

King Edward VI High School

Westway, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 9YJ

Inspection dates

29–30 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The proportion of pupils attaining good GCSE grades at the end of Year 11 has been below the national average for too long and there is little sign of improvement. Senior leaders and governors have not acted swiftly enough to address this.
- Many pupils underachieve or do not make good progress from their starting points because of teachers' low expectations.
- The differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others nationally are wide and show little sign of reducing.
- Teaching is too weak to improve pupils' outcomes quickly. Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to make sure that learning activities are matched to pupils' varying needs and abilities.
- Pupils, including the most able, are not challenged sufficiently in their learning. This prevents them from reaching the standards they are capable of in their GCSE examinations.
- Staff do not understand or follow the direction given by senior leaders. This hinders the ability to improve the school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is not accurate. As a result, there is an over-generous appraisal by leaders and governors of the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.
- Leaders have not ensured that agreed policies, such as for behaviour management, are applied consistently by all staff. This has resulted in varying standards in some pupils' behaviour.
- The sixth form requires improvement because students do not make good progress. Leaders do not measure accurately the quality of teaching and the progress made by students.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are cared for well in school. Their overall attendance is above average.
- There are examples of good and effective practice in school. Some teachers know how to get the best from pupils and when this happens, pupils make sustained progress.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate quickly the outcomes for pupils by improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school by:
 - raising teachers' expectations, so that they realise that all groups of pupils are capable of more challenging work
 - insisting that teachers provide work that engages different groups of pupils so that they remain motivated, behave well and want to learn more
 - ensuring that teachers take full account of pupils' knowledge and understanding when they are planning lessons so that pupils, including the most able and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are challenged and supported to do their best.
- Improve leadership and management in the main school so that all leaders are effective in driving up standards and all pupils make rapid progress, by:
 - evaluating rigorously the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that rapid improvements can be made across all subjects
 - making sure that everyone understands and uses the school's assessment process so that teachers' timely progress information informs lesson planning
 - making sure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to reduce the difference in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally
 - continuing to develop governance so that its challenge to leaders is robust and results in pupils achieving well
 - making sure that all teachers use the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Improve students' outcomes in the sixth form by strengthening the effectiveness of leaders in ensuring that teaching meets the needs of students at their different stages of learning.

It is recommended that newly qualified teachers are not appointed by the school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Since the last inspection, leaders and governors have failed to make the necessary improvements to provide pupils with a good standard of education. They have not acted quickly enough to address the deterioration in the school's performance. Although there have been some recent improvements, outcomes for pupils have declined overall, with little sign of improving and therefore standards remain too low.
- Leaders have not done enough to improve poor teaching to enable pupils to catch up for lost ground. The roles of senior and middle leaders have been revised so that they can become more effective in their work. However, this change has not had time to make a positive difference.
- Leaders and teachers had an inaccurate understating of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. As a result, senior leaders incorrectly estimated that results should have been better than they were, and better than in previous years.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is not robust enough and hides the true nature of pupils' slow progress. Improvements that have been made have not yet had time to show any impact on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils.
- Leaders have not promoted an ethos of high expectations for staff and pupils. Consequently, teachers' planning often lacks challenge for pupils of all levels of ability and sometimes stifles pupils' aspirations for their own learning.
- Subject leaders have not been effective in addressing underachievement. They have not ensured that teachers use assessment information well enough and this has resulted in too much poorly planned learning which has not met pupils' needs. This is particularly so for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A newly appointed coordinator is monitoring and evaluating this more closely, but changes made have not yet had enough time to impact on their progress.
- Despite identification in the last inspection that the most able pupils were not doing as well as they should, leaders have failed to address this in a sustained way. This group of pupils are still underachieving, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders and governors have evaluated the impact of additional funding in improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. However, this has not yet resulted in a reduction in the difference in outcomes for these pupils compared with those of others nationally. Disadvantaged pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils do not achieve well.
- Staffing changes in the main school have contributed to the slow progress being made by all pupils because of the variable quality of teaching and learning they experience.
- Although the support given by external consultants since the last inspection has been welcomed by staff, it has not been effective in securing better outcomes overall.

- The headteacher has dealt with a number of challenging issues in school with determination and tenacity. He has introduced internal processes and information systems to check on improving practice and provide more accurate evaluations. These systems are slowly beginning to make a difference, but there has not been enough time for them to be embedded sufficiently or used effectively enough by all leaders and teachers to secure rapid improvement.
- The literacy skills of some pupils entering the school are low. However, the skills of pupils in Years 7 and 8 are improving over time as a result of a catch-up programme to develop their ability to read well.
- The curriculum is balanced and pupils feel that the choice of subjects available to them is appropriate to their needs. However, the curriculum has not supported pupils to make good progress. Pupils enjoy opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom through activities in sport, music and drama.
- Leaders have created a culture of safety in school and pupils know whom they can turn to if they need help and advice. Parents who responded to the online questionnaire agree. Pupils know how to keep safe when using computers. Form-tutor activities and assemblies help to raise pupils' awareness of dealing with extremism. These activities also support pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well through displays around the school, activities in lessons and assembly themes.
- Pupils receive effective guidance to help them make the right choices for the next stage of their learning through specific advice in school and opportunities to engage with local employers, colleges and the Stafford Sixth Form Collegiate.

