

# King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103553
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	302343
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rashida Sharif HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Grammar (selective)
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	622
6th form	259
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Christopher Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Drucilla James
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Vicarage Road Kings Heath Birmingham B14 7QJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4442150
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4445123

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls is a voluntary aided, selective school with a flourishing sixth form. It is situated in Kings Heath, south of Birmingham city centre, but draws its students from a diversity of wards and backgrounds across the Midlands. Attainment on entry is well above average. Just over half of the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. However, no-one is at an early stage of learning English. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are low. The school gained specialist status in mathematics and computing in 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

There are many impressive features that combine to make this an outstanding school that gives excellent value for money. Standards are extremely high. This might be expected, as students enter the school with high levels of attainment relative to age-related expectations. Students' performance in the core subjects at Key Stage 3, in all subjects at GCSE and at advanced level is well above the local authority (LA) and national average. This success is a credit to the students, who have excellent attitudes, behaviour and a relentless desire to do well in everything they do. Students make good progress in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form. This is consistent with teaching. The personal development and well-being of the students are exceptional. The outstanding curriculum and outstanding personal and social education very effectively prepare students for the future. The school's specialist status has had a direct and beneficial impact on the school and the curriculum.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher sets a clear educational direction and is very well supported by a committed senior leadership team and an excellent governing body. The senior team and staff share a commitment to the school and give their time generously. This is evident in the endless list of extra-curricular activities which are offered and attended by the majority of the students. As one student said, 'There is always something to do, it's just finding the time to fit everything in.' The students are guided very well towards healthy lifestyles, for example, by effective physical education provision and in making healthy choices for meals. The students' excellent attitudes to learning and to the well-being of their fellow human beings, both locally and internationally, are a credit to the school. Their contribution to the community is also notable, as is their excellent behaviour. The students are well mannered, articulate young women.

Senior staff have a realistic view of the school's strengths and areas for further development. Assessment information is used effectively to inform management decisions, guide students and monitor the effectiveness of provision. The tracking and monitoring of students' academic progress is good but marking in books lacks consistency and coherence. The marking does not always tell the students what they need to do to further improve their work. The majority of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were wholly supportive of what the school offers their daughters. However, a significant minority felt that further work is needed to improve relationships and communication with parents and carers so that they feel fully involved in their daughter's education at all levels. There are robust procedures in place to judge and develop teaching through accurate monitoring by the senior management team and subject leaders. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and clearly aim for high standards. However, some lessons lack the range of learning approaches featured in some of the outstanding lessons, and activities do not always meet every individual's needs as effectively. The school is engaged in a healthy debate about the effectiveness of different teaching and learning styles for its students with an aim to develop more teaching that is outstanding.

Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement, with a significant rise in GCSE achievement in 2006, as indicated by the school's own data. The senior management team continues in its drive to provide the best education for every student. This indicates good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 1

Sixth form provision is outstanding. It is very well led, an excellent range of suitable courses are available and retention rates are impressively high. Students enter the sixth form with attainment which is well above average and make outstanding progress which results in very high standards in examinations. The vast majority of students stay on in the sixth form, and almost all go on to higher education; a significant number of students join the sixth form from other schools each year. These students receive an effective induction programme. Involvement in projects such as the Young Enterprise Scheme makes a substantial contribution to students' personal development. They enjoy their studies and take up significant roles in the rest of the school, willingly giving their time to mentor younger students and help in a range of clubs and activities. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers encourage students to take responsibility for their learning and promote their independent research skills well. There is a regular and rigorous system for reviewing students' progress which ensures that early support is provided for those who need it. However, the school recognises that the level of guidance and support the students receive directly from their tutors is inconsistent.

### What the school should do to improve further

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- Capitalise on the school's debate about teaching and learning styles so that it results in more consistently outstanding practice across the school.
- Ensure that marking in books is coherent and consistent throughout the school and provides students with the feedback and advice they need to further improve their work.
- Improve communication with parents and carers so that they feel fully involved in their child's education at all levels.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

#### Grade for sixth form: 1

Standards are extremely high throughout the school. The students' results in national tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE examinations are outstanding with excellent achievement. Standards in all core subjects have been sustained in Key Stage 3 since the last inspection and are exceptionally high. In the GCSE examinations in 2006, every student gained five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above including mathematics and English. The number of students gaining the highest grades was also outstanding. Students' progress between the end of Key Stages 2 and 4 has improved each year since 2004. The very high attainment is built on impressively in the sixth form. A-Level results for all students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, indicate that progress is outstanding overall in the sixth form, with excellent achievement.

Students are very conscientious and reflective about their learning. They want to do well and take full advantage of the good teaching across the school. Although most students make good progress, the progress of those with learning difficulties and disabilities is outstanding. In addition, there are some minor variations in progress amongst bilingual students and those from different minority ethnic backgrounds. The school, in recognition of this, has recently appointed a specialist to help support the bilingual students so that they make better progress.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The personal development and well-being of the students are outstanding. Visitors are struck by their impeccable behaviour and courtesy. In lessons, all students adopt positive attitudes, and clearly enjoy their lessons. This is demonstrated in the very high levels of attendance which are well above the national average. Opportunities to take responsibility and develop confidence and initiative are plentiful. Some of the charity fund-raising events, for example, are organised by the students, usually raising substantial sums of money. Some of this money goes to their link schools in Lethabong in Africa. Considerable enterprise skills are developed in the process. Sixth form students also mentor younger ones and support numerous extra-curricular activities. These contribute significantly to students' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students from a broad range of backgrounds work and socialise harmoniously. They have a good awareness of different cultures which both parents and students feel could be extended further through international visits. Students embrace opportunities to contribute to both the school and the wider community, notably, as prefects, through peer mentoring and by individual community service as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. These opportunities enable students to develop into mature and confident young adults who show a strong sense of responsibility and a genuine concern for others.

