

# The Kingswood School

Gainsborough Road, Corby, NN18 9NS

**Inspection dates** 22–23 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Leaders, managers and governors have only recently started to address serious shortcomings in the school's effectiveness.
- Students' achievement is inadequate because there is not enough good or outstanding teaching to promote at least expected progress. As a result, the proportion of students achieving five GCSE grades at A\* to C including English and mathematics remains well below average.
- The management of teachers' performance has failed to improve their teaching sufficiently since the previous inspection.
- There is not enough support to improve students' reading and writing skills, especially for those whose skills are weak when they first arrive at the school.
- The quality of support for students who have learning and behavioural needs varies too much, and is not monitored well enough.
- Students' attendance is below average. Exclusion figures are too high, reflecting the fact that the behaviour of some students requires improvement.
- The sixth form requires improvement. As in the main school, teaching varies too much across different subjects to help all students achieve the highest grades and students are not always able to choose from enough courses.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has quickly analysed what needs to happen for the school to improve. He has moved rapidly to tackle weak teaching and learning.
- Most students behave well in class and around the school. They get on well with each other and with the teachers and other adults, and feel safe.
- Performing arts are a notable feature of the school and some impressive lessons were observed, particularly in music.
- The new building provides an exceptional environment for learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 34 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the school’s senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team attended an assembly and made a number of short visits to lessons and other activities around the school.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, school staff, including subject leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as taking into account any written letters from parents or carers and the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked carefully at numerous documents, including checks on teaching, minutes of governors’ meetings, case studies relating to exclusions, support for vulnerable students, and policies and records relating to students’ achievement, attendance, punctuality, behaviour, safety, bullying and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

James Coyle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carol Worthington	Additional Inspector
David Cousins	Additional Inspector
Patricia Symington	Additional Inspector
Elaine Long	Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average secondary school, which serves students in Kingswood and the area around Corby.
- The vast majority of students are of White British heritage. The proportions from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below national averages.
- The proportion of students supported by school action is above average, although the proportion supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the Pupil Premium is above average (this is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals or who are in local authority care).
- The school has a specialism in arts.
- The school has arrangements with Tresham College and Rathbone for students in Key Stage 4 to attend their sites for alternative work-related courses.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that:
  - teachers insist on a high level of effort and work from students in each lesson
  - work is closely matched to the different abilities of students so it is not too hard or too easy
  - teachers check on students' progress in their learning during lessons and adjust their approach accordingly
  - students learn actively and participate fully in lessons.
- Raise achievement in the key subjects of English and mathematics by making sure that:
  - students get plenty of chance to practise their skills in speaking, reading and mental mathematics in interesting, practical contexts
  - teaching assistants have the skills they need to support the development of students' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills consistently well.
- Develop effective strategies to improve the students' attendance and reduce exclusions.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring leaders and managers make frequent, thorough checks on teaching and learning
  - fully establishing formal performance management of teachers and managers so that they are held to account for students' progress
  - using student performance data to set challenging targets for students
  - improving the range of subjects and courses available to students across the school, including

in the sixth form

- including religious studies at Key Stage 4.

■ Improve governance by:

- providing suitable training for governors in how to understand and use assessment and performance data
  - ensuring that the governing body checks on the impact of the way it spends the budget
  - consolidating the use of the 'adopted skills' audit procedures to evaluate the school's effectiveness.
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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Students start at the school with below-average attainment and all groups continue to make inadequate progress because there is too little good teaching. The support provided in developing students' skills in literacy and numeracy is not effective enough. The percentage of students at Key Stage 4 achieving five A\* to C passes at GCSE including English and mathematics is improving, but is still too low.
- The progress of students who require extra help because they are disabled or have special educational needs is inadequate and they are not closing the gap between them and similar students nationally. Students are only now having their needs properly checked when they first arrive in the school.
- The attainment of students supported by the Pupil Premium is behind those of other students nationally. The school is providing more support, such as extra tuition and individual mentoring to close the gap. There is some evidence to show that students are becoming more engaged, especially in Year 7.
- Where lessons are well planned and tasks are matched to students' ability levels, they make good progress. For example, in a Year 7 information and communication technology lesson the teacher had high expectations of the students and encouraged them to work on their own on a range of motivating tasks. As a result the students worked hard to complete their tasks, while the teacher and support assistant ensured that those who needed help were also making good progress. Such good practice is not yet common enough across all subjects.
- When given the opportunity, students are willing and able to explain their answers. Too often, however, teachers talk for too long so the students remain passive and have little chance to develop their speaking skills.
- Students' attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average. There has been an ongoing decline in the number of students gaining higher grades at A-level, although results in work-related courses are better. The school has recently changed the entry requirements for A-level study and is offering more course choices for students. However, the variations in teaching mean that students' progress requires improvement.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students attend work-related courses at Tresham College and Rathbone. This arrangement is meeting their current needs and is effective in providing some breadth to what is on offer to the students.
- Despite their inadequate achievement, a high number of students move on to education, training and employment as a result of good advice and guidance about what to do when they leave.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. It is improving in some areas, but is still not consistently good enough across the school.
- Where teaching is weakest, too little is expected of students and planning is not detailed enough to make sure activities meet the needs of all students. As a result students usually have the same work to do, regardless of their ability. Not enough checks are made on students' progress

to ensure they understand the tasks set for them. Teachers do not give students enough time for discussion or independent work.

