

Kingsbury School - A Specialist Science and Mathematics Academy

Tamworth Road, Kingsbury, Tamworth, Staffordshire B78 2LF

Inspection dates

9–10 April 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, well supported by senior leaders, has ensured improvements in all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors know the school very well. They provide leaders with effective support and ask challenging questions of leaders, holding the school to account effectively.
- The curriculum is appropriate and interesting. Pupils receive high-quality support, advice and guidance. They are presented with choices and options at different stages of their time in school.
- Pupils' behaviour is usually respectful and sensible. Staff are very skilled in supporting pupils to manage their behaviour.
- Pastoral support is a strength of the school and has brought about improvements in pupils' behaviour and attendance. The programme for pupils' personal development is well considered and complemented by additional support for pupils' emotional and mental well-being.
- Leaders are taking effective action to improve attendance, which, overall, is now close to the national average. Pupils with past poor attendance are coming to school more often than they did previously.
- Leaders have developed new systems for tracking pupils' progress and are starting to review and refine them to ensure that they are accurate.
- Leaders are rapidly addressing the minor inconsistencies in teaching that remain, for example in mathematics, where the quality of teaching varies more than elsewhere.
- Some teachers do not use questioning routinely in lessons to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Middle leaders form a committed and improving team. However, some need to lead the improvement of teaching in their subjects more effectively.
- Pupils' outcomes over recent years have been variable, as has been the impact of middle leadership. In some subjects, pupils' progress has not improved quickly enough, while in other subjects there has been rapid progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the impact of leadership by ensuring that leaders, including middle leaders, are consistently effective in monitoring, analysing and evaluating the aspects of provision they have responsibility for. The end product of this monitoring, analysing and evaluating should be improved quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Improve teaching so that pupils make at least good progress in all subjects, including mathematics, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan activities which provide sufficient challenge to pupils of all abilities and regularly check on pupils' understanding in lessons
 - use questions to deepen pupils' understanding of the work they are studying.
- Improve the behaviour for learning of the few pupils who find it hard to maintain concentration in lessons by ensuring that all staff follow the school's behaviour policy, even for minor breaches of the school rules.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has steered the school through challenging times. He leads the school with vigour and an unshakeable commitment to ensuring that all pupils, whatever their level of need or previous experiences, are supported to receive the best education possible. There is a focus and drive from the leadership team on improving the school still further.
- Reviews of the curriculum and assessment policies have led to new courses and accreditation and feedback procedures implemented. These have helped to raise the achievement of the most able pupils and ensure that clear guidance is given to pupils on how to improve their written work.
- Strategies have been put in place to develop the role of the middle leaders and to increase their contribution to the effectiveness of the school and its teaching. This work has begun to help them contribute fully to focused and effective development of staff skills.
- School leaders and staff have worked over the past two years to develop a varied and stimulating curriculum, appropriate for all pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced and enables pupils and students to take their next steps in education or training with informed confidence. The new key stage 3 curriculum prepares pupils well for making decisions about their future education.
- Leaders have reorganised the curriculum, establishing precisely what pupils should learn in each unit of work. The school has a strong commitment to the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), and an increasing number of pupils study a modern foreign language and a humanities subject at key stage 4.
- The middle leadership of the school continues to improve, but further work is needed to ensure that all middle leaders can lead the improvement of teaching in their subjects more effectively. Subject leaders receive useful professional support. New leaders show real promise. In humanities, for example, the new leader has accelerated the department's improvement. It is too soon, however, to assess the full impact of their work.
- Leaders have been successful in making sure that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Through a highly effective personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) education programme, supported by tutorial sessions, pupils learn about a variety of topical issues, including the importance of democracy and the rule of law.
- While many of the responses from parents and carers who replied to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were positive, some raised concerns. These focused on the quality of communication between school and home and the sharing of information about progress with parents.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils know the adults they can talk with if they have any worries or concerns. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey agreed that their children feel safe in school and are well cared for.