Students know how to stay safe and are confident that any isolated bullying, if it were to occur, would be quickly and effectively dealt with. They know what is required to stay healthy and lead an active lifestyle. The school council acts as a catalyst for ideas and improvements – such as instigating recycling procedures and getting picnic benches in the school grounds. Students are prepared very effectively for the world of work, particularly through personal development and health education lessons. Enterprise days and financial literacy days successfully develop the students' economic and business understanding, as well as using advanced mathematical skills with a real sense of purpose in the workplace.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning is good in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form. There are robust procedures in place to judge and develop teaching through accurate monitoring by senior leaders and, more recently, subject leaders. The majority of teaching is at least good and leads to good progress. Teachers are well qualified specialists who have high expectations of both students' performance and behaviour. They teach lessons which engage learners and capture their interest through a variety of well paced activities. The acknowledged challenge for the school is to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all students make the maximum progress of which they are capable. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. However, some lessons did not focus sufficiently on the needs of individual students to enable them to do as well as they could. Similarly, in a few lessons, students' opportunities for active involvement were limited because they had to listen passively to their teachers for too long.

Relationships are excellent. Students enjoy their lessons, are extremely well motivated, and support one another in their learning through pair and group work to which they contribute enthusiastically and responsibly. The assessment of students' academic progress is good.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The outstanding curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and is regularly reviewed and developed to meet students' needs and aspirations. The impact of the school's specialist status in mathematics and computing is evident in outreach work of high quality in local schools and the wider community and in the opportunities for students to make accelerated progress in aspects of the specialist areas. For example, students do GCSE ICT and GCSE statistics in Year 10, which opens up additional opportunities for them in Year 11. As yet, the practice of early entry is limited to some examinations.

A substantial range of options at Key Stage 4 enables students to match the curriculum to their interests and ambitions. This in turn feeds through to the sixth form curriculum. There is a particularly strong element of work-related learning within the compulsory curriculum, impressively extended by visits from representatives from higher education, the business community, and a variety of events to foster enterprise and financial awareness.

There are exceptional opportunities to develop interest and talents in dance, drama, music and art and through these to celebrate the variety of cultures in the school. The school is rightly proud of the quality of its drama and music productions and the excellent contribution made by many students to the cultural life of the city. The school is now looking to develop community languages to reflect further the backgrounds and potential of all its students.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good with outstanding features. Excellent transition systems, including residential trips, are used to help students settle across key stages and an emphasis is put on the importance of treating every student as an individual. Students stated that "Our teachers know how to get the best out of us." The school provides a safe and supportive environment for learning. Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are rigorously adhered to and understood by all staff.

Most students can identify many possible sources of support if they feel vulnerable, including prefects and peer mentors, who also provide excellent role models for younger students. However, some of the older students feel less well supported and the school plans to improve the coordination and consistency of the form tutor programme. The quality of advice and guidance given to students is something that is very much valued and appreciated by parents who are actively encouraged to be involved in efforts to enhance learning. However, a significant minority of parents feel that communication between the school and home could be improved. The school instils an ethos of care into the students and they look out for each other. Students' achievements are shared, celebrated and rewarded. The tracking and monitoring of students' academic progress are good but marking in their books lacks consistency and coherence between departments. The school aims to identify, with precision, what every child needs to do to

improve and to target intervention where it will have maximum impact. The students receive excellent guidance on careers and options which enables them to make informed choices on their future.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

The headteacher and the governors provide outstanding leadership and management. They have a very clear vision for the development of the school which builds on established strengths, such as the exceptional personal development, but also accurately identifies areas for further improvement. The successful completion of the new buildings has enhanced the provision for drama and sports, contributing to the outstanding developments in the creative arts such as drama, music and art, and to students' excellent personal development. The senior leadership team is fully involved in the school improvement planning process and the monitoring and evaluation. The school continues to aspire to improve even further through working with and building the capacity of its middle management team. Though the systems for monitoring its performance have improved in recent years, further work is needed in evaluating whether actions have been successful. Self-evaluation at a whole-school level is accurate and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The senior team is a potent force and has good capacity to further improve the school.

The well established, experienced and very effective governing body actively supports this successful school, holding senior managers to account constructively. There are effective committee structures; financial management and control are very good. Governors are well informed, are highly supportive and act as critical friends to the senior management team.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

4 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of King Edward VI Camp Hill School for Girls, Birmingham B14 7QJ

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you extended to me and my colleagues when we visited your school in May. It is a delight to write to you and say how impressed we were with you and your school. We think it is outstanding.

We were extremely impressed with your positive attitudes to learning which we thought were remarkable. It is because of these positive attitudes and your hard work and determination that you achieve such impressive high standards. You are taught well and you appreciate your teachers' love of their subject. You have a wonderful opportunity to study a wide variety of subjects and pursue additional interests in the extensive programme of out-of-hours activities. Some of you shared with us that you would like more opportunities to go abroad, which the school is considering for the near future.

Thank you very much for contributing to the inspection. We spoke with many of you in class, around the school and as part of key interviews. You were very proud of your school and full of praise. Many of you told me that you felt the school was like a 'big happy family'. We had a tremendous response to the questionnaire from your parents. I also spoke to many on the phone, so please pass on my thanks. I have tried to answer their questions in the report.

In discussion with the headteacher, the senior management team and a representative from the governing body, I have asked them to:

- Turn the good teaching to outstanding. We are fascinated by your school's current debate in this area.
- Ensure that when they mark your books their comments help you to know what you need to do to further improve your work.
- Improve further the communication with your parents and carers so that they feel fully involved in your education at all levels.

I look forward to hearing about your future successes.

Rashida Sharif Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools