

# The Kingswood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122115
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359172
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Trevor Riddiough HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1220
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Tristram
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Gainsborough Road Corby NN18 9NS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 42 lessons and 40 teachers, and observed one assembly. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, groups of students, representatives of the governing body and the local authority, the National Challenge Adviser and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at progress tracking, performance data, students' work, whole school and subject development plans, numerous policies and school documents. Completed questionnaires from 208 parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- How well have leaders, at all levels, ensured greater rigour in evaluations to bring about improvements?
- How good are attainment and progress in the main school and in the sixth form, and in particular in mathematics and science?
- How does the school ensure the curriculum, at all ages, meets the needs of the students?
- What is the impact of the specialist status on outcomes and provision across the school?

## Information about the school

The Kingswood School is larger than the average sized secondary school. It became a specialist arts college in 2004. The school has been subject to reorganisation and in 2010 it moved from a split site to completely new premises. The proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is also above average. The school population is largely White British and very few students come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The new school has designated special provision for up to 20 students on the autistic spectrum. The school has been awarded the Artsmark Gold Award, Healthy Schools status, the bronze Citizenship Award and is a Creative Partnerships Change School.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Kingswood is a satisfactory and improving school. Students' achievement is satisfactory because although standards are low, learning and progress are satisfactory but improving securely and quickly. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good practice. Pastoral care is good with very good support for students with special education needs and/or disabilities and for students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Consequently, they make good progress. However support for students' learning is inconsistent across different subjects. This is evident in important aspects of the school's provision, for example in the rigour that heads of department monitor the work of their department and in the consistency of their planning to make the necessary improvements. Weaknesses in the curriculum in mathematics and science are restricting some students' achievement in these subjects. This has been due to two key factors: staffing issues which have now been resolved and the narrow curriculum, where improvements are in train for the coming year. Provision for religious education at Key Stage 4 does not currently meet statutory requirements although there are plans in place for it to do so.

Many aspects of the school's work have improved markedly since the last inspection.

Attainment is rising rapidly and closing the gap between where students are and where they should be in relation to national averages.

The improvements in behaviour have been hard won and now students behave considerately to each other whether supervised or not.

Attendance has improved and persistent absence has been minimised due to the arrangements now in place to encourage and support students to attend school.

The care, guidance and support of students have become a strength of the school.

The tracking of students' progress is now comprehensive and more rigorous. It identifies students who are likely to miss their targets in time for the school to intervene.

The senior leadership of the school now provides robust monitoring, more accurate self-evaluation and, together with the governing body, provides a renewed determination to succeed.

Provision in the school's specialist subjects of performing arts and media is good but this good practice is not shared widely enough across other subjects. Kingswood has a national reputation for the good quality of its performing arts projects.

The majority of students enjoy school. They make a good contribution to the life of the local community as well as influencing aspects of their own school. During the inspection students were courteous and the behaviour observed was usually good. Arrangements

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for safeguarding are exemplary and these are a function of the design of the new building and the comprehensive attention that has been paid to this important aspect of work. Relationships between staff and students are strong and students respond well to the particularly good questioning used in the most effective lessons. Lessons, generally, are planned for the class as a whole rather than for students of different abilities within the class. This means that students rarely start at different points and, too often, work is matched to the middle ability in a class. Lower attaining students are well supported but higher attaining students are not sufficiently challenged. At times they become complacent and are content to work at a relaxed pace so consequently, their progress is not as great as it could be. In many cases, marking lacks clear advice to students on how to improve and make further progress.

The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis. The school has a satisfactory capacity for further, sustained improvement. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. There is a trend of improvement in key areas and senior leaders are clear about what needs to be done to move the school forward.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- – Raise attainment in all subjects especially in mathematics and science by:
  - ensuring that every subject leader takes responsibility for the strategic direction and development of their subject
  - ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the subject leaders are accurate and identify clear actions for improvement which are carried out within specified timescales
  - sharing the good practice in the school's specialist subjects across departments.
- Improve the teaching and learning so that the majority is good or better by:
  - planning for learning carefully so that the needs of all learners in the class are catered for
  - developing effective questioning in all lessons that identifies what students have learned and extends it
  - providing clear advice and guidance to students in class and through the marking of their work, on how to how to accelerate their progress.
- Ensure that statutory requirements for the provision of religious education are fully met.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

On entry to the school standards are low. While standards have risen over the last three years the most dramatic improvement has taken place in the past year. This is because

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students are generally making expected progress. The school's accurate tracking information indicates that standards are set to rise further this year to bring them even closer to national averages. The students in the current Year 11 have already achieved early GCSE module entries which show that the school will exceed the performance that the school made in 2010. However, gaps in achievement still remain, notably that of middle ability boys. Students' satisfactory progress is confirmed by observations of lessons during the inspection. Students generally engaged in their learning, and in active and interesting lessons they took part enthusiastically. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. However, at times, some higher attaining students do not work at the pace and level of which they are capable. Consequently, while they are achieving satisfactorily, staff, parents, carers and students are aware that they are capable of much more.

Students feel safe in school. The design of the new building contributes exceptionally well to the creation of a safe working environment where all students can live and work productively under one roof. Behaviour is good, both in and out of class. It reflects the students' positive view of the school and their respect for each other and their teachers.

The extent to which students adopt healthy lifestyles is satisfactory but a significant sub-group of students are not effectively engaged with the healthy menu and choices available in the school canteen. Students take part in a good range of opportunities both in school and in the wider community. They enjoy taking responsibility and play a key role in some decision-making within the school. Examples include mentoring others, playing an active part in the 'House of Representatives' and the outstanding role that students' play in assemblies. Student leadership is an ingrained strength of the school.

The school's ethos helps students to develop strong personal values. Tutor groups include students from all years, aiding the development and discussion of ideas and the cultivation of mutual respect. The performing arts activities, curriculum provision and personal, social and health education contribute well to students' cultural and spiritual understanding. Students take part in a variety of work-related experiences and activities but their development of skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being is restricted by their relatively low literacy and numeracy skills.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

Lessons are effectively managed and students behave well. New technologies are used effectively to present lesson structure, give instructions and to provide stimulating visual materials. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good knowledge of examination, curricular and assessment requirements, particularly in the vocational courses. In the best lessons, good use is made of probing questioning to challenge students and develop their ideas. However, in too many lessons there is insufficient planning to cater for students' varying aptitudes and capabilities.

The Expressive and Performing Arts specialism is used to provide a rich experience in dance, drama, music and art, particularly in the lower school. There is a good range of vocational subjects which are well matched to students' needs in terms of content, teaching and assessment styles. The personalised and alternative curriculum caters effectively for the small number of students who otherwise would not gain any accreditation. There is a good range of high quality curricular and extra-curricular opportunities in performing arts with partner schools and with community involvement. However the overall effectiveness of the curriculum is limited by a number of factors including inadequate provision for religious education in Key Stage 4 and weaknesses in provision for mathematics and science

The level of pastoral care provided is a strength of the school. Transition arrangements from Year 6 to Year 7 are well thought out, for example, by 'focus days' in the summer holidays. The Learning Support Unit is particularly effective in supporting students who are at risk of exclusion. This has contributed to a reduction in the number of exclusions and improvements in their literacy and numeracy skills. The Autism Unit is new but is

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already having positive impact in supporting students to learn effectively in the main school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers at senior level are effective and at middle level are improving. The determination, drive and vision of the headteacher have been instrumental in seeing the school through its recent turbulence culminating in the opening of the new school. The pride of this achievement is shared across the entire local community. The establishment of a consistent team at middle level has been slower to develop. Middle leaders are not consistently rigorous in the evaluations that lead to strategic action towards improvement. However, the recently implemented system that tracks progress towards targets derived from assessment, together with the associated communication to students, parents and carers, has had a major impact on improving standards.

