

The King's Church of England School

Regis Road, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 8XG

Inspection dates

15–16 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Inadequate
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The performance of the school has declined significantly since the previous inspection.
- For the last three years, too many pupils have left Year 11 with qualifications significantly lower than might be typically achieved by pupils with similar ability.
- Despite some improvements, outcomes for current pupils remain inadequate.
- Historically, leaders, including the governing body and the local authority, did not intervene successfully to improve the quality of teaching and arrest the decline in pupils' outcomes.
- Most of the governing body have remained in post during the recent years in which standards have fallen. The governing body must bear a considerable weight of responsibility for the fall in pupils' achievement.
- The quality of teaching is too inconsistent. Too often, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. Therefore pupils do not make good progress from their starting points and underachieve.
- Attendance is too low for all pupils and especially for the most vulnerable groups. Too many disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are regularly absent from school.
- Students who are studying academic courses in the sixth form have not made swift enough progress, and therefore have not always achieved the grades at A level of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal has brought ambition and drive to the school. He has restored order. He has begun to introduce new systems and new staffing structures. This has led to some improvement in the quality of teaching, and to leadership and management. This is beginning to enable pupils to do better.
- Safeguarding is effective. The new principal has brought stability to the school. As a result, safeguarding policies and practices are secure.
- Leadership of the sixth form has improved. Students enjoy their studies and make good progress in vocational subjects.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure good outcomes for all pupils by:
 - using the pupil premium funding wisely to ensure at least good outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - planning effective interventions for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make at least good progress from their starting points
 - making sure that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can do and will know, especially in developing pupils' reading and writing skills
 - ensuring that pupils achieve GCSE grades of which they are capable in all subjects, so that they are prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Improve the overall quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leadership is effective at all levels across the school including leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and management of the spending of pupil premium funding
 - members of the governing body have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and use this information to challenge school leaders in order to secure rapid improvements
 - leaders check and review the work they do to ensure that their actions have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Urgently improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - improving the attendance of all pupils, and significantly reducing the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities who are persistently absent
 - ensuring that the behaviour policy is consistently applied across the school, so that exclusions are reduced
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and presentation of work so that pupils can learn more effectively.
- Ensure that the recent rapid improvements in the sixth form are sustained, so that all students, including those studying academic courses, make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders have not intervened effectively when pupils' outcomes have been weak. For the past three years, examination results for pupils have been very low. Leaders have been ineffective in reversing or even arresting this fall. Pupils have been let down by years of poor behaviour, ineffective teaching and standards of achievement that are too low. Only since April 2016, when the current principal took up post, have there been any improvements. However, despite these improvements, it is too early for his changes to have had a sustained impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The relatively new principal has a drive and commitment that serve as an example to the rest of his staff, the governing body and pupils. His work and the beginnings of improvement in teaching, and more substantially in pupils' behaviour, are demonstrating the capacity to improve. Evidence from speaking to members of the school community and that submitted via staff and pupil inspection questionnaires support the view that the leadership of the principal is highly valued by all.
- Historically, leaders have not been successful in using the funding for pupils supported by the pupil premium grant. They have also not evaluated the effectiveness of the pupil premium spending. As a result, disadvantaged pupils have been badly let down. Progress for these pupils has been significantly worse than for other pupils nationally. The school has made improvements in the way this funding is now spent. The principal ensures that disadvantaged pupils' progress is now tracked more closely and since September the school has appointed a 'pupil premium champion' to lead this area of work. It is too early to say that this has had any sustained impact on the outcomes of these pupils.
- Over recent years the local authority has worked with the school to help improve standards, but there were too few signs of success. The governing body, the local authority and school leaders have not been effective in bringing about swift and significant improvements in outcomes for pupils.
- The principal has restructured the leadership team substantially. Many middle and senior leaders are new to the school or are in newly defined posts. They are very willing and supportive of the principal's ambitious vision. The principal has also introduced a new assessment system that tracks pupils' progress effectively, and a programme of support for leaders and teachers. Leaders new to post are successfully developing the skills to monitor, evaluate and review teachers' and pupils' performance. Leaders are now able to identify pupils' underachievement and to intervene quickly to address the issues.
- Staff complete appropriate bespoke training related to the areas for improvement identified in their appraisal. These improvements are beginning to make a positive difference to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes.

- The leadership of special educational needs and/or disabilities has been weak. Leaders have not been effective in checking whether the funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has been spent prudently. This has contributed to very poor outcomes for these pupils. The school's information about the use of catch-up funding for Year 7 pupils suggests that more progress has been made in literacy than in numeracy where progress was too slow.
- The principal has planned the curriculum so that it meets the needs of pupils more effectively. Pupils have a chance to follow a broad and balanced curriculum. This has not always been the case. Leaders acknowledge that until very recently the curriculum was poorly planned and did not meet pupils' needs.
- This year, careers information, advice and guidance have improved, and pupils receive better support when planning the next stage of their education or training. Most of the pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 11 successfully find employment and training or a place in further education.
- The school works hard to deliver effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum and is relatively successful in some aspects. Leaders are committed to their mission statement that seeks to help pupils 'embrace life-enriching experiences and make well-informed lifestyle choices that promote health and well-being'. The school has a well-appointed and well-used multifaith centre. Pupils speak highly of this facility, and they value tolerance and difference. The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities around such diverse activities as circus skills, creative writing, Dhol club and 'colour yourself calm'.

