

Kingsmead School

Address: Kings Avenue, Hednesford, Cannock, STAFFORDSHIRE, WS12 1DH

Unique reference number (URN): 142313

Inspection report: 10 March 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.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), progress very well through the curriculum. They produce high-quality work that demonstrates a detailed understanding. Pupils, including those with SEND and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, develop and secure the important knowledge they need in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, sixth-form students' work and responses show that they have a very secure understanding of what they have learned.

Published outcomes in national tests show that, over a sustained period, pupils' achievement is above the national average in many subjects. Disadvantaged pupils also achieve consistently well in external examinations. Sixth-form students achieve well in public examinations.

Pupils and sixth-form students are well prepared for their next steps in education or employment. They move on to appropriate education, employment or training that matches their abilities and aspirations.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality of the school's curriculum and teaching. They accurately identify areas for improvement and have taken effective action to improve how teachers implement the curriculum. This has ensured that highly effective teaching is embedded in all subjects. Leaders have designed a high-quality and ambitious curriculum, which equips pupils and sixth-form students with the essential knowledge they need for their futures. Furthermore, the curriculum extends pupils' knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics effectively. There is a clear focus on extending pupils' language and vocabulary. This helps to develop both pupils' spoken and written communication.

Leaders provide professional development to ensure teachers continue to improve their delivery of the curriculum. Teachers teach the curriculum to a consistently high standard. They have secure subject knowledge. They explain new learning clearly. Teachers check pupils' understanding effectively to ensure that pupils grasp key concepts securely before they move on. Teachers know pupils' needs very well. They consistently adapt their teaching well so that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the curriculum.

Pupils at the early stages of reading receive the support they need to develop their reading skills and knowledge.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created a highly inclusive culture in school. They have prioritised understanding how to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have highly effective systems in place to identify and assess these needs. They work well with parents and carers, and

external agencies, and they use pupil voice effectively to ensure that pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified.

Leaders clearly communicate to staff about pupils' needs and how to address them. Staff use this information consistently well to carefully tailor their teaching so these pupils get the support they need. The school provides regular professional development that equips staff with strategies to reduce barriers to learning effectively.

The school also uses a variety of interventions to reduce barriers to learning. Some pupils receive reading support. Leaders carefully monitor the progress pupils make through these interventions to ensure they are well supported.

Leaders use additional funding well to enhance the experience of disadvantaged pupils. For example, some of these pupils have academic mentoring, which is supporting these pupils to achieve well.

The school uses alternative provision effectively and in the pupils' best interests. Leaders monitor the effectiveness of these provisions closely to ensure they align with pupils' individual needs.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Most pupils attend school regularly, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and sixth-form students. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the barriers to regular attendance that some pupils face. They provide effective support for pupils who find coming to school difficult. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is close to national averages. However, some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school as often as they could. Leaders are aware of this and are taking effective action, leading to these pupils attending school more regularly. However, their actions have yet to lead to rapid improvements for this group of pupils.

Leaders have established clear routines that pupils understand and follow. Pupils enjoy being rewarded for meeting the school's high expectations. Teachers apply the school's behaviour policies consistently well. Staff address effectively any instances of bullying or discrimination. Pupils feel safe and valued, knowing that staff will take their concerns seriously. As a result, the school is calm and orderly. There are respectful and supportive relationships between pupils and staff.

In lessons, pupils demonstrate highly positive attitudes towards learning. Sixth-form students approach their studies maturely. At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils socialise well and are respectful of one another.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Recently, leaders have ensured that there is greater clarity about responsibilities across the school. Staff appreciate these improvements. The school is well led and managed. Leaders have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have clearly identified actions to improve the school. For example, leaders know there is more to do to improve attendance for some pupils who are disadvantaged, and the quality of the delivery of the personal development programme.

Leaders consistently make decisions that prioritise the best interests of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They seek to support these pupils with well-thought-out strategies. Governors and trustees meet their statutory duties well. They regularly review the school's performance and successfully hold leaders to account.

Trust leaders have provided effective challenge and support. They have ensured that the school has had the right support at the right time. Moreover, they ensure that school staff and leaders have access to high-quality professional learning opportunities that support them well to carry out their roles more effectively.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders in terms of workload and wellbeing.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders foster pupils' broader development well through an effective personal development programme. This programme successfully supports disadvantaged pupils and gives them a broad range of experiences they may not otherwise have.

Staff typically deliver the personal development programme well. However, some pupils do not always develop a secure and detailed understanding of some of the important elements of the personal development curriculum. Pupils develop their understanding of fundamental British values and equality. Furthermore, they learn about different religions and cultures. They know to treat other people with respect, regardless of any differences they may have. Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the community. Through the school's relationships and sex education and health education programme, pupils learn about healthy relationships and consent. The school also teaches pupils how to look after their wellbeing. Sixth-form students similarly benefit from an effective, broader study programme that prepares them well for adulthood.

