

The Kimberley School

Newdigate Street, Kimberley, Nottingham, NG16 2NJ

Inspection dates 18–19 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students make expected, rather than better than expected progress throughout the school, including in English and mathematics. Although this is an improvement on the slower progress found recently, the school knows it has some way to go for students' achievement to be good.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to promote students' good progress throughout the school.
- Teachers' expectations of students' work and learning, including the presentation of their work and handwriting, are not consistently high enough to ensure they achieve well.
- Teaching is not appropriately challenging to enable students of all abilities to learn as well as possible. This leads to some students getting restless and not concentrating.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently tell students what to do to make further progress. Teachers do not ensure that students respond to the advice they are given.
- The staff do not all apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Not all students have good attendance to ensure they learn at least well over time.
- The school does not have a full picture of students' achievement because information about the progress of all groups of students is incomplete. Not all staff use the available data in planning teaching.
- The quality and regularity of senior and middle leaders' checking of progress and teaching is variable in its detail and regularity. This means that necessary improvements to teaching are not made as quickly as possible.
- The performance targets that teachers are set are not as sharply focused as they need to be to improve teaching quickly. Some do not have clear goals for the teachers to aim for.
- The school's coverage of careers education and personal, social and health education, including citizenship and British values, is not sufficiently broad throughout the school to ensure that students have a comprehensive understanding of issues in society.
- The sixth form requires improvement because students in the sixth form make expected progress rather than good progress by the end of Year 13.

The school has the following strengths

- Students feel safe in school.
- The quality of teaching is improving because leaders have introduced good strategies to support it.
- Reading is being promoted well throughout the school.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and they drive improvement by challenging leaders strongly.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in a wide range of subjects. They watched several lessons with either the headteacher or with individual members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors talked with students while they were working, and at break and lunchtimes. They met formally with five groups of students to find out their views about the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with senior, faculty and subject leaders, and with members of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a variety of documentation, including records of students' attendance and behaviour. They studied information about the achievement of students and checked the school's development plan to see the progress being made towards its goals. They scrutinised examples of students' work with a senior leader and checked their work in lessons.
- In carrying out the inspection, the inspectors took into account the 50 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, the letters and phone calls from parents, and the 89 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Lynne Blakelock, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
James Adkins	Additional Inspector
Alison Naylor	Additional Inspector
Cathryn Richards	Additional Inspector
Gerard Batty	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than others of its type.
- It became a stand-alone academy in September 2012. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Most students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be disadvantaged and therefore supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium funding is additional government funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is just above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school works in partnership with three local secondary schools with regard to behaviour management. It also works with a multi-academy trust, The Torch Alliance, to provide teacher training and to offer the same Key Stage 3 courses so that teachers can use tests to confirm the assessments of students' work.
- A very few students spend part or all of the week learning at other sites or learning establishments.
- The school does not enter any students early for GCSE examinations.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of students' progress across the school, particularly in English, by making sure that:
 - students of all abilities are set appropriately challenging work
 - teachers' marking shows students how to make further progress
 - expectations of the quality of students' work and effort are consistently high
 - students always present their work neatly.
- Promote students' good behaviour in lessons, and their continued safety, by ensuring that:
 - staff have the highest expectations of students' attitudes to learning and to behaviour
 - teaching always interests and engages students so that they want to learn
 - staff implement the behaviour policy consistently
 - all students attend school very regularly and understand the link between progress and attendance rates.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by ensuring that:
 - data about students, including those in the sixth form, are rigorously analysed, provide a clear overview of the performance of all groups of students and are used by all staff as a basis for improving teaching, achievement, behaviour and attendance
 - teachers' performance targets are measurable, have clear outcomes and match very closely how individual teachers need to improve their teaching and leadership skills
 - senior, faculty and subject leaders check achievement, teaching and students' work very regularly and take the necessary actions to help raise standards
 - the school delivers the necessary coverage of careers information and guidance and British values in order to ensure that students are well prepared for their future lives.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders do not drive improvements in teaching and achievement as quickly as possible because they do not have a full picture of students' achievement in all areas of the school, making it more difficult to know exactly how well all are learning.
- Faculty and subject leaders work purposefully to develop new courses and to support staff in teaching them. However, their checking of the quality of teaching and of students' work is variable in its regularity and detail. This means that, in turn, the senior leadership team does not have a fully accurate picture of teaching and achievement across subjects.
- The leader of special educational needs ensures some very good individual support to meet students' specific needs but does not yet have an overview of progress made by all of the students to inform staff deployment.
- Leaders have good information about how well some groups of students are learning, including in the sixth form to enable them to make accurate decisions about what the school needs to do next. However, these data are not analysed thoroughly to give an overview of the achievement of all groups of students. Neither does the senior leadership team ensure that all staff use these data as a basis for improvement.
- Teachers' performance targets are not closely matched to their individual needs; neither do they always provide clear, measurable goals that the staff must achieve in order to get a pay rise.
- The headteacher knows the issues facing the school and, together with other senior leaders, is addressing them. In particular, expectations of students' achievement are now much higher and the school is working to raise the aspirations of the students. There is a major focus on progress throughout the school; literacy skills, including reading, are being promoted well from Year 7 onwards; and senior leaders are now overseeing more effectively those subjects in which performance is weaker.
- The leader of teaching and learning is having an impact in securing improvements because she knows the strengths in teaching and how and where it needs to improve. Leaders know that training to improve the skills of staff is not sharply focused enough to be fully effective and they are addressing this. Lead teachers are aiding the push to improve teaching.
- The school is using its partnerships with other schools to make sure its practices, such as the grading of students' work, are accurate and to discuss teaching methods with staff from similar schools.
- The funding of pupil premium support is effective in accelerating the progress of eligible students, including those in Year 11. The support leaders have introduced have proved very helpful in enabling disadvantaged students to make faster progress than in previous years.
- The curriculum offers a range of courses to match the students' needs well. Many students enjoy their courses, although they do not all have equal chances of being successful because work is not always matched to their different capabilities.
- The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. It ensures that students who learn off-site also have courses that match their aspirations.
- A programme of careers information and guidance is in place but is not sufficiently spread through Year 8 to Year 13 to ensure that the students get the information and learn the skills that will best help them in their search for a career.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the curriculum and visits. The school expects that the personal, social and health education programme will provide students with an understanding of citizenship, democracy and the law, as well as issues such as equality and prejudice.

