

Kew House School

Capital Interchange Way, London, TW8 0EX

Inspection dates 13–15 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- The quality of teaching is good, with some examples of outstanding practice. Teachers use the excellent facilities well to provide students with good opportunities to achieve in all subjects.
- Students' achievements are good in all subjects, including English and mathematics. Students make especially good progress in mathematics.
- Students are exceptionally well behaved. They are courteous and thoughtful, and enthusiastic learners. They feel very safe in school.
- The proprietor and headteacher have set very ambitious standards for the development of this new school and have made good progress towards achieving them.
- Leaders and managers know the school well. They have ensured that all the regulations for independent schools are met and they have well-considered plans for the continued development of the school and for raising the standard of students' achievements and the quality of teachers' performance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The school's processes for making checks on students' achievement and staff performance are not as rigorous and detailed as they could be.
- Marking of books does not always provide students with enough guidance about how to improve their performance.
- Students' knowledge of world cultures is not as broad as it could be

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice. The inspectors observed 13 lessons. Six lessons were jointly observed with members of the school's senior leadership team.
- The inspectors looked at students' work and held meetings with the headteacher, the proprietor, staff members and students.
- The inspectors looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning and records of students' progress and of staff training.
- They considered the response of 32 parents and carers who had completed Ofsted's Parent View on-line questionnaire. Questionnaire responses from 23 staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Usman Mapara

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kew House is an independent secondary day school providing education for boys and girls aged between 11 and 18 years. It is owned and operated by London Preparatory Schools Ltd, which also runs two independent schools in the near vicinity.
- The school occupies a newly-refurbished building, formerly used as offices by a multi-national company, adjacent to Kew Bridge railway station in South West London. It makes use of additional facilities nearby to extend the students' opportunities for physical education and sports.
- The school opened in September 2013. It is registered for 600 pupils and in this first year of operation there are 84 students in Years 7, 8 and 9. A substantial minority of students have joined the school since the beginning of the school year.
- One student has a statement of special educational needs and a number of others have additional learning needs. One student is looked after by the local authority.
- A small number of students are of ethnic minority heritage, primarily from Europe. Some regularly speak other languages at home, but all are competent speakers of English.
- This is the school's first inspection.
- The school aims to 'pursue excellence in all areas of study. Each student will be respected as a valuable individual and staff will work in partnership with both students and parents to promote their success, welfare and happiness'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - carrying out sharper checks on students' achievement so that teachers are fully aware of all students' abilities and progress
 - making sure that, in all lessons, all students are fully drawn into all learning activities
 - ensuring that marking always indicates how students can improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management so that arrangements to analyse students' achievements and to enable teachers to improve their practice are fully developed.
- Provide students with enhanced opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding of different cultures from around the world.

