

Kenilworth School and Sports College

Leyes Lane, Kenilworth, CV8 2DA

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Governors, senior leaders and staff are fully committed to the school's stated aim of 'Achieving Excellence'.
- Academic standards have risen year-on-year and are well above national averages. Students make excellent progress from their starting points and achieve outstandingly well.
- Senior leaders are exceptionally rigorous in checking students' progress and the quality of teaching and intervening when necessary.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now outstanding. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge that they use to plan lessons that are very well matched to the ability of their students.
- Excellent relationships between staff and students are a key strength and result in confident students and a highly positive climate for learning.
- The behaviour of students is exemplary. They participate enthusiastically in their learning and behave maturely around the school. Consequently they feel safe and are safe at school.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students make excellent progress as a result of inspirational teaching and well-targeted support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 57 lessons, of which six were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to other lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, governors and groups of students. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also spoke with many students informally, in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information showing students' progress over time, school improvement plans, monitoring documentation and records related to behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of 139 responses from the Parent View website, and the questionnaires completed for the inspection by 51 staff. They also considered the results of surveys of students and parents and carers carried out by the school.

Inspection team

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Deborah James, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Patrick Walsh | Additional Inspector |
| Hugh Betterton | Additional Inspector |
| Wendy Davies | Additional Inspector |
| Lin Bartlett | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average secondary school with a sixth form.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or those who have a parent in the armed forces, is much lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is similar to the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also similar to national averages.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.
- The school provides a part-time alternative course in an Equine Facilitated Learning programme organised through the Coventry Integrated Disability Service.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make the teaching even better by:
 - ensuring that all teachers provide students with high quality written feedback that gives clear advice on how to improve and that they allow students time to respond to this advice
 - providing opportunities in all lessons for students to work independently through group work, discussions and independent research.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students begin at the school with attainment levels that are above average. By the end of Key Stage 4, the great majority gain five or more GCSE passes at grades A*-C including in English and mathematics, with many of those passes at the very highest grades.
- The school has been successful in narrowing the gaps in attainment between certain groups of students and their peers. For example, although those known to be eligible for the pupil premium attained a little below the Year 11 group as a whole in 2012, they did much better than similar students nationally. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is very strong and the considerable additional one-to-one support put in place for these students this year is going a long way towards closing the gap entirely.
- Students, including those eligible for the pupil premium, make excellent progress in a broad range of subjects. The school regularly assesses each student, and this information is used by heads of department and heads of year to decide where to place additional support. This, alongside outstanding teaching, has been very successful in improving achievement.
- Early entry for GCSE mathematics has been used to help a small group of middle-ability students gain confidence in examination techniques. Students who take the examinations early continue to study mathematics, aiming for a higher grade at a later date. Students' skills in numeracy are very well developed and used highly effectively in other subjects.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make exceptionally good progress. This is because teachers provide tasks and activities that allow these students to do well, often with highly effective support from other adults in the classroom. Progress and achievement in the alternative course in the Equine Facilitated Learning programme is equally good.
- Students are given regular opportunities to develop their reading, writing and speaking skills in many lessons. In several lessons, inspectors saw students being asked to read and then explain texts to their peers. This helped them to increase their understanding of the new information.
- Students participate enthusiastically in lessons and frequently ask their teachers questions to clarify and extend their understanding.
- In the sixth form, students achieve grades at A and AS level that are well above the national average. They make excellent progress from their high starting points. The small amount of variation in outcomes between subjects is being addressed and outcomes are rapidly improving.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers' planning is highly detailed, clearly explaining the point of the work at the start of the lesson to capture students' interest and then matching tasks extremely well to students' abilities to make sure they make substantial progress. Questioning is precise and sharply focused on checking students' understanding.
- Teaching is underpinned by teachers' high expectations and a commitment to enabling students

to use and understand complex subject specific language. For example, in a Year 8 English lesson careful structuring of the learning enabled students to analyse a film extract using highly technical language.

