



Kingsweston School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109386
Local Authority Bristol, City of
Inspection number 288359
Inspection dates 18–19 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mike Kell

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Napier Miles Road
School category	Community special		Kingsweston
Age range of pupils	3–19		Bristol BS11 0UT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0117 9030400
Number on roll (school)	164	Fax number	01779 872915
Number on roll (6th form)	29		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Vacant Position
		Headteacher	David Capel
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

Age group 3–19	Inspection dates 18–19 January 2007	Inspection number 288359
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kingsweston School is a large and complex organisation. Most pupils are taught at the main site, but the school also operates what it refers to as 'satellite class bases' in partnership with four local schools. On three of these sites there are classes for between 7 and 16 pupils who benefit from specialist teaching as well as having social opportunities to mix with their mainstream peers. Older pupils are also included in some mainstream lessons. Sixty-nine pupils are taught in the satellite bases. The fourth school hosts the Kingsweston Centre; this is the provision for pupils with autism in the age range 11 to 16 years. By September 2007 it is planned there will be 140 pupils in six satellite bases. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language and a very large majority have a White British background. The pupils have a wide range of learning difficulties and virtually all of them have a statement of special educational need. In most cases these statements identify autism, severe learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties or difficulties with speech and communication as the primary disability. There are more than twice as many boys as girls on roll. There are very few children of Reception age, whereas the post-16 department has grown steadily in recent years.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Kingsweston is a successful school. It meets its aim of giving all pupils as wide an experience as possible within a safe environment. The school's leaders and governors have an outstanding commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. The pupils and their parents show overwhelming support for Kingsweston. The partner schools with the satellite bases are equally enthusiastic about the links that have been forged. These partnerships are an outstanding feature of the school's work. Pupils make exceptional progress in their personal development. They are able to make such very good progress because the school provides an outstanding level of care, guidance and support. Pupils' personal development lies at the heart of much of the school's work. Adults seize every opportunity to promote it informally and through the curriculum and so the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The standard of pupils' work is exceptionally low compared with national expectations but the pupils achieve well and make good progress from their starting points. The pupils are taught well. Teachers use a wide range of communication strategies but some of their lesson planning lacks detail. They do not always identify precisely enough what it is anticipated individual pupils and groups of pupils will learn. The pupils benefit greatly from a rich and diverse curriculum. This encourages them to be inquisitive and open minded and helps them acquire social, communication, academic and workplace skills. The pupils do a great deal to help themselves. They attend regularly, behave well and have positive attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy their time in school immensely. The quality of provision for the young children in the Foundation Stage is good and these children also achieve well. The school's leadership and management are good. Managers at all levels make an important contribution to the school's overall effectiveness on all sites. The school has good procedures for evaluating how well it is doing. School leaders have implemented effective systems for monitoring many features of the school's work and have reacted effectively to most of their findings. However, they do not yet have a way of showing pupils' assessment details in a simple layout that enables their progress to be tracked efficiently. This reduces senior leaders' ability to analyse assessment data and use this information to bring about change.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

A well managed post-16 department gives its students a good education and excellent opportunities for personal development. The students are sociable, communicative and increasingly independent. They gain the poise and confidence to sample what the community has to offer, such as shops, leisure centres, galleries and museums. They also enjoy very good opportunities to go on residential trips. The students are encouraged to form positive relationships and so they have the confidence to make use of the excellent opportunities they have to discuss sensitive matters such as sexual health with trusted and supportive adults. Students are prepared well for the next stage of their life through a minienterprise project, college courses, work experience

and excellent advice from Connexions advisers. The students learn well in lessons. Skilled teachers balance the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills with the development of social and communication competences. The Youth Award Scheme gives teachers a structure for assessing students' achievements, but generally mechanisms for assessing and tracking students' achievements and progress are underdeveloped.

