

Kingsmead School

Bridge Street, Derby DE1 3LB

Inspection dates	5–6 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and together with her leadership team has successfully moved the school forward since the last inspection. Staff morale is high and staff fully support the headteacher's vision and her clear focus on pupils' learning and well-being.
- The great majority of all pupil groups make good progress from their starting points in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics. They go on to achieve external awards, including English and mathematics, up to GCSE level.
- Senior leaders regularly check how well pupils are learning. Changes are made to the way pupils are taught when needed.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. They behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being are at the forefront of the school's work. They are very well supervised, cared for and kept safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is encouraged, especially in regard to British values such as tolerance and respect.
- Teaching assistants work well with teachers and are highly committed to supporting pupils' engagement in lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent.
- Governors provide highly effective support and challenge and understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching for the subject they lead in order to drive improvements.
- In some lessons, teachers do not organise the time of their teaching assistants sufficiently to ensure the best learning outcomes for all pupils.
- Teachers do not consistently use the information on pupils' progress available in school when planning their lessons.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' outcomes further by ensuring that all teachers use the range of information available to them through the whole-school tracking system to plan their lessons.
- Further develop the skills of middle leaders, enabling them to:
 - provide effective evaluations of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in their subjects
 - use the range of information available to them to prioritise improvements in the areas they lead.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, the headteacher, supported by her senior leaders and a strong governing body, has worked relentlessly to improve all aspects of the school's work. She has confidently challenged any poor performance and created a very positive culture, expecting high standards throughout the school.
- The deputy headteacher appointment at the beginning of the year together with the establishment of a model of distributed leadership is developing well and already proving to be effective. All teachers hold responsibility for improving teaching in a subject, and developing the quality of practice for staff who teach that subject. Base leaders hold overall responsibility for the teaching and learning outcomes on their site. As a result, the responsibility to monitor the school's work and make required improvements is shared across all senior and middle leaders. This is not yet sufficiently developed in order to have full impact on pupils' learning and outcomes.
- The focus on high-quality teaching, learning and assessment is having a positive impact on pupils' attendance in school and on their progress in behaviour and learning. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school that promotes high staff morale along with the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. There is a clear emphasis on the promotion of British values seen in lessons and referred to through the pupil voice, class displays and the many and varied activities pupils engage in. The school's policy of equal opportunities is well promoted.
- The headteacher has established a good range of approaches to check how well teachers are performing. This includes senior leaders regularly monitoring progress information, visiting lessons, checking pupils' work, and working with other schools and the local authority school improvement officer to verify the school's judgements. Additional support plans are put in place for staff when the quality of their work requires improvement. There are very good links with Derby teaching school alliance, the secondary education improvement partnership, the special schools' cluster and local mainstream schools. Staff access a wide variety of training programmes which they really value, to strengthen their understanding of pupils' needs and support learning outcomes.
- The governors ensure that teachers are held to account for the quality of their work. Any salary progression is directly linked to how well teachers are performing.
- The curriculum is broad and enriching with careful attention given to ensure that lessons help pupils prepare for life in modern Britain. This is enhanced by a range of exciting activities out of school with pupils enjoy, such as the recent drama 'Fagin's Twist' performed by a touring company. There is a wide range of accreditation accessed by pupils from alternative providers and 'Junction 16' programmes, alongside subjects that would be offered in a mainstream school. For example, pupils follow hair and beauty courses, animal care and farming and take part in indoor climbing and outdoor education. Literacy and numeracy are carefully planned across the curriculum and staff work hard to make the links between subjects work for the pupils they teach. As a result, pupils develop self-confidence and very positive attitudes towards school and their learning.
- School works closely with the careers advisory service, Connexions, and pupils receive very good support and advice regarding their next steps, and are offered a wide range of opportunities. Most go on to further education, training or employment as a result.
- Good use is made of the additional funding that the school receives. The pupil premium fund has been used to provide individual or small-group teaching and to support the wide range of learning opportunities, including the alternative provisions that the school offer. This has enabled the majority of pupils to re-engage in learning and see the point in doing their best to achieve their best outcomes.
- Teaching assistants are highly committed to the work they do in supporting positive behaviour and engaging pupils in learning. In the best lessons they are fully involved in bringing about the best learning outcomes for pupils. Teachers do not, however, consistently plan in the work of their teaching assistants and sometimes therefore opportunities are missed, especially when class groups are very small.
- The local authority school improvement officer has provided good support, particularly in working with leaders to organise and track pupil information which they can evaluate effectively. Middle leaders and teachers are not yet using this information effectively in their planning to improve learning outcomes for their pupils.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance is very effective. The governing body has a wide range of skills, knowledge and expertise to contribute to school improvement. The chair provides support and training to governors across the city.