However, insufficient time is provided to ensure that these and other British values are promoted fully.

- Safeguarding procedures meet the necessary requirements, including for students educated off-site. Parents, who are largely supportive of the school's work, agree that the school helps to keep their children safe. A very small number felt that communication between home and school could be improved.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body now has a very accurate understanding of the school's situation and what it needs to do to improve further. It provides good strategic direction for the school, including in the partnerships the school has forged. It shows the capacity to make the school more effective, including a good range of skills and training to help governors carry out their roles effectively.
 - Governors collect a lot of their own evidence about the school through their links to faculties, action plans from leaders and regular governor monitoring days. They support and challenge the school rigorously and have put forward ideas to help the school improve, such as extending the school day for Year 11 in order to better help them to achieve well.
 - The governors ask probing questions, particularly but not exclusively about the achievement of students. They check finances regularly. There is a small deficit this year which is being managed carefully to ensure that the budget balances next year. The governors know how pupil premium money is spent and that the gap is narrowing between disadvantaged students and other students in the school.
 - Governors know that teaching is inconsistent and see performance management as invaluable in improving teaching. They are determined that teachers' targets reflect the needs of the school and they do not agree to pay rises unless the teachers meet all of their individual goals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. When teaching is less effective, some students get distracted and silly, slowing down both their own progress and that of students whose behaviour is exemplary.
- Students do not all take enough care over the presentation of their work.
- The behaviour policy is not applied consistently by staff to promote good behaviour; staff and students on the school council have expressed concern about low-level disruption.
- The school manages very well those students who sometimes find it hard to behave as they should. As a result, the number of exclusions has fallen.
- Students like their school and its community feel. They keep it tidy and free from litter. They wear their uniform smartly. Around the school and at break and lunchtimes, including in the dining hall, students are sensible and considerate towards each other. Most get to lessons on time.
- The school council works on democratic principles. Amongst its achievements is a presentation to the school on its findings about bullying, and, through working with the local council, the opening of a footpath for the convenience of the students. Students know the importance of treating others fairly and equally and can give examples of situations in society where this does not happen.
- Students educated at other sites behave well and try hard to achieve their potential.
- Students' attitudes to learning are variable in Key Stages 3 and 4. In lessons where teaching challenges them well, students are interested, get involved and act maturely. Behaviour in the sixth form is good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good, including for those who learn off-site. Students say the school keeps them secure so they feel safe.

- Students say there is not very much bullying and, if it happens, the school helps them. A few students use offensive words and actions at which the school looks bleakly.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school has successfully reduced the rates of persistent absenteeism, which are now below average.
- The attendance of students educated off-site is monitored regularly and is similar to other students. The attendance of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is improving because of the greater focus given to it. The poor attendance of disadvantaged students last year was a factor in the disappointing progress they made, both of which are now improving throughout the school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching is too variable through the school and leads to students making insufficiently rapid progress. The inconsistency of teaching within and between subjects and year groups is the major barrier to higher achievement.
- The work given to students is often too easy and sometimes too hard to enable students of different abilities to make good progress from their different starting points. Some students lose interest when they are set work that is not at the right level of difficulty, and so they do not learn well.
- Teachers' expectations of the quality and quantity of students' work and its presentation, and of their attitudes to learning, are not always sufficiently high.
- Some marking of students' work is excellent; for example, in English in Key Stage 3. However, across subjects, marking differs in its regularity and especially in the quality of the help it provides to students to improve their work. Teachers do not consistently ensure that students respond to their marking.
- A growing proportion of teaching is good. There are examples of good teaching in most subjects which lead to quicker progress, including in English and mathematics. In a drama lesson, students made quick progress in developing their dramatic skills. They worked together well, thinking carefully about how best to refine their performances and taking advantage of probing questioning to develop sharp skills in expressing their feelings.
- Literacy is being promoted increasingly widely through the school, including in subjects such as in history. The use of technical vocabulary, such as in science, is promoted well.
- In mathematics, students are given the opportunity to practise the concepts they have learned through solving problems. They enjoy this and it also ensures that they practise the skills they have learned previously.
- Individual students with special educational needs receive helpful support from teaching assistants who know their needs well. As a result, they increase their literacy and numeracy skills, including their confidence in using numbers as fractions.