Governance

- Governors have failed to challenge school leaders about the past three years of very poor examination results, declining rates of attendance and ineffectual self-evaluation and action planning. They have failed to develop a culture of effective accountability through the performance management of staff. There has been little change to the membership of the governing body over recent years.
- Over time, governors have not established an accurate view of the work of the school. This has limited their capacity to provide support and challenge. However, they acknowledge that standards are still too low. Governors have a new system of linking with subject teams and receiving information about pupils' progress. Governors know that the school has begun to improve because of the leadership of the new principal.
- The governing body fully supports the new principal, and it is working with him to restructure the leadership of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Recruitment procedures are thorough. Staff are regularly trained in safeguarding matters so they can identify and support vulnerable pupils. The school keeps its risk assessments and child protection plans up to date and secure.
- Staff implement what they have learned in their training in e-safety and anti-bullying. The school's information suggests that incidents of bullying have declined since last year. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that staff deal with bullying incidents quickly and efficiently.

- Pupils feel safe and speak highly of the assemblies and tutor time that teach them how to keep safe in school and in the wider community. Pupils say that they know whom they should talk to when they feel concerned.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Leaders acknowledge that teaching and assessment have not been effective and that this contributed to the very weak outcomes seen in recent years. Teachers have not used the information they have about what pupils know and can do to plan learning activities that help pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- In 2016, the progress of the most able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was below that of similar and other pupils nationally. Outcomes for pupils currently attending the school are still not good. For example, in key stage 4, teachers do not challenge pupils effectively in order to improve their literacy skills. As a result, pupils' reading and writing skills are not good enough and they find accessing the curriculum difficult.
- Over the last three years, pupils have not achieved well in English, mathematics and science. This is due to ineffective teaching and inaccurate assessment. This is improving, but it is too early to say that pupils' progress in these subjects is strong. Teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Inspectors saw instances of pupils name-calling, losing concentration and demonstrating poor attitudes to their learning. Some pupils' poor behaviour prevents them and others from learning and making progress.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough. This leads to pupils' expectations about how much work they are expected to do and the quality of their work being too inconsistent. For example, in too many workbooks, inspectors saw a lack of pride in achievement and too little care in keeping work well organised. As a result, pupils do not do well.
- Where teaching is most successful, there is appropriate challenge for pupils, teachers' explanations are clear and helpful, and pupils respond with effort and success. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher gave pupils an experience of being in a university lecture and pupils were eager to improve and make progress.
- The work in pupils' books shows that they do well in geography. In this subject, pupils show pride in their work and complete tasks to the best of their ability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Inadequate

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- In many lessons there is a lack of respect. There are a high number of sanctions recorded by the school for pupils whose attitude to learning is not good enough. However, in previous years, these attitudes were much worse. Leaders describe a situation where too many pupils were difficult to control. Since April 2016, the principal has led his team to show pupils how to behave with courtesy and politeness. The school has improved pupils' ability to follow instructions and show respect for authority.

- Where learning and teaching are most effective, pupils are polite, thoughtful and considerate. In these lessons, pupils are eager to contribute, want to ask and answer questions, and model positive attitudes for others. Increasingly, pupils understand how important positive attitudes are to securing examination success. So, for example, the numbers of pupils attending after-school lessons and Saturday lessons are increasing.
- Since September, more pupils feel a sense of pride in their school. Pupils speak positively of the recent changes. They say that poor behaviour is managed better now and teachers reward them fairly. Teachers recognise how important it is to maintain and improve the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils now feel safe around the school. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. Safety is taught across the curriculum. For example, the assembly and form-time programme teaches pupils how to use electronic communications safely.
- There is a supportive programme of personal, health, social and economic education. Now that behaviour is improving, the school's core values are beginning to be more obvious. There is an emerging optimism shared by staff, pupils and parents.
- Pupils who attend the school's alternative provision are improving their attitudes to learning. The school works well with its alternative providers to plan and track pupils' personal development and welfare, and academic progress.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. High numbers of pupils miss lessons due to fixed-term exclusions. However, there are fewer exclusions than last year.
- Attendance rates have declined over the last three years and are too low. This is the case overall and for the school's most vulnerable groups, including those supported by the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- There are high numbers of pupils persistently absent from school, and this is the case for those supported by the pupil premium and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The principal is determined that attendance should improve quickly and has restructured the school's systems for monitoring attendance. The school works with the local authority to ensure the safety of those who are persistently absent. Leaders have restructured tutor groups to help manage and improve attendance. Since September 2016, pupils' attendance has improved, but it is too early to judge whether this will be sustained over the full school year.
- Behaviour inside and outside lessons has improved since last year. The school's behaviour records track these improvements carefully. Parents, pupils and staff report that the atmosphere is much more orderly and calm than in previous years. The leadership of the current principal is cited by members of the school community as the reason for this improvement.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- After the last inspection in 2013, there was a sharp fall in GCSE examination results for pupils in key stage 4.
- The progress made by pupils in 2016 placed the school in the bottom 10% of similar

schools nationally. Pupils' progress in this year in English, mathematics, science and the English Baccalaureate was also in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally.

