



King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103554
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276951
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mark Sims HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to inspect any school in England. The inspection is to be treated as a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Grammar (selective)	School address	Vicarage Road
School category	Community		Kings Heath
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Birmingham, West Midlands B14 7QJ
Gender of pupils	Boys	Telephone number	0121 4443188
Number on roll	699	Fax number	0121 4412796
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Beeston
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2000	Headteacher	Mr J V Darby

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. The inspector met with the headteacher, pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Two hundred and sixty-five parents responded to the questionnaire seeking their views about the school.

Description of the school

King Edward VI is a small secondary school with a flourishing sixth form of nearly 200 pupils. It is situated in Kings Heath, south of Birmingham city centre, but draws its pupils from a diversity of wards across the city. Over half of the school population is from minority ethnic backgrounds, although no-one is at an early stage of learning English. Pupils join the school with skills well above average for their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very low, as is the proportion claiming free school meals. The school is heavily oversubscribed and consequently mobility rates are very low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school, not simply as a result of the high standards it achieves but because of the well-rounded educational experience it offers to all its pupils.

In many ways, the school starts from an advantageous position. Pupils are selected on ability and are highly motivated. Parents are very supportive. The school could rest on its laurels and still get good results, but instead it puts all its energies into ensuring pupils make very good progress and get the best possible results. This is achieved through consistently good and often outstanding teaching.

More important for the pupils and many of the staff is what happens outside the classroom. When asked what they enjoy most about the school, pupils highlighted the unrivalled opportunity for extra-curricular activities. There is a seemingly endless list of sports, clubs and societies to join and pupils do so with relish and enthusiasm. Rather than distract from their studies, these activities complement and enhance their academic performance.

Parents have an overwhelmingly positive view of how well their children are cared for and rightly recognise that pupils' personal development is an outstanding feature. The support and guidance provided by the teachers and support staff is very highly regarded by parents and pupils. Time and again pupils spoke of teachers who had put themselves out to support and guide them. The admiration and respect pupils have for their well-qualified and committed staff is something the school can be proud of.

The successes of the school are also attributable to the inspirational leadership and management. Leaders know where they are strong and where they have more to do. The governors also make sure the school is not sitting back and they provide challenge when necessary.

The school knows there is more to do. There is more progress to make in monitoring all aspects of school life to ensure all its different groups of pupils fully participate. The teaching workforce does not reflect the diversity within the school population or the local community. Given how well the school knows itself and its relentless drive for improvement, it has the capacity to go on getting better.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Pupils do very well in the sixth form as a result of outstanding teaching and their motivation to succeed. This is reflected in the large number of pupils who stay on in the sixth form or who join from other schools. The school will go to almost any length to ensure its pupils study the options they have chosen. They will put on additional courses where feasible and when the timetable is a constraint, seek partnerships with the neighbouring girls' school. The increasing popularity of the sixth form means the school is having to strengthen the leadership capacity of the sixth form so that it can monitor more closely provision, particularly teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The school has many advantages in that pupils enter the school already doing very well. Pupils are highly motivated to succeed and have very supportive parents. That said, the school rises superbly to the challenge of building on high levels of attainment. By the time pupils take their tests at the end of Key Stage 3 they have made over and above what would be their expected progress. Their attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form is well above the national average so that overall throughout their time in school they make very good progress. Higher-attaining pupils do exceptionally well, as do different groups of pupils although, unusually in the most recent tests, pupils for whom English is not their first language did not make quite such good progress as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development in the school is outstanding. The school has worked hard to ensure pupils maintain a healthy lifestyle in their sport and diet, although some pupils admit they are not so keen on the healthy food now on offer. Pupils readily acknowledge the wide range of opportunities they have to participate in sport.

All parents who responded agreed that the pupils are well cared for at the school. Hardly any serious incidents between pupils occur. Pupils themselves were full of praise for the atmosphere in the school and remarked how well pupils of different backgrounds and faiths get on together. Pupils clearly enjoy school. They talked with enthusiasm about the wide range of activities on offer, which they rate of more significance than the academic standards they achieve. Their high levels of attendance and low levels of exclusions confirm this is a place where pupils want to be. As one parent said:

