

Kings' School

Romsey Road , Winchester, S022 5PN

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The new headteacher has quickly won the respect and loyalty of teachers, students, and parents and carers. Under his clear leadership, this exceptional school continues to thrive.
- Students' achievement is excellent. They make outstanding progress. The standards they reach in their GCSE examinations, including in English and in mathematics, are considerably higher than average.
- Teaching is consistently of a very high quality. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. They know their students very well and continually challenge them to achieve their best.
- Students are very proud of their school. They enjoy their learning and want to do well. They work together exceptionally well and help each other to learn.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Students show high levels of respect and courtesy to each other and to adults. They feel very safe in school.
- The leadership of the headteacher and other leaders is outstanding. There is a determined focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching and of the educational experiences offered to the students.
- The very wide range of subjects, together with exciting additional activities, promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.
- Governors are passionately committed to providing effective and strategic leadership so that the school will continue to develop. They bring a wealth of skills and knowledge to their roles.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 part-lessons, 20 jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the school and in the playground, attended assemblies, visited the library, and scrutinised students' work. They also visited the resource base.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, groups of staff, a group of governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority. Discussions took place with a number of groups of students.
- The team scrutinised school documents including the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school development plan, records of the school's lesson observations and statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered 236 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) along with the results of questionnaires the school had given to parents. Inspectors also analysed 79 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Ann Short , Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sulina Piesse	Additional Inspector
Cathy Tooze	Additional Inspector
Huw Bishop	Additional Inspector
Martin Marsh	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized secondary school.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2013.
- The proportion of students eligible for additional government funding, known as pupil premium, is well below average. In this school, the funding is used to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and some students identified by the school as requiring additional support.
- The proportion of Year 7 students who are eligible for catch-up funding is also well below average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is lower than average. The majority of students are of White British heritage.
- Fewer students than usual speak English as an additional language. Only a very few come to the school at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly below average.
- The school provides a resource base for 12 students with physical disabilities.
- A small number of students in Year 10 and Year 11 attend off-site courses at Eastleigh and Sparsholt Colleges for part of the week. A very small number of students have placements at The Bridge Education Centre for limited periods of time when they need particular support with managing their behaviour and emotions.
- The school enters some Year 10 and Year 11 students early for examinations.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of students eligible for additional government funding so that even more make outstanding progress in all of their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Many students enter the school with levels of attainment which are above average. From their different starting points, they make outstanding progress so that they achieve exceptionally well. The proportion gaining five or more good-quality GCSEs including English and mathematics is consistently well above the national average, and rose in 2013.
- The proportions of students making good or better progress in both English and mathematics are well above average. Students also make exceptional progress in science, modern foreign languages, humanities and in many other subjects including the arts and physical education.
- The school has rigorous systems to check the progress of students so that any student who falls behind can quickly be given the right support.
- Students in the resource base with physical disabilities and others with special educational needs also make outstanding progress. This is because of the excellent support they are given and the rich range of experiences they are offered.
- The most-able students make excellent progress because they are challenged in lessons to achieve very well and given opportunities to extend their thinking and understanding.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to their classmates.
- The small proportion of students eligible for additional government funding make very good progress from their starting points. The gaps between their achievement and their peers in the school are closing rapidly in most year groups. They make especially good progress in English. In 2013, there was a gap of about a grade in both English and mathematics at the end of Year 11.
- There are excellent strategies in place to develop a love of reading and to improve literacy and communication skills. Students are highly articulate, express themselves clearly and listen well to each other and to adults. The library is a very popular place and is an excellent resource.
- Students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education or for training and employment. They receive excellent advice and guidance when they are making choices.
- Students in the resource base are given similar strong support to ensure that they can continue to flourish as they move to a new environment. All students proceed to employment, education or training when they leave the school.
- Many of the Year 7 students who are supported by catch-up funding in English and mathematics make very rapid progress so that they develop the skills they need to do well.
- The school enters students early for GCSE examinations in both English and mathematics when this will help them to achieve well. If they do not achieve their target grades, they are given another opportunity to take the examination. Some students are entered early for geography or religious studies so that they can have some experience of advanced level study in Year 11.
- The progress and attendance of the small number of Key Stage 4 students who attend courses at Eastleigh and Sparsholt Colleges are carefully monitored, so that they achieve well.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers are enthusiastic and have excellent subject knowledge. They have high expectations of what students can achieve. They plan exciting and challenging activities which capture students' interests and enthusiasm.
- Relationships between teachers and students are outstanding. Teachers know their students very well and check the learning of individuals throughout lessons, ensuring that all understand exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Students work together exceptionally well, supporting each other in their learning. In a Year 10 drama lesson, for example, students prepared a performance, leading their own learning with encouragement and challenge from the teacher so that all made outstanding progress.
- Teachers use a variety of questioning techniques with many examples of very effective open and

searching questions to strengthen understanding and challenge thinking. In religious studies, Year 8 students were encouraged through probing questions to explore their personal understanding of God and of suffering. Here, they explained their views fully, deepening their knowledge and understanding, and as a result made very rapid progress.

