

Inspection of Kings' School

Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire SO22 5PN

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 10 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel incredibly proud to be a part of the Kings' School community. They recognise the very high expectations of their achievement and behaviour. They work hard to meet these, knowing that they have the full support of staff.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are taught to do 'the right thing at the right time for the right reasons'. This ethos is clear to see around the school. Pupils treat each other with high levels of respect. They feel confident that any bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively, and that this has been strengthened by new systems introduced in the last year. Pupils know that there is somebody they can go to if they need help or feel worried.

The exceptional range of extra-curricular activities available to pupils embodies the school's aim of 'discovering brilliance in everyone'. It includes everything from rugby and hockey, to crochet and watercolour painting. The offer is highly inclusive, and there are ways for all pupils to get involved. One parent reflected the views of many, commenting: 'Kings cultivates well-rounded individuals. The diverse extra-curricular programme, coupled with a strong sense of community, contributes to a holistic educational experience.'

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

The school provides a broad range of subjects for pupils to study, and the curriculum in each is highly ambitious. Decisions about what pupils will learn and in what order are considered carefully. Appropriate links are made between subjects and across year groups, resulting in a coherent approach. Teachers draw on their impressive subject knowledge to inspire and motivate pupils. They make skilled use of assessment to check how pupils are learning and adapt their teaching if needed.

Overall, pupils achieve very well at this school, and this can be seen in published examination outcomes. However, the same is not true for disadvantaged pupils, particularly those eligible for free school meals. Leaders have already identified this as a priority and implemented a range of strategies across the school. Although still in the early stages, the initial impact of this work is evident.

There have been recent changes to the way that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and supported. These systems are understood and used consistently well by teachers. Pupils who need support with reading and mathematics are identified quickly in Year 7, and a range of interventions are used to help them catch up quickly with their peers.

Pupils appreciate the enormous range of ways to get involved in shaping their school. These include taking on leadership roles and participating in pupil voice. They know that their views on the school are taken seriously. They benefit from opportunities to debate, encouraging them to become thoughtful and critical thinkers. In personal, social, health and economic education, pupils study a broad

and relevant curriculum that is tailored precisely to the school's context. Pupils draw on their learning in this area when reflecting on concepts such as individual liberty and diversity in modern Britain. This work, alongside a highly effective careers programme, ensures that pupils are prepared exceptionally well for their next steps in education and in life.

Virtually all pupils demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to their education. They attend school regularly and show impressive dedication and commitment to their studies. When pupils struggle, the school recognises this quickly and puts in place highly effective support. This includes close working between education and pastoral staff to eliminate barriers to learning and attendance.

The school's leaders, including the governing body, have a very accurate understanding of their strengths and areas for further development. Staff are proud to work at this school and appreciate opportunities to benefit from high-quality professional development. Leaders recognise the importance of making sure the excellent opportunities and education available at this school have a positive impact on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. In accordance with the school's motto, 'una laborantes' (working together), they have ensured that all staff are committed to this shared aim.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum over time has not had the desired impact for disadvantaged pupils, particularly those eligible for free school meals. These pupils do not achieve well in published examination results. The school has developed extensive plans to address this, and it should now ensure that these plans are implemented fully. Leaders, including governors, should be rigorous in monitoring the impact of this work.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	116468
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10317985
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,795
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Priestley
Headteacher	James Adams
Website	www.kings-winchester.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's headteacher was appointed in January 2021.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with physical disabilities. There are currently six pupils in this provision.
- The school uses 20 alternative providers, 15 of which are unregistered.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with a range of senior leaders about their roles, including the school's headteacher. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography, music and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys. They took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments.

Inspection team

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