

Kingsmeadow Community School

Address: Market Lane, Dunston, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE11 9NX

Unique reference number (URN): 108410

Inspection report: 13 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, pupils build up suitable knowledge of the subjects they study. Consequently, pupils' written work is of an appropriately high quality across the curriculum.

Leaders have taken careful steps to monitor pupils' progress in more detail. Provision for pupils missing crucial foundational knowledge has developed so that pupils get the help they need. For example, pupils who are struggling to read receive targeted intervention, which effectively supports them to catch up quickly.

Outcomes for pupils at key stage 4 in 2025 improved considerably. Pupils' attainment is currently around national averages. The gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and non-disadvantaged pupils at key stage 4 have narrowed in recent years.

Students' achievement in the sixth form is mixed and reflects recent published outcomes. While students studying applied general qualifications attain and progress as well as others nationally, those studying A-level qualifications do not attain or progress as well as they should.

Pupil destinations reflect that they are generally ready for their next steps into education, employment or training.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Attendance has remained stable this year following significant and rapid improvement previously for all groups of pupils. This reflects leaders' systematic and rigorous approach to improve attendance. Careful analysis and targeted action for pupils who are persistently absent have been impactful and preventative. Leaders work with external agencies to reduce barriers and escalate appropriately when school-level interventions are exhausted. Leaders use a range of strategies effectively to support positive attendance. For example, pupils on personalised timetables are monitored closely and supported effectively through consistently reviewed next steps.

Pupils' positive behaviour is grounded in well-understood routines. This means lessons start promptly, corridors clear swiftly and detentions are well managed. Pupils and staff have a shared understanding of the school's values. Suspensions and exclusions have reduced markedly over the year. Bullying is rare and addressed quickly. Pupils know who to tell and trust adults to resolve concerns. Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive. Staff create an environment where pupils are confident to participate and collaborate in class. Staff know and care for pupils, make reasonable adjustments and provide tailored help when needed. For example, pastoral and counsellor support is provided when pupils need it to assist them back into learning as soon as possible.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of the curriculum and teaching. They have ensured that improvements since the last inspection are securely in place. For example, subject plans are well sequenced and ambitious across key stages 3 and 4. Leaders have maintained their focus on providing a high-quality, broad and balanced curriculum to all.

Leaders have focused on recall, resilience in writing and questioning to improve pupils' experience in lessons. Teachers' subject and teaching knowledge are typically effective. For example, teachers use modelling well to help pupils to see what is expected of them. Pupils' participation and accurate use of subject vocabulary are increasingly apparent in lessons. Many teachers use routines well to support learning. They check understanding effectively and build on pupils' prior knowledge. Leaders are continuing to support staff to develop and embed more consistent delivery of the curriculum across the school.

Teachers increasingly adapt teaching so that more pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the full curriculum. Through sharing best practice and professional development opportunities, leaders have supported staff to better support disadvantaged pupils. Staff actions are carefully considered and usually effective, although not always, in supporting disadvantaged pupils to engage in deep and meaningful learning alongside their peers.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have fostered an inclusive culture where staff know pupils' barriers. Identification of pupils' needs is precise. Usually, disadvantaged pupils benefit from structured approaches to ensure their learning is scaffolded effectively. Leaders continue to work with staff to develop greater consistency in the support that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive in lessons.

Pupils' barriers are overcome through strategic provision and reasonable adjustments. For example, 'The Bridge' offers a space that mirrors mainstream lessons and supports pupils to re-enter the main school effectively. Leaders review support for vulnerable pupils regularly to ensure that they are engaging as well as possible in school life.

Alternative provision is used in pupils' best interests. Leaders sensitively and systematically ensure that pupils who face particular barriers to their learning attend alternative provision well. Over time, pupils develop strategies that often allow them to reintegrate back into school.

Leaders use a graduated approach to assess pupils' needs and provide appropriate support. Leaders work with parents and external agencies well to support pupils' needs. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully by leaders at all levels. For example, leaders work effectively with the virtual school so that pupils' personal education plans improve learning and attendance and support a feeling of belonging.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders, including those with responsibility for governance, work collectively to ensure that pupils and staff share a sense of belonging to the school community. Governor oversight has strengthened in recent years. They meet their statutory duties. Governors have maintained a careful watch on safeguarding and attendance. With the support of the local authority, governors provide clear support and challenge to leaders. Governors set the tone effectively and leaders make decisions in pupils' best interests.

Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities. They have demonstrated a very positive track record of strengthening inclusion and behaviour. Leaders have also responded positively to changes in their context, for example in the additional support provided to pupils who speak English as an additional language. Leaders ensure that relationships with the community, other schools and external agencies are constructive and help shape pupils' experience. Parents are positive about the work of the school, including more recent changes to improve communication.

Staff, including support staff and early career teachers, feel valued and well supported. Leaders' engagement with staff wellbeing reflects a clear commitment to sustainable improvement. Leaders act with precision and have managed change well over the last two years. They have adjusted systems and teaching in a timely way with appropriate support for staff. The professional learning programme for staff is coherent and informed by evidence. It is increasingly bespoke and carefully monitored. Through this, leaders ensure staff adopt suitable approaches to support pupils. Leaders drive for consistency and are ambitious for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have put an appropriate personal development programme into place. Much of this is taught through the school's 'Thrive' sessions. This includes coverage of statutory content such as healthy relationships, and it supports pupils' character development. Leaders provide training for staff to teach the 'Thrive' curriculum. Staff make use of pupil voice and assessment to reflect and make improvements. Pupils develop detailed knowledge in a number of key areas that support their wellbeing. These include consent, online safety and protected characteristics. Disadvantaged pupils describe their experience in the school as one which embraces diversity and difference. Leaders use assemblies and form time to raise pupil awareness of key issues such as world religions and local important news.