Governance of the school

- Over time, governors have not held leaders sufficiently to account for school improvement. Although their effectiveness is starting to get better as a result of reviewing their processes, they still do not have sufficiently robust procedures for checking and challenging the school's performance.
- Until recently, governors have not been sufficiently well informed about the quality of provision and standards at the school as a result of leaders' inaccurate evaluation of the school's effectiveness. They now have a better understanding of the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on pupils' progress.
- Governors have supported the headteacher in the changes that he is making so that other school leaders can be more effective in bringing about the necessary improvements.
- Governors have ensured that their training in safeguarding, safer recruitment and tackling issues related to radicalisation and extremism is up to date. They are managing a challenging financial situation to ensure that urgent improvement can happen to improve outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff, at all levels, are trained in safer recruitment and strategies to tackle the risks of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders create a culture within the school where staff show a clear understanding of their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Parents and pupils who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire agree.
- Staff and governors are aware of the published requirements for keeping children safe in education and the culture of safeguarding is promoted throughout the curriculum, with issues covered also in assemblies and form-tutor time.
- Procedures for checking staff recruitment are robust so that all adults are checked for their suitability to work with children. School leaders quickly identify any pupil at risk of harm and the school engages appropriately with external partners and local community agencies as necessary. Leaders have systems in place for checking visitors to the school site and to ensure the safe movement of sixth-form students to other institutions.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment varies too much across the school with too much that is having an inadequate impact. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics where rates of progress are still below those that are expected nationally. Over time, teaching has failed to ensure that pupils make the progress they should to secure good results.
- Leaders and governors acknowledge that the quality of teaching in recent years has not been good enough. Improvements are happening, but these are too slow, especially to make sure that pupils in key stage 4 make up lost ground.
- Too often, teachers have low expectations of pupils in some subjects. When this is the case, they do not plan lessons effectively to ensure that pupils make the progress they should, or are motivated to try harder and do their best.
- Teachers are sometimes too ready to accept a low standard of work from pupils that does not reflect their true abilities. The most able pupils are not always challenged enough to do their best. Too often, their work fails to encourage them to think deeply and, as a result, pupils make slow progress over time.
- Teachers do not use progress information collected by the school effectively to target particular groups of pupils and narrow differences between different groups of pupils.
- Sometimes, teaching does not interest or enthuse pupils and a minority of pupils lose interest and disrupt the learning of others. This is particularly the case in classes for middle- and lower ability pupils.
- A number of pupils continue to have poor literacy skills. A focused programme of improving pupils' reading skills and enjoyment of reading is beginning to make some difference.
- Leaders have introduced new assessment procedures in key stage 3. These are at an early stage of development and it is not yet possible to assess any impact.

- Some teachers in school have high expectations, engage pupils and challenge them to think deeply and work hard. This was seen by inspectors in design technology and mathematics, with evidence of positive impact over time. However, the school has not used the effective practice that exists in the school to bring about a consistent improvement in all subject areas.
- Currently, the use of additional support given to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is more effective than before because new leadership has ensured that staff have a greater understanding of pupils' particular learning and emotional needs. However, over time, teaching has not matched these pupils' needs well enough and there remains much to do.
- The quality of the relationships between pupils and staff is usually good and additional adults in classrooms help with this aspect as well as, increasingly, with helping pupils to remain on track with their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The supportive culture in the school promotes pupils' well-being, including their emotional, mental and physical welfare.
- The school's focus on British values is linked closely to the school's personal, social and health education programme, which is delivered through form-tutor time and daily assemblies. Pupils appreciate their school community in which all are valued and respected.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe. They understand risk and have a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including bullying done through social media, the internet and mobile phone technology. They say that there is very little bullying in school and express confidence that should any happen, it would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils can identify an adult they could go to if they had any worries or concerns.
- Pupils are given good, impartial careers information, advice and guidance and are supported well to move on to the next stage of their education. This is despite pupils' poor outcomes.
- The school anticipates and manages any risk that pupils may be exposed to, including radicalisation or extremism, and monitors this carefully.
- There are opportunities in the school for pupils to take on responsibilities, such as on the school council, so that they can appreciate the importance of listening to other pupils' views. Students in the sixth form lead on this work well with younger pupils.
- The few pupils who receive their education away from the school site are monitored carefully to check on their attendance and progress. There is regular contact between the school, the alternative providers and parents. Evidence shows that these pupils make progress in line with their abilities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because some low-level disruption happens in a few lessons, as was seen during this inspection and is a typical experience for some pupils. This kind of behaviour interferes with and prevents pupils making the progress they need to make. Pupils also say that some teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- Behaviour is worse when the quality of teaching is weak and teachers' expectations of pupils are low.
- Pupils say that behaviour around the school has improved and is managed well by staff. Inspectors saw evidence of both of these aspects at break- and lunchtime, and as pupils moved around the building between lessons. Pupils generally interact well with each other at these times and during most lessons.
- The rate of fixed-term exclusions for poor behaviour is below the national average for all schools nationally.
- Attendance rates overall are above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and this supports pupils' comments that they enjoy coming to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes are inadequate because too many pupils have failed to make the progress they should and this has been the case for too long. Although some small signs of improvement are evident, this is not enough to enable pupils to catch up for lost ground. Pupils continue to underachieve.
- Pupils join the school with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are in line with or below the national average, but the proportion of all pupils who left school in 2016 with five GCSEs at grades A*–C was lower than average. A legacy of poor teaching and staffing difficulties had an impact on this underachievement.
- The most able pupils underachieve. They do not make the progress they should from their starting points. Teachers' low expectations contribute to the fact that not enough of these pupils are making the progress they should.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is inadequate. The difference in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils, including disadvantaged pupils who are most-able, and that of others nationally in 2016 was wide, as has been the case previously. These differences are not reducing quickly enough. Leaders recognise this and have now re-allocated additional funding to support pupils in a number of ways. However, these improvements have not had time to have sufficient impact on the progress these pupils make.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have not previously made the progress of which they were capable. However, this group of pupils in school now are better supported, but it is too early to see any impact on improving outcomes.