- Teachers give students opportunities to develop confidence in discussion and debate. For example, in business and communication studies, Year 10 students enthusiastically discussed the moral and social issues surrounding the building of a new nightclub in the town.
- Many examples of excellent written feedback were seen, with clear guidance to students about how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Students often respond to teachers' comments and suggestions on how they might improve their work.
- Students are given opportunities to assess their own work and the work of their classmates. They do this well because they are given clear guidance about what they should look for.
- Additional adults are used very well in the classroom to support the learning of all students. They ensure that students from the resource base are able to participate comfortably in the lessons.
- Homework is purposeful and contributes to the outstanding progress students make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They enjoy their learning and want to do as well as they can. Their attitudes to learning are exceptionally positive. Relationships are fostered exceedingly well so that they work highly effectively together. They ask each other questions, listen well to each other and help one another to think more deeply.
- Students and teachers are immensely proud of their school. They comment on the happy and buzzing community in which everyone is encouraged and supported to do their very best.
- Students behave in a sensible and mature manner around the school. They take care of their environment, for example by acting as eco-warriors and 'gumbusters'. They are given many opportunities to take responsibility. Prefects help to supervise the grounds and buildings, so all can feel safe. Students agree that the school and year councils make an important contribution to school life.
- No time is wasted in managing behaviour because students know exactly how the school expects them to behave. There are very few exclusions from school and the very small number of students who have difficulty in managing their behaviour are effectively supported so that they can succeed.
- Parents and carers, staff and students agree that behaviour in the school is very well managed.
- Students with physical disabilities play a full part in the life of the school. Their resource base is in the centre of the school and so at the heart of all activity. They enjoy being at school and appreciate the independence the school gives them. As one student reported, 'This school helps you understand who you are.'
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance, which is now above average. There is a range of strategies in place to ensure that it continues to improve. Punctuality to school and to lessons is good.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students say they feel safe at all times in school, and parents and carers, and staff, agree that the school is a safe place. Students are taught to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet, in lessons and assemblies.
- Students report that there is hardly any bullying in school and, if it does happen, it is dealt with immediately and effectively. They have a good understanding of different kinds of bullying, such as cyber or homophobic bullying. They talk with pride about the way the school community values every individual.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The new headteacher has quickly won the respect and loyalty of staff, students, and parents and carers. Staff and students talk about his passion for getting to know them, listening to them and making a difference. He is providing clear direction to this exceptional school, leading it into the next stage of its development. As one student reported, 'He is so optimistic!'
- The leadership and management of the school are of the highest order. There is a collaborative approach to developing consistently outstanding practice across the school. Subject leaders play an important part in this and all staff are fully committed to continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers share ideas and learn from each other.
- Teachers are set challenging targets and supported to achieve them through training and development. The links between students' achievement and teachers' pay increases are clear.
- The school accurately assesses its own performance and is very clear about what it does well, where improvements should be made and where new developments could be put in place.
- The very wide range of subjects promotes students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development exceptionally well. For example, five different languages are taught. Students benefit greatly from the exceptionally rich variety of activities, including trips and visits, both within and beyond the school day. These include many sporting, musical and artistic pursuits.
- The leadership of literacy is outstanding. All teachers accept a responsibility to develop literacy and communication skills, and teachers work together to ensure that this happens. Many examples of excellent support for literacy development were seen.
- The strong support of parents and carers for the school is clear from the highly positive responses to Parent View and other questionnaires. The school works innovatively to involve the small proportion of parents and carers who find working with the school more difficult.
- The school has developed a wide range of strategies to promote the achievement of students eligible for pupil premium funding. Governors and staff are passionately committed to closing gaps in achievement. Funding provides additional classes and one-to-one tuition. It also supports the welfare of these students in a variety of ways, raising aspirations to achieve highly and ensuring they can benefit fully from the many opportunities the school offers.
- The school works well with other secondary schools through the Winchester Inclusion Partnership and with local primary schools in the Kings' cluster.
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this outstanding school but maintains a close relationship with it. It recognises the capacity in the school to improve still further.
- The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is shown by the high expectations of staff of all students, including those from the resource base, which is well led and managed.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has recently reorganised itself so that it can provide even more effective support and challenge for the school. Governors regularly undertake training and development to help them continue to improve their effectiveness. They are highly skilled and bring a range of expertise to their roles. They plan strategically and are passionately committed to improving the well-being and achievement of the students. They also have a commitment to supporting the wider local community beyond the school gates.
 - Governors visit the school regularly and receive informative presentations from staff so that they know the school very well. They understand how to use information about students' achievement to judge how well the school is doing in comparison to other schools nationally. They use this information to help them to evaluate the quality of teaching. They understand well how setting targets for teachers contributes to the improvement of the school and the links between the quality of teaching and staff salaries.
 - Governors closely monitor the effective use of resources including additional funds provided to support particular groups of students. They ensure safeguarding procedures are rigorously applied.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	116468
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	444371

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,650
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Metcalfe
Headteacher	Matthew Leeming
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 March 2009
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