What the school should do to improve further

- Write lesson plans that focus on what individual pupils or groups are expected to learn.
- Implement procedures that enable staff to monitor and measure pupils' progress efficiently as they move through the school.
- Analyse assessment data to compare the performance of different groups of pupils and their learning in different subjects, and use this information to raise achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils enter the school working at an exceptionally low level compared with national expectations. A very few pupils with autism enter broadly in line with the national standard. The nature of their learning difficulties means that pupils' standard of work remains well below the national average throughout their time in school. Pupils on all sites, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress from their starting points when they enter the school. Leaders' commitment to equal opportunity ensures that all pupils are in the setting that best meets their needs. Exceptionally high quality guidance and support and the outstanding progress that pupils make in their personal development put them in the best possible position to make progress. Teachers build on this by providing stimulating teaching and a programme of visits and off-site activities that bring pupils' learning alive. The pupils generally meet their learning and development targets, such as in their individual education plans (IEPs), but the targets are not always as challenging as they could be. This is because there is not a clear enough connection between what pupils achieve in a lesson and the planning for what they will learn the next time that subject is taught. The school now recognises that in order to challenge all pupils at all times it needs to tighten up how it tracks and measures their progress and uses this information to set learning targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Kingsweston pupils are polite, outgoing, communicative and demonstrate increasing self-control. A striking example of their confidence was the way the school council liaised with their counterparts from the school that hosts the Kingsweston Centre to design the new school uniform that would be worn by both groups of pupils. The pupils' social and communication skills are outstanding as they practise them frequently in real life situations in the community. The personal development of pupils in the satellite bases is enhanced significantly by opportunities to mix with the mainstream pupils. Pupils take advantage of a wide range of sporting activities and they listen and respond to advice on healthy eating and keeping safe. They have many opportunities to learn about living in a community and how they can contribute, such as being on the school council. This group has a real voice about matters such as getting an eco garden established. Pupils contribute to wider communities through raising money for charities and helping to support a school in Cameroon. By the time pupils leave school they have developed an excellent understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles and how they can play their part in the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teachers know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their many needs. Relationships are excellent and teachers manage their pupils very well. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils, helping them to participate in activities and to develop better understanding of acceptable behaviour. Teachers use a good range of communication strategies to encourage this participation. Speaking and listening, Makaton signs, text and symbols are all used as required. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also used effectively to grab pupils' attention. Systems for assessing pupils' achievements are relatively new but are now being used routinely as staff become accustomed to them. Although lesson planning is generally satisfactory, it is inconsistent across the school. The majority of teachers' planning focuses effectively on what they expect individual pupils to learn and show the activities that will promote these small steps in learning. Other planning is too imprecise and the anticipated learning is not matched to pupils' previous achievements. This sometimes results in a lack of expectation as pupils do unnecessary activities before beginning work that is appropriately challenging.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. Effective planning enables pupils to acquire basic skills enhanced by numerous opportunities to apply them in a variety of settings. The Connexions service, vocational courses, work experience and college links provide a work-related curriculum for older pupils that prepares them exceptionally well for leaving school. Pupils' horizons are extended very well by the striking variety of additional activities on and off the different sites. These include many residential trips, including to France, and the opportunity to be part of dance festivals and drama productions. The school's commitment to equal opportunities means that all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, have a curriculum that meets their social, emotional and physical needs. On most satellite sites this includes the opportunity to attend some mainstream lessons. The commitment to meeting individual needs is also evident in the very good liaison with other agencies. Short-term curriculum plans, as shown in lesson planning, are less effective. They do not always acknowledge individuals' needs, such as in classes that contain pupils with a relatively wide range of academic ability.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The parent who commented 'I have always felt that my child has been well looked after and safe at school' is right. Procedures are rigorous and sensitive. Consistent behaviour management has resulted in a calm school environment. Difficult situations are defused quickly and serious incidents are recorded meticulously. There are very good systems for safeguarding pupils. A highly effective learning mentor develops close home-school links and supports and advises pupils, providing advice on sexual and emotional health. The school encourages pupils to be involved in decisions that affect them. They attend annual reviews of their statement of special educational need and are guided in setting and evaluating their learning targets. Shortcomings in the ways that pupils' progress is monitored reduce the impact of this guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Senior leaders have addressed all key issues and they have had the vision, commitment and ability to set up the satellite bases. The headteachers of the host schools cannot speak too highly of the meticulous way in which the pupils, their parents and mainstream staff were prepared for Kingsweston pupils to join their schools. At the same time, school leaders

have maintained a high quality of education on the main site through some careful monitoring and taking action. For instance, pupils' attendance has risen and their behaviour has improved. There are now almost no exclusions. The leadership team also responded very positively to the findings of a recent parent survey. Although senior leaders have established suitable procedures for assessing attainment, they have not been so effective in tracking pupils' progress, examining this information and using their conclusions in a practical way. Recent management changes are having an impact in developing closer cooperation between the sites. This benefits all pupils. Teachers from the sites now meet to ensure consistency in evaluating pupils' work. The learning directors and learning managers hold regular meetings with their teams. These ensure smooth communication and consistent practice across sites and encourage staff to feel valued and part of a single school. The school faces even more change in the future as new sites open. Working alongside an effective governing body, senior leaders have a good capacity to meet this challenge.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

- Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our time there very much. You think Kingsweston is a good school and we agree with you. Good teaching makes learning fun and so you enjoy your lessons. The teachers give you many interesting things to do and there are lots of visits that help you to learn. As a result, you do well. You do a great deal to help yourselves too. You go to school most of the time, listen carefully to your teachers and behave well. The staff look after you very, very well. They try very hard to help you to become more mature and to get ready for leaving school. You do really, really well in becoming more confident and doing things by yourself. Many of you help others as well, such as when you are on the school council. The way you make sensible choices is also very good. You know a great deal about keeping fit and staying safe. The senior staff do a good job in running the school. The bases they have opened at Portway, Henbury and Sea Mills give some of you lots of chances to go into the main school and learn with other pupils. The senior staff are very keen to make the school better. We have given them and your teachers some ideas to help them to do this:
 - Write lesson plans that show what they want each one of you to learn.
 - Have a better way of finding out just how much you have learned.
 - Make sure that every one of you is doing as well as you can. Thank you again, and we wish you luck in the future.