

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Kingswood Secondary Academy

Gainsborough Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 9NS

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 March 2025

Outcome

Kingswood Secondary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of academy is Matthew Gamble. This school is part of Greenwood Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Wayne Norrie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christine Hall.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ambition and high expectations underpin the positive and inclusive culture at Kingswood Secondary Academy. Staff prioritise raising aspirations and reducing barriers so that all pupils can be successful. Most pupils achieve well and move on to appropriate colleges, universities or places of work.

Pupils are inspired by the school's 'RISE' values to demonstrate respect, independence, service to the community and empathy. They demonstrate these values keenly to earn points that they can exchange for items from the 'RISE store'. Around school, pupils get along well together during social times and move around the school calmly. In lessons, they display positive attitudes and try hard. Pupils feel safe and are well cared for.

The school provides a variety of extra-curricular activities to support pupils' wider development. Clubs develop pupils' talents in sport and the arts. Further opportunities include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and the Emergency Services Cadets group. The school council is elected to represent pupils. Members of the council gain leadership skills by helping to make decisions that improve school life for everyone. Sixth-form students act as role models in the school community. For example, they work with younger pupils as 'reading leaders' or 'word warriors'.

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

The school has strengthened the curriculum since the previous inspection. In key stage 3, pupils study a wide range of subjects. When they choose their options for key stage 4, all pupils have the opportunity to take the full range of GCSE courses that make up the English Baccalaureate, although only a small proportion choose to take a modern foreign language. The range of academic and vocational courses available in key stage 4 and the sixth form is well considered to meet pupils' interests and aspirations.

Subject curriculums have been designed well. They identify the detailed knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary pupils will learn. Learning is sequenced carefully so that pupils can link new knowledge to what they already know. As subjects become more challenging, there are regular opportunities to revisit previous topics. This helps pupils to strengthen and deepen their understanding. Pupils are encouraged to read, both for pleasure and to enrich their learning across the curriculum. Any pupils who need to develop their reading fluency are supported effectively.

The school provides excellent support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It quickly identifies when pupils have SEND. Detailed information is shared with staff so that they can adapt learning activities when necessary. The majority of pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers successfully. A small number of pupils with complex needs, including those in the designated specialist provision, follow ambitious personalised learning pathways that support them to achieve well.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain concepts clearly and provide pupils with challenging and interesting learning activities. Teachers use questions well to promote discussion and stretch pupils' thinking. The school has established routines for checking pupils' understanding and providing feedback to help pupils to improve. On some occasions, these routines are not applied as effectively as they could be. Sometimes, teachers do not check pupils' understanding precisely enough to identify when pupils have misconceptions. This means that they do not provide corrective feedback or adapt activities to deepen pupils' understanding.

The school's curriculum is complemented by a rich personal development offer. This includes a personal, social and health education curriculum that helps pupils learn to appreciate diversity, respect equality and understand the fundamental British values. Pupils benefit from an excellent careers programme that includes personalised advice about next steps for all pupils and students in the sixth form.

There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The vast majority of pupils meet these expectations without fuss. When pupils need support or guidance to help them regulate their behaviour, this is provided by caring staff.

Most pupils attend school well. Staff keep a close eye on attendance. They work closely with pupils who are absent too often to identify challenges and help them to attend more often.

School leaders and staff are united in their commitment to making sure that all pupils, especially the most disadvantaged and those with SEND, benefit from the school's offer. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has been strengthened. This has resulted in some improved outcomes for pupils in public examinations. More recently, under new leadership, the school has developed strong pastoral support that has seen attendance improve and the number of pupils suspended from school decrease. Staff value the way that the school helps them to balance their workload and develop their expertise.

The trust routinely monitors the impact of the school's work. It provides strong support and robust challenge to school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, teachers do not check pupils' understanding precisely enough. Sometimes, they do not identify when they need to adapt learning activities or provide feedback to help strengthen pupils' understanding. When this happens, pupils do not gain knowledge as securely as they could. The school needs to ensure that teachers check understanding systematically, provide clear feedback and adapt learning activities so that all pupils achieve well.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2019.

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	139957
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347575
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,221
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	118
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christine Hall
CEO of the trust	Wayne Norrie
Headteacher	Matthew Gamble (Head of academy)
Website	www.kingswoodsecondaryacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The head of academy was appointed in January 2024.
- The school is part of Greenwood Academies Trust.
- The school has a designated specialist provision for pupils with SEND. The provision caters for 14 pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 with autism.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with the head of school and with other school leaders.
- The lead inspector held conversations with representatives of the multi-academy trust, including the CEO and the chair of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- Inspectors held discussions about, and scrutinised records relating to, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and pupils. They considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as responses to the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector

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