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Not enough students make good progress throughout the school. In particular, boys, disadvantaged students and the most-able students do not learn well over time because teaching is too variable.
- In the recent past, not enough students have made the progress they should. This is due to a range of reasons, including attendance over time and variability in teaching and the quality of support. Improvements, however, are working through from Year 7, where there is good planning to promote students' literacy skills and, especially, their reading.

- Standards at the end of Year 11 are improving as a result of more good teaching and a lot of extra support. Based on the school's data and other inspection evidence, progress is now more rapid so that attainment in English is set to be in line with the national average in 2015. In mathematics, it is expected to be just above average. Progress in English has improved at a slower rate than in mathematics because of a previous lack of continuity in teaching literacy skills. Leaders have recognised this and the school is providing well for students who have gaps in their knowledge.
- Students' performance in most other subjects is also on track to improve on last year's results, including in separate sciences and languages.
- The most-able students do not achieve well overall because work does not consistently enable them to develop higher-level analytical and evaluative skills.
- The achievement of disadvantaged students is improving because the school has some good strategies to help them, including keeping a very careful check on their attendance, which has previously been a significant barrier to their progress. Students in Years 8 and 9 who are supported by the additional funding have caught up well in reading since a specific support package was introduced.
- Last year, the proportion of disadvantaged students gaining five A* to C grades including English and mathematics was half of that gained by other students. This represented a gap of one and two-thirds grades within the school and two and a quarter grades nationally. The gap in mathematics narrowed slightly in 2014 within the school to one and a third grades. The gap with nationally was stable at one and a half grades.
- This year, the gap is set to narrow because of a significant increase in the proportion of disadvantaged students achieving five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics. The progress rates of Year 11 students are lower than other groups because they have not had the quality of support through the school that they are getting now. However, the attainment gap has narrowed, particularly in mathematics.
- The gap between the attainment of boys and girls is narrowing because the school is using effective strategies to raise boys' rates of progress.
- The progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is improving and is in line with that of other students in the school.
- The school provides additional support through 'catch-up' funding for those students in Year 7 who did not reach the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. It did not provide the data to show the proportion of students who subsequently achieved the required level but the available information shows that all made progress and some made quick progress.
- Students read regularly and are encouraged to use the library, which is a very good resource. The school has introduced effective strategies to promote boys' reading. As a result, many are enjoying reading and becoming much more confident and skilful readers.
- Most students go on to join the sixth form, further education, or go into training.
- Students educated off-site behave appropriately and most attend regularly. Overall, they make reasonable progress towards their goals.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- A minority of students go on to the sixth form at the end of Year 11. The proportion has fallen because the school's minimum requirements for entry are more demanding. The large majority of students who join Year 12 stay on into Year 13. Most students in Year 13 complete their courses.

- Students enter Year 12 with standards a little below average. Those students who have not achieved a minimum of a C grade in English and mathematics have to re-take the examinations. In the summer of 2014, 75% of these students achieved at least a C grade in English. No students reached at least a C grade in mathematics. Over half achieved the necessary grade in mathematics after a further re-sit.
- At the end of Year 13, most students go on to higher education. The rest go into jobs or training.
- The sixth form is improving. Standards are broadly average and improving overall, demonstrating students are making the progress they should. Almost all students achieve pass grades at A level by the end of Year 13 because teaching, although variable, is often good; students are well supported in their learning and given help to improve. However, the leader of the sixth form does not yet have data on students' achievement overall which can be analysed to show strengths and to pinpoint those areas most in need of improvement.
- Although some students say that they could be better prepared for the demands of the sixth form, they feel generally well supported in their learning and personal development through Years 12 and 13. They find careers information useful in the breadth of information that it provides to help them make decisions about their future.
- The sixth form provides students with a broad tutorial programme about lifestyle choices and provides regular time for discussion. Students have considered issues such as extremism and the potential for radicalisation. They have a good understanding of British values and their responsibility to adhere to democratic principles.
- Students like the sixth form, which they say gives them good opportunities to develop both their academic and personal skills. They are good ambassadors for the school because they behave well, act maturely, attend very regularly and get to school on time.
- Younger students in the school look up to the sixth form students, whose roles include, for example, helping boys to develop their reading skills and appreciation of books. Sixth form students are also involved in charity fundraising to help those less fortunate than themselves.

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	138641
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	456019

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1302
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Wilson OBE
Headteacher	Chris Teal
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	0115 9387000
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