- In most lessons students have excellent opportunities to work independently or with peers on challenging activities. However, occasionally teachers lead students through their work in small steps, giving them little opportunity to learn from their mistakes or develop resilience.
- In the best lessons, humour is well-used to motivate students and a sense of fun permeates the learning. For example, in a Year 10 chemistry lesson, the teacher played a harmonica for a short 'pass the parcel' game to decide who asked and answered questions to summarise learning.
- During lessons, teachers talk to students, giving detailed feedback on how to improve their work. Marking is usually very regular and thorough and the impact of this on students' progress is evident in their written work, especially in the sixth form. However, this highly effective practice is not entirely consistent across the whole school.
- In the Parent View survey, parents and carers expressed high levels of confidence in the quality of teaching and the progress made by their children.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Teachers have consistently high expectations of their students and use a range of teaching strategies to ensure students think deeply about concepts so they become embedded in their understanding. Peer assessment is used very effectively. For example, one student talked about her work and how she achieved her grades and other students questioned her and discussed how they could use her ideas to improve their own work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school reflects the school's high expectations regarding student conduct. Students rise to the expectation that good behaviour is the norm.
- Students have an extremely positive attitude to learning and treat each other with respect and courtesy. They enjoy opportunities to take on additional responsibility, for example as prefects or members of the school council. Students show considerable initiative in organising charitable fundraising activities.
- A school-wide system for rewards and sanctions allows senior leaders to carefully monitor all aspects of behaviour and is highly effective in ensuring that the very small group of students in danger of becoming disaffected is rapidly identified and supported. In such ways, the school helps to make sure that all students have an equal chance to succeed. Exclusion rates are extremely low and are falling.
- Attendance has been improving year-on-year and is above the national average. The proportion of students who are persistently absent from school is very low.
- All groups in the school feel safe and have a clear understanding of what constitutes unsafe situations. Students are fully aware of the different forms of bullying and all incidents are fully investigated and carefully logged. Students also know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- The school has invested in considerable support for careers guidance for students in the main

school and the sixth form. All students receive excellent advice on the choice of careers and pathways open to them. A parent wrote of the 'invaluable support' in ensuring her daughter was able to select an 'appropriate individualised curriculum' in her Year 9 options.

- All safeguarding procedures, including those involving training for child protection are fully in place.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, has an uncompromising ambition for the development of the school. Monitoring and evaluation are highly effective, making good use of systematic subject reviews that include classroom observation and scrutiny of students' work. The outcomes of these reviews lead to sharply focused actions for improvement.
- Senior leaders have driven a programme of staff training that has led to considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Professional development is well matched to both whole school and specific teachers' needs. It has had a marked impact in improving the provision for students, hence improving overall achievement. The school manages teachers' performance exceptionally well, with all teachers expected to complete a 'lesson study' that helps them analyse their own teaching strengths and weaknesses.
- Communication with parents was a key issue at the time of the last inspection. This has been rectified by the production of a high quality weekly newsletter that ensures parents have regular updates on all aspects of the life of the school.
- The school made good use of local authority advisors to review and improve provision in the sixth form following the last inspection. Since then the local authority has maintained just 'light touch' support, keeping a careful watch on achievement data.
- The range of taught courses meets students' abilities and aspirations well. Provision at Key Stage 3 has been reviewed and adapted to ensure students make rapid progress and are well prepared for GCSE courses. There has been an increasing focus on developing literacy skills, including a Read-On programme to encourage reading for pleasure.
- In Key Stage 4 students are helped to make choices towards different pathways depending on their interests and ability levels. The range of available subjects and courses has undergone considerable change to ensure they motivate and engage all students. The breadth of provision is further enhanced by an extensive range of lunchtime and after school opportunities, including those in sport, the arts, and revision support for older students prior to examinations.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. It provides them with clear guidance on moral issues in lessons and tutor time and a wide range of opportunities to reflect on a wide range of issues and ideas about the world around them.
- The head of sixth form has been highly effective in ensuring the sixth form students have regular and rich opportunities to enhance and extend their personal development. Students enthusiastically take up the many opportunities to demonstrate leadership qualities, volunteer in the local community, organise charity fundraising activities and support younger students.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors demonstrate a great commitment to the school and bring a wide range of personal skills and professional expertise. They ensure that statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding students, are met. Governors are committed to ensuring that every student receives excellent teaching and fully support the headteacher in developing the performance of teachers so that they get the best out of all students. Governors and the school maintain a close link between pay and performance when making decisions about pay rises. Members of the finance committee play a key role in deciding school spending priorities and understand, for example, the importance of carefully spending pupil premium funds to close the achievement gap for eligible students. Governors receive regular updates in governing body meetings on the school's performance and scrutinise this carefully, requesting further information as necessary. They have developed an excellent handbook for new governors, giving useful advice and guidance and explaining clearly the role of a governor.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 125747 |
| Local authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 403582 |

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

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| Type of school | Comprehensive |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 11–19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1750 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 422 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Shirley Whiting |
| Headteacher | Hayden Abbott |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 February 2008 |
| Telephone number | 01926 859421 |
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