- The school's progress information for current key stage 4 pupils shows slowly improving trends. Similarly, at key stage 3, the school has used external systems to assess pupils from their key stage 2 starting points. However, progress information is not used consistently in lessons to ensure that all groups of pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils are encouraged to read and there is a reading programme in place for pupils at key stage 3. This is helping particularly to improve pupils' confidence and literacy skills and contributes to some improvement in their progress.
- Support to accelerate pupils' reading skills is beginning to have a positive impact. Evidence shows that pupils in Years 7 and 8 had made gains in their reading ages as a result of this support.
- Pupils educated away from the school are monitored by a senior leader, and the school's information shows that they make adequate progress in line with their ability.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Students in the sixth form have not made good progress. Their outcomes have been too varied since the last inspection, although the government's interim minimum standards for this phase of education have been met.
- Leaders have not monitored well the quality of 16 to 19 study programmes. As a result, students are not sufficiently challenged to do well.
- Teaching in the sixth form lacks challenge in some subjects and the most able students are not fully stretched and successful in attaining the highest grades. However, students say that they receive good support from teachers, and relationships between teachers and students are strong.
- In the last year, all students who had not previously attained a grade C or above in English and mathematics at GCSE were successful in doing so. Similar students currently in the school are also developing their skills well.
- The retention of students from Year 12 to Year 13 is lower than the national average. However, the sixth-form curriculum has been reviewed to make sure that it better meets students' current needs and aspirations. Students are able to diversify and enrich their subject choices by taking courses in partner schools within the Stafford Sixth Form Collegiate. This is leading to increasing success for these students.
- Leaders have planned an individual study programme that generally prepares students well for the next stage of their learning. Opportunities for students to develop their personal, social and employability skills are good. Impartial careers guidance helps students to develop realistic plans for the future and strong numbers go on to apprenticeships or further and higher education studies.
- Students benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities in school. This contributes to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students behave with maturity and show confidence and independence. Students' attendance in the sixth form is lower than that of pupils in the main school. Leaders are monitoring this carefully.

- Students say that the sixth form is a safe place and that bullying does not happen. Leaders ensure that student movement between this school and other providers is safe as a result of risk assessments that have taken place.

School details

Unique reference number	124445
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10020029

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of students in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	720
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Witts
Headteacher	Jason Christey
Telephone number	01785 258546
Website	www.kevi.org.uk
Email address	headteacher@kevi.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 October 2014

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and has a sixth form.
- The headteacher became the substantive headteacher just over 12 months ago. He was acting headteacher at the time of the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.

- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- A very small number of pupils attend an alternative provision at The Hollies in Stafford and at Stoke City Football Club Academy.
- The school's sixth form provides a range of academic courses which are taught on site, or with other providers within the Stafford Sixth Form Collegiate.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited a range of lessons in order to evaluate the quality of pupils' learning and the use of assessment. Many of these visits were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was sampled in lessons and through formal reviews of work in various subjects at key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own information on the progress of current pupils, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to keeping pupils safe. Inspectors also looked at the minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Meetings were held with pupils across Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form, as well as contact at break- and lunchtime. An inspector also met with members of the governing body.
- Discussions took place with senior leaders, subject leaders and staff responsible for the pastoral care and guidance of pupils. An inspector also had discussions with education advisers who had supported the school since the last inspection.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading in Year 7 and Year 8 as part of their lessons and separately.
- Inspectors evaluated the 37 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the free-text facility as well as those who made direct contact with inspectors. They also took account of the 38 responses of staff and of 84 pupils who completed their respective Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

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Rob Steed	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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