The school's enrichment programme is extensive and well tailored to pupils' interests. This programme takes place during the school day so that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, can take part. Pupils learn how to contribute to society by raising money for charities. They take part in clubs, such as boxing, table tennis, travel and singing. Furthermore, pupils build their social skills through these activities. The school has carefully mapped out leadership opportunities for pupils to develop their character. For example, pupils are proud to be student councillors.

The careers education and guidance offered by the school is highly effective. Pupils benefit from a range of careers interviews and fairs, which help them prepare for their future. Students in the sixth form visit different universities and learn about apprenticeships. They are very well prepared for their next steps.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have a secure understanding of the quality and suitability of the sixth-form curriculum. They have designed the curriculum to meet students' needs and aspirations. Teachers implement the curriculum consistently well in all subjects. Teachers use assessment well and provide personalised feedback that supports students in improving their work. Teachers support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to fully access the curriculum.

Students progress well through the curriculum. The work they produce shows a secure understanding of their learning. Students attain well in national examinations, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. Typically, students perform as expected in these exams, and in some subjects, exceed national averages.

Students have access to a wide range of opportunities that prepare them well for adulthood. They do worthwhile work experience and learn about personal finance and current affairs. They also have opportunities to contribute to the school by being academic mentors to younger pupils. To prepare students for their next steps in education or employment, leaders provide high-quality careers information, advice and guidance. Students have many opportunities to learn about university courses, apprenticeships and different careers. They are well informed to make appropriate decisions about their next steps.

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

Pupils enjoy learning at this caring and welcoming school. The school promotes its values of resilience, innovation, mindfulness and employability well. Staff help pupils to understand what is expected of them. The curriculum is taught consistently well. Teachers provide tailored support to disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This reduces any barriers to learning that these pupils may have. As a result, they progress well through the curriculum. Pupils and sixth-form students achieve well in external examinations. They are very well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know that there are staff to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Most teachers use effective behaviour management strategies and rewards well. This helps to foster a respectful atmosphere in school. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. There are positive and supportive relationships between staff and pupils. Bullying is not tolerated. Staff address any incidents swiftly and effectively. Pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders ensure that all pupils have access to an extensive range of enrichment activities during the school day. These help pupils develop their talents and interests. For example, pupils enjoy taking part in football, handball, the debating club, the chess club, arts and

crafts and the school production. Pupils also help to raise money for charities and take part in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. These support pupils in developing their character and learning how to contribute positively to society.

Pupils learn about different religions, festivals and current affairs. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to look after their own wellbeing and mental health. Pupils and students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that pupils develop a detailed and secure understanding of the important knowledge covered in the school's personal development programme.
 - Leaders should ensure that their actions to address the barriers some disadvantaged pupils face to regular attendance result in notable and sustained improvements in their attendance.
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About this inspection

This school is part of John Taylor Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mike Donoghue, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Colin Hopkins.

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, other senior leaders, trust leaders and those responsible for governance.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The headteacher was appointed in September 2025.

The school makes use of 3 unregistered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Paul Averis

Lead inspector:

Paul Halcro, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Adele Mills, Ofsted Inspector

Melanie Callaghan-Lewis, Ofsted Inspector

Mark Sims, Ofsted Inspector

Sultanat Yunus, Ofsted Inspector

Gareth Morgan, His Majesty's 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 10 March 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,429

Above 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

1,257

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)

19.22%

Below 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

1.19%

Below 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

12.95%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Below 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 (revised)	39.5%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.4%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	55.3%	45.3%	Above

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 (revised)	48.5	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	51.3	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	53.1	46.3	Above

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)	0.44	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.70	-0.03	Above

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 (revised)	18.9%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.4%	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 (revised)	38.9	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45.9	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	43.0	35.0	Above

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)	0.03	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.15	-0.57	Above

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 (revised)	18.9%	53.1%	-34.2 pp
2023/24 (final)	30.0%	53.1%	-23.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	29.4%	52.4%	-23.0 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 (revised)	38.9	50.4	-11.5
2023/24 (final)	45.9	50.0	-4.1
2022/23 (final)	43.0	50.3	-7.3

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)	0.03	0.16	-0.14
2022/23 (final)	0.15	0.17	-0.01

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)	96%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	97%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	96%	94%	Average

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)	37.84	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	36.40	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.12	34.16	Close to average

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)	-0.2	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	0.2	0.0	Above

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)	8.4%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	7.4%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.8%	9.0%	Below

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)	22.2%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	22.1%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	20.3%	26.5%	Below

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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