Inspection judgements

Achievement of pupils

Good

- Students achieve well in all their subjects, including in English and mathematics. They make good progress from their varying starting points. Accurate comparison with other students nationally is not possible. This is because of the limited time students have been at the school and the wide variety of schools they have attended previously. However, the results so far, and the assessments of their teachers, suggest that the number making and exceeding expected progress compares favourably with students of a similar age in other schools. These assessments were corroborated by the observations made during the inspection.
- Neither inspectors nor the school are aware of any significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in any of the subject areas. The most able and those who find learning more difficult do well.
- In English, students learn to be analytical as well as creative through their study of literature and poetry. They listen carefully and shape their ideas through discussion as well as in writing. They learn the skills necessary for effective written communication while gaining awareness of the way language can express both feeling and meaning.
- Students read frequently in all their lessons and do so accurately and with increasing confidence and good understanding. This includes those who regularly speak another language at home.
- In mathematics, students make rapid progress. They practise their existing knowledge and skills and they readily take up new concepts, relishing the challenges they provide. In science, students learn to use scientific terminology and processes. They design their own experiments to test the ideas they have developed about how the world works. The skills students develop in these lessons promote their ability for methodical and analytical thinking.
- The school has identified a number of students who require additional support to address weaknesses in English and mathematics. An effective range of support, both in class and in focused additional sessions, is helping students to gain confidence and to improve their performance.
- Students benefit from a well-balanced and broad-based curriculum, as well as an excellent range of educational facilities that are very well utilised. The full range of National Curriculum subjects is covered, and three modern foreign languages, and Latin, are taught or are available as options. Physical education (PE) lessons are supplemented by sports options including cricket, rowing and tennis. The school's own 'Individuals in Society' course develops the students' personal and social skills well and their awareness of health and social issues. This is because lessons cover areas such as living healthily, understanding the media, appreciating world religions and developing effective relationships.
- Careers guidance is provided during personal tutorial sessions, and in connection with students' choices for subject options as they progress through the school. Students are guided effectively to valuable on-line resources and thus extend their awareness of the options available to them.
- Students' interests and personal development grow through the very good range of activities which is available after school. Sporting fixtures, clubs for additional music, art and technology, as well as supervised and supported homework sessions, are all well attended. Most students took part in the week-long residential visit to Cornwall in the school's first term, and a small group has recently returned from a language and art themed trip to Spain. These activities enable students to build their self-confidence as learners and to improve their achievements at the school.

Quality of teaching

Good

- Almost all teaching is good, and some is outstanding. Well-structured lessons and the work planned in the majority of subjects enable students to make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding and developing the skills they will need as they progress through the school.

- Good or better teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge, which allows teachers to use the best resources and explain things clearly. Questioning is skilfully used to deepen students' understanding and knowledge. Teachers have high expectations and this contributes significantly to creating a positive climate for learning and ensuring that students make good progress.
- Where teaching is less effective, students learn at a slower pace. On a limited number of occasions, teachers do not draw all the students into the class activity, with the result that some make less progress than they could.
- Overall, teaching enables students to improve their reading and writing skills and to achieve very well in mathematics.
- Teachers plan lessons well, including by using a central theme as an excellent context for learning in a range of subjects. For example, while the inspection was taking place, the whole school made very good use of a First World War theme to provide additional meaning to the lesson content. In English, students thought, discussed and wrote about the way the war affected women, gaining new knowledge from an excellent range of resources. In music, students composed pieces to evoke the feelings of war, and in mathematics they wrote, and broke, codes. These experiences broadened their knowledge and understanding of history while helping them to deepen their knowledge of other subjects effectively.
- Teachers mark students work regularly, and frequently praise their efforts and achievements. Although students are aware of their targets and find teachers helpful, marking does not always indicate what students need to do to improve their results.
- Teachers record students' achievements in all subjects each half term. Students also take tests that are marked outside the school to make sure that the school has an accurate understanding about what students know and can do. However, teachers are at an early stage of developing these arrangements and they do not yet make full use of the information they collect to ensure that every student makes the best progress they can.
- Students with additional learning needs are effectively supported, in particular by the school's focus on literacy and by the concern shown by all members of staff for helping these students build their self-confidence.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Outstanding

- Students behave exceptionally well both in their lessons and around the school. The way they interact with visitors, teachers and each other is consistently polite, courteous and thoughtful. An atmosphere of mutual respect pervades the school, so that students can learn and develop their personal and social skills very well.
- Students' attendance is considerably above the national average, and the small number of late arrivals are followed up rigorously so that poor habits do not develop. In lessons, students are well motivated and keen to learn. They listen attentively and comply quickly with their teacher's instructions.
- Students say that they feel safe in school. They appreciate and benefit from effective and friendly supervision provided by staff. They know that they have regular access to advice and support for any personal or academic concerns from their personal tutor or from the school's pastoral team. They learn strategies for caring for themselves and keeping safe in their 'Individuals in Society' (IS) lessons, and through the valuable messages delivered in the weekly assemblies. All the required safeguarding procedures are in place and fully implemented.
- Students understand bullying. They feel that on the very few occasions when students have felt bullied, the staff have dealt it with quickly and very effectively. They know about the dangers posed by the inappropriate use of social media and have learned how to avoid them. They are clear that people can be very different from one another and that this can be a good thing. This was well exemplified when one student said that he would feel pride for the school and for the individual concerned if a classmate announced that he was homosexual.
- Students' spiritual and moral development is supported by the school's strongly-promoted ethos