My son is disappointed if there's a holiday

Pupils grasp the chances they are given to organise charity events, participate in the school council, edit or contribute to the school newspaper and work as volunteers in the wider community. The academic success which pupils achieve sets them up well for their future education and career. The academic is balanced with social and business experience so that when they leave school pupils are ready for the wider world.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Teaching and learning is consistently good and much of it is outstanding. Teachers are well qualified and experienced and this equips them to set challenging work for pupils, some of whom are amongst the highest achievers in the country. The quality

of pupils' presentations is so high that one very experienced teacher commented in a lesson,

I have learnt something today

Teachers are good at developing pupils' speaking skills in lessons. They give them time to express their opinions, debate and ask searching questions. Pupils also appraise each other's work critically and constructively. Information and communication technology is used well in lessons to support learning. Relations between pupils and between teachers and pupils are of the highest order. Teachers always expect the very best in standards and attitude and pupils respond well to this. Occasionally teaching does not give pupils the chance to show what they have learnt when a lesson is recapped.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The range of opportunities pupils have in and out of the classroom is simply breathtaking. At times it is hard to see how pupils can fit so much in and still do so well in their exams. The curriculum gives pupils a good balance with the chance to study three sciences, two languages and two humanities subjects up to Key Stage 4. Despite the small size of the school nearly all pupils get to do their chosen options in the sixth form. This is helped by making arrangements with the neighbouring girls' school when necessary. The curriculum also reflects the diversity of the school and the community, particularly in religious education, history and English. There is potential to make more of the other languages pupils can speak at home.

All activities are taken on to the best possible standard. Drama and music productions and a wide range of societies and clubs on top of the sports activities ensure life is never dull at the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils and parents all report the same message that pupils are very well cared for. Parents praised the roles carried out by pastoral staff. According to pupils:

Teachers go out of their way to help us....They are always there to talk to... always giving freely of their own time

This is shown in the time they give to extra-curricular activities and trips but also in the academic guidance and support offered. Targets are never less than very challenging. There are homework clubs at lunchtime or after school, as well as help with applications and mock interviews for older pupils. The school has started to address the needs of a small group of pupils who join the school as high achievers but experience some difficulties where English is not their first language. This is an area

the school is seeking to develop. The small numbers of pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by a learning mentor. Older pupils mentor younger pupils very well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 2

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher provides a strategic vision for the school. This is backed up by a senior management team which has a secure knowledge of the strengths of the school and what areas need to be developed. School leaders are very good at looking at themselves critically to improve. In no way could they be regarded as complacent simply because the examination results are so good. The governing body keeps the leadership team on its toes by fulfilling its role very effectively to challenge as well as support the school. Subject leaders play their full part in monitoring provision within their subject area.

The impact of the school's specialist school status in science and humanities can be seen in the way that these subjects have been enhanced. The local community, particularly nearby primary schools, has benefited both in terms of resources and support.

The school knows that the leadership of the sixth form is good, but it needs strengthening to respond to the demand for more places and the need to monitor provision more closely, particularly teaching and learning. The school is now monitoring the attainment of different groups and has more to do to extend its monitoring further to all aspects of school life; for example, the teaching workforce does not reflect the diversity of the pupils or local area. A small minority of parents and pupils think that not enough account is taken of their views. The school has worked hard through the school council and parental questionnaires to elicit their views, but will need to respond further to those who remain unconvinced.

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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?	1	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

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	1	
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	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	2

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	
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 are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As many of you will know I paid the school an inspection visit this week. Having met a number of you during the course of the day, I thought you might like to know a summary of the outcome. You have said how much you appreciate all the school has to offer you and rightly so. You go to an outstanding school where not only are standards very high but you experience the widest possible range of additional activities in and out of school.

You came to King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Boys because you did well in your primary school but throughout your time here you have continued to make good progress in your studies. The teachers, of whom you speak so highly, make sure you all receive challenging work which ensures you do as well as you possibly can. Your use of ICT in lessons is very impressive.

Your behaviour and attitude to learning is a credit to you and the school. You and your parents have commented on how much you enjoy school and feel safe in an environment where you get on with each other so well. You have also said how much you appreciate the extra work your teachers do concerning after-school activities and the support and guidance for your studies. You have a wide range of courses to follow, which gives you a good choice when you come to consider options.

Your leaders have a very clear view of the strengths of the school, but are also keen to go on making improvements, by increasing the leadership team in the sixth form and analysing more closely whether all groups of pupils play an equal part in different aspect of school life.

Can I take this opportunity to thank you again for the opportunity to meet some of you and wish you every success in your future careers.