, the quality of a minority of teaching, a few instances of bullying, lack of support and challenge for more able students, lack of support and understanding of some students with additional needs, inconsistent marking, and the quality of homework. They praised: the positive impact of the new leadership team, the good quality of some teaching, the good support for their children from teaching and support staff, and the good extra-curricular provision in sports and music. Inspectors agree with the very large majority of parents' positive views of the school. The additional comments by parents broadly match the strengths and weaknesses identified by inspectors. Inspectors found that the few instances of bullying were dealt with effectively. Inspectors did not investigate the quality of homework

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Kelvin Hall 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 384 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 995 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	182	24	478	63	66	9	16	2
The school keeps my child safe	168	22	532	71	34	5	6	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	182	25	466	63	52	7	10	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	168	23	454	62	68	9	8	1
The teaching is good at this school	152	21	512	69	36	5	6	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	122	17	476	65	84	11	20	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	90	13	512	72	74	10	12	2
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)	142	20	486	67	48	7	12	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	142	19	484	65	74	10	10	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	132	18	422	58	106	15	26	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	88	12	468	65	92	13	20	3
The school is led and managed effectively	128	18	496	68	56	8	12	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	216	29	438	59	52	7	12	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 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.



Inspection of Kelvin Hall School, Hull, HU5 4QH

Thank you for being so welcoming when we came to inspect your school. We enjoyed meeting you very much. We judged that your school is satisfactory and improving because of the good leadership by the headteacher, the hard work of the staff and the support of the governors. These were the things we liked most about your school.

- The school is changing quickly for the better.
- GCSE results in 2009 were a significant improvement on previous years.
- Your attendance has improved in the last year.
- You feel safe in school and you are learning to lead healthy lives.
- You have good links with schools in other countries.
- Changes to the curriculum are giving you a better chance to get good qualifications.
- You enjoy most lessons and the sports and music activities after school.

To help the school to continue its improvement, we have said that senior leaders should make sure that:

- students of all abilities make good progress and the school gets higher than average results
- all teaching is good rather than satisfactory
- teaching meets the needs of students who find work hard, and challenges the more able pupils
- students are more actively involved and increase their enjoyment in learning
- marking is regular and helpful across all subjects
- the science specialism becomes an inspiring part of the school and enriches your work in other subjects.

I wish you all the very best for the future

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