- The leadership of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. This group of pupils is supported well to make progress, to attend school and to avoid exclusion. The strong leadership of the SEND provision ensures that pupils who may have many challenges are successfully integrated into mainstream school and make good progress in their lessons.
- The pastoral leader is effective in monitoring pupils' attendance. Pupils' rates of attendance improve dramatically when compared to their previous school or setting, and often during their time at the school. Arrangements for monitoring the attendance of pupils at any alternative provisions are thorough.
- The leadership of the school's use of the pupil premium is effective. Staff have a good understanding of the barriers to learning that some pupils experience. Many of these are complex. Funds are used appropriately. Attendance of disadvantaged pupils continues to improve and pupils behave well within school. The school has a clear focus on further improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- Staff morale is high. Relationships at all levels are very good. The majority of staff who completed the Ofsted inspection survey indicated that they enjoy working at the school. They feel that they are well supported in their roles and personal well-being by the management.
- Senior leaders recognise that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been affected by the use of temporary staff. These difficulties are largely historical, and leaders have worked hard to establish stable and more specialist staffing.
- More broadly, senior leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weakness in teaching across the school.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body and the trustees of the multi-academy trust (MAT) work well together to support and challenge the school.
- Trust leaders are well informed, providing school leaders with an appropriate balance of support and challenge. They work effectively with school leaders to review their actions and plan future improvements. Focused reviews by trust leaders, for instance of the use of pupil premium funding, provide leaders with detailed recommendations for improvements.
- Governors have an accurate understanding of their responsibilities. They possess a wide range of relevant skills, including finance, human resources and school improvement.
- Information provided to governors by senior leaders is honest and accurate. It allows governors to ask pertinent question and to hold the school to account for its performance.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are well trained and have a very clear understanding of their responsibilities. A strong culture of safeguarding pupils is evident in the school.

- Leaders have a good knowledge of the context in which they operate. They work proactively with external agencies and families to provide appropriate support for vulnerable pupils, for example providing life coaching and specialist mental health support.
- Leaders acknowledge that some elements of their safeguarding practice could be improved. Due to recent changes in the safeguarding team, roles and responsibilities around safeguarding are not yet clear enough. During the inspection, some minor clerical errors needed to be put right on the single central record. All appropriate checks on staff had been carried out, but occasionally these have not been recorded in full on the single central record.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Where teaching is most effective, it is carefully planned to provide challenge for pupils with different starting points. Staff have high expectations, and in the strongest lessons teachers use questions and their subject knowledge well to deepen pupils' understanding. They use lesson time productively to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. However, some teaching is not as consistently strong as it could be.
- Inspectors saw particularly challenging teaching in Year 11 astronomy and biology lessons. In these subjects, teachers have strong subject knowledge, which helps them to ask pupils challenging questions and give helpful verbal feedback.
- In mathematics, the quality of teaching has varied over time. Pupils told inspectors that mathematics teaching is improving. Inspectors saw some effective teaching, but inconsistencies remain. Pupils in Year 8, for example, do not have enough opportunities to practise and explore mathematical concepts in detail.
- Teachers' planning for pupils with SEND is effective. Teaching assistants are well trained and support pupils well. Inspectors saw examples of pupils with SEND achieving exceptionally well, including in music and textiles technology.
- At times, challenge for most-able pupils is not demanding enough. There are occasions when work is set at the same level of challenge for all. In a few lessons, there were occasions when all pupils were given low-level, undemanding tasks, such as copying or drawing pictures, even in some higher sets.
- In many lessons, teachers made effective use of the school's 'Take it Further' strategy to challenge the most able and encourage independent thinking. However, in a few cases, teachers set the same additional task for pupils of different abilities. In these instances, less-able pupils struggled to complete their work and a few were demotivated as a result.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The majority of pupils said that bullying is rare and that if it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly. However, a small number of pupils and their parents think that there is more

that the school can do to ensure that all pupils feel safe at school. Leaders continue to work with parents and have introduced an open morning where parents can drop in without an appointment and talk with senior leaders.