of tolerance and understanding. Students develop as self-confident individuals, aware of their own capacities and equally willing to help others, for example through fundraising for local and international charities. They learn about other religions and cultures in history and in IS lessons. However, their knowledge of different world cultures is not as broad as it could be.

- Lessons in geography, English and IS provide students with very good opportunities to learn about English institutions and services. For example, some students have recently compared the judiciary system in England with that of other countries. This helps students to build an understanding of their place in the world.
- The school's approach to the expression of political views is clearly set out in the teaching and learning policy and in the staff code of conduct. This policy is implemented rigorously so that partisan views are not promoted and political issues are presented in a balanced way.

Leadership and management

Good

- The school is very well led by the headteacher who benefits from valuable and consistent support from the proprietor. Together, their ambitious vision and relentless drive have established a new school that promotes the highest standards and aims for excellent achievements for its students.
- The headteacher and his senior leadership team know the school well and how far they have come towards achieving this vision. They have effective strategies to ensure the continued development of the school's facilities, and its practice. These include termly lesson observations that monitor the performance of all teachers and provide guidance that has already led to improvements. In addition, the early stages of performance management procedures have enabled some teachers to improve their teaching.
- The result of these procedures is that teachers and school leaders have a valuable range of processes for understanding the quality of teaching and student progress that is achieved. However, the school's systems for gaining a detailed view about how well students and staff are doing are not as sharp as they could be. The information collected about students' progress is not as thorough as it needs to be. In addition, the information that is available is not yet used well enough to support teachers in deciding what they need to do to help each student progress as far as they can.
- The proprietor's board meets termly and scrutinises all aspects of the school's development. The members have a sound grasp of the information the school currently makes available on the quality of teaching, standards, staff appraisal and rewards. However, they are aware that the school has not yet fully developed its arrangements for collecting and analysing information about students' learning and about the performance of the teachers.
- All of the regulations for independent schools are met. Students' safety is assured by rigorously implemented policies for safe recruitment of staff and for child protection. All the required checks are made to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children and that the information is recorded on the required central record.
- Staff members receive thorough induction training when they start at the school in areas including child protection, fire safety and first aid, and the school has suitable plans to ensure that this training is refreshed annually. The school's designated safeguarding lead has received the required advanced-level training in child protection. Thorough and well implemented fire safety and health and safety policies promote students well-being. Health and safety risks, including those posed to students on trips and visits away from the school, are thoroughly assessed and mitigated.
- The proprietor has made available an excellent range of buildings and facilities for the school. Specialist teaching resources for science, art, music and design and technology complement spacious and well-resourced classrooms. These facilities, including the computer suite, are well used by staff and students to enhance learning and progress.
- A good range of useful information about the school is provided through termly newsletters, in the school's prospectus and on its website. This enables parents, carers and others to have

access to the information they need to stay in touch with the school. Reports about students' progress are made available to parents and carers twice each term. However, although these provide a useful overview of students' progress, the comments do not provide the level of detail necessary for a clear view of students' achievements.

- The school's complaints policy is effectively implemented and well promoted through the students' and parents' handbooks. This is consistent with the way the school ensures that the views of all members of the school community are taken into account.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	140066
Inspection number	443030
DfE registration number	313/6005

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Day co-educational secondary school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	84
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	London Preparatory Schools Ltd
Chair	Mrs Maria Gardener
Headteacher	Mr Mark Hudson
Date of previous school inspection	This is the first inspection
Annual fees (day pupils)	£17,500
Telephone number	0208 7422038
Email address	info@kewhouseschool.com

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