- Teaching is improving but many teachers still do not have the expertise to develop students' literacy skills, or to support disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Training is beginning to develop teaching assistants' expertise in supporting reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills.
- Where teaching is good, planning and activities take careful account of students' previous learning and abilities. The work set makes students think about and develop their ideas. Good teaching reflects teachers' strong subject knowledge, and in such lessons they build good relationships and use challenging questioning to make students think hard and keep them on their toes.
- The online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own surveys show that parents and carers consider students to be taught well; this is at odds with the inspection findings.
- Teaching in the sixth form requires improvement, especially in mathematics and science. A new leader has started to align courses and subjects more closely to teachers' expertise. The school has yet to see the full impact of the improved use of assessment information and sharing best practice on teaching skills. Sixth form teachers hold individual tutorials, provide targets and give effective feedback to students so they know what they need to do to improve.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Behaviour and safety require improvement because, despite the actions taken by the school since the last inspection, attendance remains below average. Some students are still too often late for school and lessons, even though case studies show that the school works hard to meet their needs.
- Permanent and fixed-term exclusions are above national levels and rising. In too many cases exclusions involve vulnerable students. The school has responded by introducing an on-call behaviour management facility. A new attendance and behaviour policy has been drawn up, but this has not yet been implemented.
- Students treat each other and staff with respect. Parents and carers, staff and students say that behaviour has improved. They feel behaviour is good and that the school is a safe place for learning.
- Occasionally students become distracted in class when the teaching does not thoroughly challenge them. However, their attitudes to learning are generally good and teachers tackle any classroom disruption effectively.
- The 'bully line' and 'bully box' provide useful ways for teachers to identify issues and take action. Students are well informed about issues such as homophobic bullying or bullying over the internet. There is a school council, a 'student voice', a peer mentoring system and an effective citizenship programme. As a result, students feel the school deals with bullying effectively.
- Attendance and progress of students at courses away from the school site are tracked and checked. The school ensures students are well cared for on these courses.

- The compulsory requirement to include religious studies at Key Stage 4 has not been resolved fully since the previous inspection. Students reflect on spiritual, moral and social beliefs in assemblies, philosophy and citizenship lessons. They are encouraged to use their creativity and imagination in arts subjects, which also contribute to their cultural understanding. An interesting example was seen in a Year 13 business studies lesson based on a talent show planned and organised by the students. This made a large profit which was donated to Children in Need and helped students to reflect on the distribution of shareholder wealth in the United Kingdom.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Until the arrival of the new headteacher leaders, managers and governors did not do enough to tackle the low performance of the school. For example:
  - the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection have not been addressed
  - systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching were not thorough enough
  - not enough was done to address the students' low literacy levels
  - the use of data to create effective targets and improve learning was inadequate
  - no personalised, flexible course choices were offered to improve students' achievement.
- The new headteacher has moved swiftly to introduce a robust system to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the school and to implement changes to address the key areas for improvement. He is supported by a small, professional and dedicated senior leadership team that understands his high aspirations for all students. Other managers and teaching staff across the school are, in turn, beginning to understand and share the vision, including more involvement by the new Chair of the Governing Body. However, the improvements have yet to become established and have a sustainable impact on the quality of teaching and the outcomes for students. Consequently, the school does not demonstrate sufficient capacity to improve.
- Teaching is improving as a result of measures taken to monitor performance in line with the national 'teachers' standards' and to meet identified weaknesses. The assessment of teachers' performance is now clearly linked to outcomes for students.
- The range of subjects and courses is still not good enough to promote high levels of achievement or develop students' basic skills. The school has not maintained its focus on its arts specialism, although dance, music and drama subjects remain strengths. The school has yet to include religious education as a programme of study in Key Stage 4.
- The number of students staying on to the sixth form remains stable, despite the fact that the lack of guidance on entry results in an inadequate match between students' academic ability and the courses on offer. Recent changes have been made to the requirements for entry to A-level courses, and new combinations of courses offered include academic and work-related learning. These cater for students who require extra help or have a statement of special educational needs.
- The local authority has provided ongoing support and maintained close monitoring since the school's previous designation as a National Challenge school. It has specifically helped the school with budget management and enabled financial stability during a period of staff changes. It has helped the school to begin to make improvements to students' progress, attendance and behaviour. Despite this support, the school's overall decline since the previous inspection has not been prevented.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have not been effective in challenging the school's leaders and until recently have not had enough awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors have only just started to hold the school's leaders and the teachers to account for students' achievement. The new Chair of the Governing Body has overseen a skills audit resulting in actions to provide governors with a better awareness of assessment data relating to students' achievement and progress, and better systems to agree and monitor the budget, including the Pupil Premium funding. It is too soon to judge the impact of these actions. Governors have agreed the adoption of national 'teacher standards' as part of the school's performance management system, but are only now getting information on how the results are linked to teachers' pay and rewards. The governing body makes sure the school meets national safeguarding requirements.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122115
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406078

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1211
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	176
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Scott Hudson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 October 2010
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