- A cohesive programme of careers education, throughout the school, is effective in preparing pupils, including those at risk of disengagement, for the next steps of their education, employment or training.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For instance, they know how to protect themselves from the potential dangers of the internet. Pupils know what constitutes bullying and recognise that all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, are unacceptable. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but are confident that staff would deal swiftly and effectively with any instances that did occur. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Effective monitoring is in place for pupils who attend off-site alternative provision. Leaders and providers liaise closely to ensure that pupils' needs are met and that their personal development and well-being are promoted.
- Occasionally, when teachers have not communicated high expectations, some pupils do not apply themselves fully to their learning and are content to produce work that does not match their capabilities. This limits the progress of these pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new behaviour policy. Expectations are higher and most have implemented sanctions, on the rare occasions that these high standards are not met. This has caused some concern from a few parents, but pupils say that although it is stricter, they think it is effective as well. Consequently, incidents of low-level disruption are rare and these higher expectations are helping to ensure that pupils remain focused on their learning and behave well.
- Most pupils value coming to school, and overall attendance is in line with the national average. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND is improving rapidly, but is still below that of their peers. Leaders accept that there is more to do to ensure that the attendance of these pupils matches or exceeds that of their peers.
- Occasionally, when teaching does not meet their needs, some pupils lose concentration and cause low-level disruption.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils, in all year groups, are making strong progress in a range of subjects. Work in pupils' books, assessment files and leaders' tracking information indicate that pupils' outcomes in 2019 will exceed those achieved in previous years. The work in books seen by inspectors supports this.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved in key stage 3. Pupils are now entering their chosen GCSEs better prepared for the demands of these qualifications. The expectations for future cohorts are high.

- Considerable work has been undertaken, particularly since the principal's appointment, to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. These groups of pupils are making faster progress than has been seen in the past. The drive to improve teaching further is supporting these pupils in achieving their potential. There is no visible difference in the quality of work and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school compared to other pupils nationally.
- The most able pupils make less progress in some subjects. Leaders are aware of this, and plans are in place to improve the rates of progress for this group of pupils.
- Current Year 11 pupils made less progress in mathematics and humanities, and leaders are taking appropriate actions to support improvement; current progress is strong.
- In key stage 3, work in books and assessment records show that the majority of pupils make strong progress towards their end-of-year targets, which are appropriately challenging. If pupils are struggling to meet these targets, teachers ensure that they receive well-planned, additional help in a timely manner.
- Pupils do read frequently and widely. Teachers provide opportunities for them to read on a regular basis, for example in tutor time and in English lessons. The school provides catch-up opportunities for those who need to improve their reading skills rapidly. This is having a positive impact on pupils' reading ability and is helping them to make progress in their learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND receive effective support to meet their targets. From their starting points, they make progress which is broadly in line with that of other pupils. Leaders are aware that there are a very small number of pupils who have multiple learning needs who are not making as much progress as their peers.
- The careers guidance pupils receive is very effective and allows them to make informed choices regarding their future pathways. In 2018, 100% of pupils went on to further education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	145019
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10088463

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	683
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Helen Reilly
Headteacher	Mr Martin Clarke
Telephone number	01827 872316
Website	www.kingsburyschool.co.uk
Email address	admin4111@we-learn365.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Kingsbury School converted to become an academy on 1 May 2016 and joined the Castle Phoenix MAT. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected, it was judged to require improvement.
- Governance is provided by a local governing body. The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The headteacher took up his post in September 2016.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils in the school are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning throughout the school and in a range of subjects. The majority of lessons were observed jointly with school leaders and with the director of teaching and learning for the Castle Phoenix trust.
- Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons to evaluate pupils' progress and behaviour in a range of classrooms.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books, during lessons and at other times during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, subject staff, including those who are newly qualified teachers, pupils, and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, the school complaints file, policies minutes of the local governing body meetings.
- Inspectors scrutinised the academy's safeguarding documents, records, policies and practice.
- Inspectors looked at the 104 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 51 free-text responses from parents. The views of parents gathered by the school were also taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to the views of pupils in key stage 3 and key stage 4 during meetings, in classrooms and around the school.
- Inspectors considered 40 staff responses to Ofsted's survey and talked with teachers after lessons to seek their views.

Inspection team

Herminder Channa, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Haskins	Ofsted Inspector
Dan Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Blackburn	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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