A range of extra-curricular opportunities are available to pupils, during lunch and after school. Enrichment activities are varied, including both drama and creative writing alongside many sporting activities. Participation in these activities is growing, for example in the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme. Pupils also have the opportunity to be student ambassadors, where they gain knowledge and skills about leadership and local community matters.

Pupils benefit from a broad careers programme. They receive independent, impartial advice to support informed choices. The programme also includes meaningful work experience and regular contact with employers to help pupils to be ready for life beyond school. Pupils are generally prepared well for decisions about their next steps. The number of pupils who go on to a sustained destination, such as education, training and employment, is in line with

local figures. Leaders have put in place mock interviews for pupils in Year 7 to 9 and university visits for all to raise aspirations.

Leaders have increased the capacity of pastoral support for pupils. Staff are always on hand to help when pupils need it. Pupils speak very positively of the improved pastoral system in recent times.

Needs attention

Post 16 provision

Needs attention 

Sometimes, students do not get the opportunities that they need to consistently develop understanding of the subject content they encounter or the skills they need to work independently. This affects their progress through the curriculum and their subsequent attainment in A-Level qualifications. Leaders have a realistic view of the quality of post-16 provision. They have put in place changes to support the curriculum and teaching. However, it is too soon to determine the impact of this.

Within lessons, students benefit from suitable staff subject knowledge. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities have appropriately adapted provision. The curriculum is appropriately sequenced, and staff typically make effective use of assessment. Students appreciate the support they receive in lessons.

The wider aspects of the post-16 study programme positively promote students' personal development. Students attend well and enjoy life in the sixth form. They have regular 'Thrive' sessions, which are age appropriate. Students have opportunities to contribute to the school and understand the wider world, for example sixth-form students' recent delivery of an assembly around the issue of period poverty to younger pupils. Trips also support students' development well. Older students are very positive about the careers support they have received. They appreciate the careers visits and particularly staff support for university applications and work experience.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Positive relationships built on respect and integrity characterise the culture around school. Leaders and staff effectively model to pupils what it means to be part of the Kingsmeadow community. Pupils feel safe and attend well. They know who to go to if they are concerned. Pupils enjoy their learning. They are supported by clear structures for learning and adjustments in their lessons. Leaders keep a close eye on pupils who may be more vulnerable and act quickly when concerns arise.

Lessons and social times are calm and orderly. Clear routines help pupils settle quickly so learning time is used well. Pupils understand the behaviour system and find it fair and consistent. They demonstrate this around school by being respectful and focused. Pupils

report that bullying is rare and staff deal with it effectively. Older pupils appreciate the improvements in behaviour that leaders have brought about in recent years.

Pupils in Years 7 to 11 generally achieve well. However, students in the sixth form do not develop deep enough understanding of the subjects they study to achieve as well as they should. Across the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, build their knowledge from firm foundations to enable them to access the ambitious curriculum.

Pupils are encouraged to get involved in learning and typically do. Teachers increasingly praise them for their efforts and support them to develop their understanding. Pupils are respectful of each other and appreciate the differences they have.

The range of personal development opportunities is both thoughtful and age-appropriate, including for students in the sixth form. For example, there are opportunities to visit a local art gallery and engineering firm alongside a wide range of sporting competitions.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and expertise that they need to deliver the curriculum consistently well, including providing support for those pupils who face additional barriers to learning.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff consistently provide the opportunities that pupils need to gain knowledge, deepen their understanding and acquire the skills that they need to progress and achieve well in the qualifications that they study.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Sarah Diggle.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers, governors from the governing body, including the chair, the local authority representative and pupils during the inspection.

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 school:

The school makes use of 5 alternative provisions, including 2 that are unregistered.

Lead inspector:

Richard Wakefield, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Bernard Clark, Ofsted Inspector

Christine Durand, Ofsted Inspector

Tim Johnson, His Majesty's Inspector

John Downs, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

911

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

975

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

49.35%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.96%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

18.77%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	36.4%	45.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	27.4%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	33.5%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	42.7	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	37.6	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	42.1	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.75	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.41	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	24.6%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	17.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	23.1%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	36.0	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	37.1	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.94	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.57	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	24.6%	52.8%	-28.2 pp
2023/24 (final)	17.6%	53.1%	-35.5 pp
2022/23 (final)	23.1%	52.4%	-29.4 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	36.0	50.3	-14.2

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	30.5	50.0	-19.5
2022/23 (final)	37.1	50.3	-13.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.94	0.16	-1.10
2022/23 (final)	-0.57	0.17	-0.73

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	90%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	90%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	86%	94%	Below

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	26.62	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	27.63	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	30.00	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students' progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	-0.4	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	9.5%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	14.9%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	14.2%	9.0%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	29.5%	21.9%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	44.7%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	42.3%	26.5%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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