Governors are regular visitors to the school and provide challenge and support. They have a good knowledge of the school's work, including how well different groups of pupils are progressing, the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching team, and the impact of different funding streams. They effectively monitor the school's work, for example through visits to the school, regular meetings with the headteacher, scrutinising reports and the on-going work of their standards committee.

- Regular checks are made to ensure that the governing body has the correct level of skills and knowledge to carry out its responsibilities. They have been very successful in recruiting experienced people to fill gaps as they arise.
- Performance management is used effectively for all staff. Good reference is made to the teachers' professional standards in how governors manage underperformance and reward good teaching.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff and governors receive the appropriate level of training. The school carefully tracks any concerns about individual pupils, to ensure that they are fully investigated. Procedures ensure that the correct checks are carried out on staff and visitors. The school identifies any risks to pupils or staff, and takes appropriate action to reduce these. The premises are secure and well maintained.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection so that it is now consistently good. Teaching and support staff ensure that they follow agreed school policies, for example in the marking of pupils' work and how feedback is provided to pupils. Teachers are encouraged to share best practice and the headteacher ensures that teachers benefit from the support and challenge provided by senior leaders' feedback after lesson observations.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge. They know their pupils well. As a result, they plan lessons that interest, engage and challenge pupils in their learning. Pupils enjoy the tasks that are set for them.
- There is a very positive climate for learning in classes. This is created by the strong relationships pupils have with their teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are expected to work with positive attitudes and as a result they respond well by focusing on their learning.
- Work in books and displayed around the school shows that pupils produce work of good quality that is usually matched well to their ability.
- Very good use is made of practical resources, which often help pupils improve their basic skills, for example in a science lesson where pupils were challenged in reading thermometers to consider the conditions when water cools. The wide variety of practical subjects offered enables pupils to gain skills and knowledge which prepare them for their next steps when they leave school, such as motor vehicle maintenance and catering.
- Inspectors saw good examples of teachers using questioning effectively to help pupils problem-solve and as a result they learned new skills by responding to the level of challenge, for example in a computing lesson where pupils were introduced to working with spreadsheets.
- Both English and mathematics are taught well across the school and are developed across other subjects successfully. Pupils learn a wide range of skills in both subjects, which assist them in their ability to understand the world around them. In literacy, communication skills are developed, so they are more able to express their thoughts and feelings effectively.
- Teachers use pupil information to plan their lessons so that, for example, pupils can access tasks within three levels of work in mathematics. This ensures that they are fully engaged in learning and the lesson is appropriately paced to prevent off-task behaviour. They are not, however, always making full use of the information school now holds in their planning to ensure that all pupils are stretched and challenged fully.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Teachers and support staff are highly effective in encouraging and promoting high expectations for behaviour, engagement in lessons and attendance. As a result, pupils learn to take responsibility for their own actions. There is very little evidence of litter or graffiti in or out of classrooms. Pupils are polite and helpful; they hold doors open for each other, staff and visitors and speak with respect about the school.