- In the last three years, pupils in key stage 4 did not make good progress from their starting points in a range of subjects. Pupils in all ability groups made much less progress than would be typical for pupils with similar ability.
- At the end of key stage 4 over the last three years, GCSE grades in English and mathematics were too low. Therefore pupils were not well enough prepared for the next stage of their education and/or training. This year, in Years 10 and 11, pupils are making better progress, but it is not yet good enough.
- The school's assessment information suggests that current Year 11 pupils will do better than previous year groups. However, changes to examination requirements mean that it is not clear if these predictions are reliable. Inspectors were shown the school's tracking of outcomes for pupils in current cohorts and looked at a wide range of pupils' workbooks. This showed that improvements in the rate of progress are not yet secure and that progress is still behind what might be typical for pupils with similar starting points.
- There are some early signs that outcomes are improving in specific curriculum areas. For example, the school showed inspectors the early results of a group of vocational subjects taken by some of this year's Year 11 pupils. The results appear to be better than similar qualifications taken by last year's pupils.
- In key stage 3, pupils are making better progress than in the past. For example, in Year 7 English, pupils are making more progress than last year because the school has helped pupils to enjoy reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make inadequate progress from their starting points. Over time, the school's use of funding for these pupils has not led to sustained improvements in their progress. While the principal has revised the provision for these pupils, it is too soon to see secure impact.
- Leaders' effective use of alternative provision has enabled some pupils at risk of exclusion to stay in school. Their progress, however, remains lower than would be typical of pupils with similar starting points.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- In 2016, attainment in most subjects in the post-16 programmes of study was broadly in line with national averages. However, students' progress in many academic qualifications was below nationally expected averages. Disadvantaged students did less well than other students nationally.
- Outcomes in vocational subjects were better than those in academic subjects. For example, students made better than average progress in music studies and computer use.
- Since September 2016, a new leader for post-16 programmes of study has been appointed. The school now tracks, and is improving, the progress of disadvantaged

students. In 2016, more students stayed on to the sixth form than in the past, and high numbers of students stayed on into Year 13.

- Attendance is well monitored and is high in both Year 12 and Year 13. Teaching in the sixth form is better than in key stage 3 and key stage 4. Students are well motivated, and the school's assessment policy is used effectively. Students speak highly of their lessons and of extra-curricular opportunities. They enjoy their studies. In a Year 12 English lesson, for example, students were keen to describe how they analyse texts, read widely and improve their written work.
- Most students who failed to secure a grade C in English or mathematics in Year 11, and who retook these examinations in Year 12, did not get a grade C or higher in 2016.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the sixth form. Students speak positively of the way the school teaches them about different faiths, values and the celebration of difference.
- Careers education is effective. Most students go on to higher education or training.
- Safeguarding is effective. Students know how to keep themselves safe and say they value their learning about radicalisation and extremism.

School details

Unique reference number	131547
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10025291

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 comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	729
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	99
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Dixon
Principal	James Ludlow
Telephone number	01902 558 333
Website	www.kingswolverhampton.co.uk
Email address	admin@kingswolverhampton.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school uses alternative provision at The Midpoint Centre, The Braybrook Centre and The Orchard Centre in Wolverhampton.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school did not meet the current government floor standards in 2016.
- The school meets the Department for Education’s definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

- The school is smaller than the average-size secondary school.
- Over half of its pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding, which is well above the national average.
- Almost three quarters of its pupils are from minority ethnic groups, which is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly below the national average overall.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation including national data and school information about pupils' current attainment and progress.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, and representatives of the governing body and the local authority. They also spoke to middle leaders, the coordinator of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the leader of the sixth form, the leader for the pupil premium provision, and other leaders and teachers.
- Inspectors met with pupils. Inspectors observed teaching and scrutinised a wide range of pupils' workbooks from across the school.
- Inspectors met with a small group of parents.
- An inspector visited the school's alternative provision and scrutinised the risk assessments and provision plans for this setting.
- Inspectors met with staff who have responsibility for the single central record and inspected arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors examined the 35 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 18 free-text responses. Inspectors considered the 16 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 25 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Graham Tyrer, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Considine	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Ellis-Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Quigley	Ofsted Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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