

Inspection of Kingsdown School

Hyde Rd, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon SN2 7SH

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Kingsdown School say the school is ambitious for them. They know staff have high expectations for them to do well. Pupils can see how the school has improved. They say they now feel safe and can learn without disruption. Pupils say there is very little bullying, and staff tackle it well if it does occur.

Staff know pupils well. Pupils learn things in an order that helps them to make sense of their work. Teaching is helping them to know more and to remember more. This is helping them to achieve.

Pupils are proud of and feel part of the school's improvement. They work with governors, carry out pupil surveys and receive recognition for their contribution to positive behaviour in the school.

There are many opportunities for pupils to help each other. Many have become reading buddies, sports leaders, ambassadors or mentors to their fellow pupils. The school makes sure that pupils find out more about the world around them, so that they are well prepared for when they leave the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher has an ambitious vision for the school to 'champion each and every pupil'. Pupils say they feel that it does this. Leaders have set clear expectations of conduct and attitudes that encourage pupils to work hard and to achieve. Pupils say the school's expectation that they 'have a go' and persist helps them to do well.

Leaders and teachers have thought carefully about what they need to teach and when. As a result, teaching promotes effective learning and positive behaviour. Teachers use assessment well to know when to change the curriculum or review content, so they can set the right work for pupils.

Leaders have planned and are implementing a broader curriculum in key stage 3. The number of pupils who study a humanities subject and a language in key stage 4 is now growing. Leaders have set more ambitious goals for uptake of these subjects. The curriculum in years 7 and 8 is well rounded and pupils enjoy the challenges it provides.

Pupils look after their environment. The school behaviour policy balances sanctions with rewards and praise. However, a small number of pupils have not responded as well and are over-represented in the number of fixed-term exclusions. Leaders have taken a robust stance on absence, while rewarding pupils for good attendance. This has had an impact, including for disadvantaged pupils or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils show respect and tolerance for one another and people who may choose to live their lives differently or hold different beliefs. Leaders adapt the content of the personal development curriculum in response to national and local issues. This helps pupils to be well informed. The school's careers guidance is helping all pupils to make appropriate choices about their future.

Leaders support pupils to develop a love of reading. The phonics programme for pupils who have found reading difficult is helping them to develop their reading skills and to enjoy reading.

The school provides well for pupils with SEND. They are now achieving more. The Autistic Spectrum Condition Centre provides effective support for pupils, so that they can work alongside their peers in the school. These pupils attend well. Pupils with SEND complete their programmes of study and go on to further education or apprenticeships.

Staff enjoy working at the school and they feel well supported by the headteacher and leaders. They believe the school has greatly improved and say they are proud to work there. Governors know the school well. They visit regularly to speak with staff and pupils. The trust supports the school well in pursuing its ambition for all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils and staff say they feel safe and secure in the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They understand how to minimise risks.

Safeguarding leaders have put robust systems in place. They work with local community groups to develop knowledge of the risks for pupils in the local area and to support their safety beyond the school.

The safeguarding team secures the right support for vulnerable pupils, so that their chances of securing academic success are not affected. The team secures early help promptly to support pupils and families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have made considerable inroads into developing the curriculum. However, there is still more to do. Leaders should ensure that their plans for a broader and richer curriculum are implemented effectively in all subjects. They should help all pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, to make ambitious choices.
- Leaders do not make consistently good use of the key information the school holds. This can prevent them from identifying and analysing behaviour patterns

that may lead to fixed-term exclusions. A deeper analysis of the information would enable leaders to identify the impact of their systems. This would help them to support pupils at risk of repeated exclusion.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	145139
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	10127543
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	956
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Emma Leigh-Bennett
Website	www.kingsdownschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Kingsdown School is a member of the River Learning Trust.
- The school uses alternative provision at Swindon College, and at Education Other Than at School, which includes the Oakfield project and the Riverside Centre.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the chief executive officer and chair of the local governing board, the trust support and challenge partner, and governors. We also met with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: English, modern foreign languages, mathematics and science. We visited lessons, met with staff, looked at pupils' work, talked with pupils, interviewed curriculum leaders and examined documentation.
- We met with the designated safeguarding lead and the child protection officer. We talked with a range of staff about safeguarding training. We examined

documentation and school records.

- We spoke with pupils to discuss their views about the school. We considered 118 responses to Ofsted’s online survey Parent View and 63 responses from the staff survey.

Inspection team

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