- Pupils told inspectors, 'they have given me a second chance; no matter what happens, they never give up on you here'.
- Pupils spoken to said they appreciated the approachability of all staff. They benefit from the support staff give them in their learning or when they have personal problems.
- Attendance is improving and most pupils make very good improvements when comparing their attendance to that in their previous school. Staff contact parents where there are difficulties and work within a plan to support improved attendance for individual pupils and families. Parents say they value this support.
- A number of pupils say they feel safe in school. Pupils demonstrate in lessons that they understand health and safety rules and how to apply them; for example, in a basketball lesson in the sports hall and during an engineering lesson where they were making skips.
- Parents spoken to confirm that they know the staff keep their children safe at school. They say that they are very impressed with the school, 'Staff are marvellous, my child has come on in leaps and bounds and can't get to school quick enough!'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school is a calm and orderly environment. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. When occasionally there is an incident, staff intervene and support very swiftly. As a result, the situation is resolved quickly and little learning time is wasted.
- Pupils take a great pride in their learning environment and their work. Although they all know that they attend Kingsmead, they also take great pride in the base they work at and this is evident to visitors on arrival.
- Pupils' books show the high level of care and effort they have put into their work. The school buildings are maintained in excellent order, with no signs of damage or misuse. Pupils say how much they like the school.
- Behaviour incidents are few, but all are recorded and evaluated. Records are kept to a high standard and plans made to support the pupil in moving forward to improved behaviour as a result. The school regularly analyses this information in order to identify trends over time.
- Fixed-term exclusions are reducing because pupils are taking increasing responsibility for their own actions. Observations in lessons by inspectors also indicated that the great majority of pupils engage well in learning and enjoy their work.
- Parents spoken to state that the behaviour of their child has greatly improved since joining the school.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- When pupils arrive at the school, their abilities are well below those typical for pupils of their age because of their special educational needs. Most have experienced difficulties in their learning, behaviour and attendance. As a result, they come with lower than expected literacy and numeracy levels.
- Teachers check abilities on arrival and set targets for the expected rate of progress in English and mathematics, as well as other areas of learning, for each pupil. Overall, pupils make good progress in achieving these. They develop skills and acquire knowledge in reading, writing, communication, number facts and in other areas of mathematics.
- Older pupils complete accredited training programmes over a wide range of vocational courses and GCSEs.
- All groups of pupils make similar rates of progress. This includes the most-able pupils and disadvantaged pupils.
- According to the school's information, the rate of progress has not been consistent for all age groups and in all subjects over the last year. Progress in English has been less strong than in mathematics at times. The school identified the reasons and put measures in place to support progress in English this year. As a result, progress in English is now consistent with that in other subjects.
- A scrutiny of pupils' work identifies that all groups of pupils are making similarly good progress. Pupils are helped to progress by receiving clear written and verbal feedback on how well they are learning, and how to improve their work.
- Pupils leave the school well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training. Last year the vast majority transferred to college or other training providers.

School details

Unique reference number	135345
Local authority	Derby
Inspection number	10008116

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	62
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Fletcher
Headteacher	Sue Bradley
Telephone number	01332 715970
Website	http://kingsmead-derby.co.uk
Email address	s.bradley@kingsmead.derby.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2014

Information about this school

- Kingsmead School is a small special school that forms part of a larger integrated provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Pupils from the special school are taught alongside those from the pupil referral unit on all six sites. Pupils are taught individually or in small groups.
- The two provisions function as one, sharing the same teaching staff, administrative staff, senior leadership team and governing body. Some of the special school pupils have been on the pupil referral unit's roll before joining the special school roll.
- Since the last inspection, the special school roll has continued to expand.
- Almost all pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. An increasing proportion has learning needs in addition to their social, emotional and mental health difficulties. These include moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders.
- The vast majority of pupils enter with behavioural difficulties and have been permanently excluded from mainstream and special schools. Most have had a much disrupted education and have missed considerable schooling. A small but increasing number of pupils enter the school in Year 7. Most pupils arrive at any point during their secondary education, sometimes as late as Year 11.
- The vast majority of pupils are boys. A few are from ethnic minority backgrounds with an increasing number of those pupils speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is very high.
- The school and pupil referral unit manage access to a range of alternative providers through a service called Junction 16 for its own pupils and a group of schools across the city of Derby. The quality of these provisions are assured through a rigorously agreed process. Kingsmead pupils have access to a wide range of providers which include Access Construction, Baby People, Engineered Learning, The Island, Hair and Beauty, Skillforce, The YMCA, G-Music, CAST, Deda, After Rock and Acclimatize.

- The school runs an outreach service supporting children who are looked after by the local authority on the Enhanced Care Programme, and those under the care of the Royal Derby Hospital on Puffin Ward.

Information about this inspection

- Observations were made by inspectors in lessons involving pupils from all six sites. The large majority of these were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team. The linked pupil referral unit was also inspected at the same time as this special school. Lessons observed involved pupils from both this school and the pupil referral unit, unless pupils were being taught individually.
- Inspectors also visited two sites on which alternative provision is provided for pupils from the school and other schools within the city of Derby. Telephone discussions were held with three more providers.
- Discussions were held with the leadership team, middle leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority representative and two headteachers from mainstream schools working in partnership with Kingsmead, pupils and parents.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation about the school's work including the school's own evaluation of its work, the school improvement plan, the ways in which it monitors pupils' progress and how targets are set for teachers. They also considered governors' documents and minutes of meetings, the school's policies including those relating to child protection, safeguarding, special educational needs and behaviour.
- Inspectors examined pupil records and explored individual case studies. They took account of 39 staff questionnaires. Inspectors spoke by telephone with parents and considered the school's own questionnaires to parents to find out more about their views of the school. There were insufficient responses to consider from Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire survey for parents).

Inspection team

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