The newly reformed governing body is now well informed about all aspects of the school's work. The governing body is determined that the investment made in the new school building pays dividends in the form of good achievement for all students. Governors are now supporting and challenging the school appropriately to accomplish this. Procedures, policies and protocols to safeguard students are robust. They are followed diligently and staff are appropriately trained. Security arrangements are excellent which contributes to students' strong sense of safety and protection.

The school is inclusive. Many students told inspectors that they are keen to gain qualifications and employment in the future. The school is successfully raising the aspirations of all young people. The important link that the school makes between good attendance and good achievement, coupled with the positive work of the learning support centre to reduce exclusions, reflects the school's ethos and its hard work in promoting equalities and tackling discrimination.

The promotion of community cohesion is good. The school's performing arts department has made a useful contribution to the local question of immigration via high quality performance workshops delivered to over two thousand primary school pupils. This indicates that the school has taken the drive to promote community cohesion beyond the 'school gate' very seriously. At an international level, the school has developed links with others in Haiti and Gambia.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Sixth form

The sixth form provides a satisfactory quality of education. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average which reflects the school's desire to include as many students as possible into post-16 education. The school's response to this has been to provide a wide range of courses, including vocational and academic, to cater for this range of ability. Students make satisfactory progress. Attainment at GCE A and AS level is below the national average. However, students do particularly well on vocational courses. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. While teaching is satisfactory overall it is good in vocational subjects where there are more opportunities for independent learning requiring students to apply what they have learnt. In the less effective lessons there is too much teacher input and students are not challenged sufficiently. Students have many opportunities to make a positive contribution to the school, through mentoring younger students, leading assemblies and running discos and events for younger students. This leads to their good personal development. Students are well cared for and value the one-to-one support they receive on both academic and personal matters. Leaders in the sixth form evaluate the progress students make in different subjects, and tracking systems clearly identify students who are underachieving. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision is not systematic. Outcomes are too variable across subjects, and in a few, the progress made by students is below expectations.

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*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. Many agreed or strongly agreed that they were happy with their children's overall school experience. A few parents and carers were worried about behaviour. The inspection found that the school has effective policies in place with regard to behaviour and procedures are followed consistently. There was no evidence to endorse these concerns.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Kingswood School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 208 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1220 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	30	129	62	12	6	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	90	43	114	55	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	84	40	108	52	9	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	36	112	54	16	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	66	32	123	59	7	3	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	26	119	57	23	11	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	19	132	63	33	16	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	69	33	120	58	10	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	29	131	63	9	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	30	115	55	19	9	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	19	133	64	17	8	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	71	34	120	58	0	0	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	43	110	53	5	2	1	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



22 October 2010

Dear Students,

Inspection of The Kingswood School, Corby NN18 9NS

Thank you for the courteous and warm welcome you gave to us and the insightful and thoughtful comments you made during the inspection. You have been very helpful in giving us a detailed picture of your school. It was good to see you in your impressive new building looking happy and settled.

The school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education overall, and some areas are good. Your headteacher, senior leadership team, teachers and all other staff have worked hard to get you established in your new school for the start of this term. They have also worked hard to help you to improve in some important areas such as your attendance, behaviour and GCSE examination results. We agree with those of you who told us that you felt safe in school. The work you do as a performing arts specialist college gives you opportunities to learn about different cultures and you also make a good contribution to the local community. It has enriched your education and provided you with some first-rate experiences, for example in involving you in contemporary arts projects and in the opportunities for you to attend dance residencies.

Your performance in GCSE examinations and A level is improving. We have, therefore, asked the school to work hard to ensure that even more of you achieve well in the future especially in mathematics and science. Staff care for you well and make sure you are prepared for the next stage of your education. But in order to improve the quality of teaching, we have asked your school to plan your work in lessons more carefully so that all of you make the progress expected. This is particularly for those of you who find work easy and do not always get stretched sufficiently academically. We have also asked the school to ensure that marking informs you how well you are doing and how to improve.

Every member of staff works hard to support and help you to have the best start to life. You enjoy school and benefit well from the improved facilities provided by the new building. This has led to some outstanding practice on keeping you safe.

We wish you all the best in your studies and every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Trevor Riddiough

Her Majesty's Inspector

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