

Chipping Sodbury School

Bowling Road, Chipping Sodbury, BS37 6EW

Inspection dates 5–6 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although progress is improving, achievement is not yet secure. In particular, students do not reach the standards of which they are capable in English.
- Students' achievement is too variable between groups of students. Boys achieve less well than girls.
- There is too much variation between achievement in different subjects.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the progress of its students is not rapid enough.
- Students are not always given enough opportunities to use the skills they have learned in new situations.
- The school's marking policy is not followed by all staff and outstanding practice is not shared more widely.

The school has the following strengths

- Both teaching and students' achievement are improving because of the good leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and other staff with leadership roles.
- Teaching is now good, so that students in the school are making more accelerated progress.
- Students are very proud of their school. They show respect to one another and to adults. Students feel safe and their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- Governors are highly effective and show a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 32 lessons, of which six were jointly observed with a member of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors visited an assembly, tutor groups and other learning activities.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of students, talked with students in their lessons and around the school and scrutinised samples of students’ work.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, other staff with leadership responsibilities and two members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- A variety of school documentation was examined, including the school’s records of current student progress, self-evaluation summaries and improvement plans, behaviour and attendance logs, records relating to safeguarding and those relating to the management of staff performance.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaires completed by 43 staff, together with 68 responses submitted to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and one letter from a parent.

Inspection team

Sean Thornton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Teresa Gilpin	Additional Inspector
Lesley Greenway	Additional Inspector
Shahnaz Maqsood	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- A lower than average proportion of students are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, students from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all these students in this school are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of students whose first language is not English is much below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of these students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school's sixth form courses are provided in partnership with Brimsham Green School.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision at Filton College to follow work-related courses.
- About 25 students are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in English or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that all teachers provide students with opportunities to extend and make use of the skills they have learned in new situations
 - making sure that the features of the strongest teaching present in the school, relating to pace, challenge and questioning, are implemented fully by all teachers
 - ensuring that all teachers give high quality feedback to students, enabling them to understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, and providing them with time to respond to their teachers' comments.
- Raise achievement by making sure that:
 - all groups of students, including boys, make at least good progress in English and make equally strong progress in all their subjects
 - students in the sixth form make more rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The achievement of students requires improvement because students are not yet making securely good progress over time, especially the boys. This is particularly the case in English where students do not reach the standards of which they are capable.
- Students join the school with attainment that is broadly average. Following a dip in achievement in 2012, the proportion that gains five or more GCSE grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, at the end of Year 11, from provisional data is now in line with national figures and the school's projections indicate further improvement.
- Students' attainment and progress are not consistent and, in particular, boys make less progress than girls in several subjects. There is too much variation between the progress that students make in different subjects. In some subjects, such as mathematics, progress is good, but in others, such as French and history, it is much poorer.
- School leaders have taken strong actions to raise standards and these are showing increasing effects. They realised that, in 2012, students were not making enough progress in English and that achievement here was lagging behind that in mathematics. Standards in English have now risen; attainment is now equal to the national average and observations during the inspection show that progress is continuing to improve.
- Although teaching has improved and is now good, the sixth form does not add sufficient value to students' achievement, and here too there are significant differences in the progress that students make in different subjects.
- The school's tracking systems focus closely on the progress of all groups of students. They show that students are making more rapid progress in Key Stage 3 and that this is leading to higher attainment further up the school.
- The progress that more-able students make varies between subjects. In some subjects, such as the sciences and religious education, the proportions of students gaining GCCSE grades A* and A are high, but in others, such as English, these students do not yet make enough progress.
- The school has taken actions to improve students' standards in reading as this helps the students to succeed in all their subjects. There is a well-organised programme that ensures students engage in purposeful reading and their progress is monitored closely.
- The needs of disabled students and those who have special educational needs are considered carefully when they join the school. Appropriate interventions and close tracking of progress ensure that these students make progress that is at least equal to that of their peers.
- The school provides a 'pupil premium guarantee' for eligible students. The funding is used well to provide a range of interventions, including enhanced careers advice, mentoring, one-to-one support and specific activities for the more able. Provisional data for 2013 show that the progress made by the end of Year 11 in English by students eligible for the pupil premium was equal to that of their peers and there was almost no difference in their attainment. In mathematics the gap in progress reduced, but there was almost one grade difference in attainment. These figures show considerable improvement from 2012.
- The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all its students and supports fully the progress of all groups. This is now leading to improvements in examination results.
- The Year 7 catch-up premium is being used to provide one-to-one support and the teaching of small groups in English and mathematics. The entitled students are making good progress and are catching up with their peers.
- In the past the school has used early entry for some students in mathematics, but this practice has been discontinued.
- The small number of students who attend Filton College for part of their week make good progress in the well-chosen courses they are following.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is now typically good and is leading to increasing student achievement. A scrutiny of students' work, combined with discussions involving students and staff and reference to school data, show that, across the school, students' progress is more rapid than that of their predecessors.
- The headteacher has taken rigorous actions to improve teaching. Many new roles have been created recently in the school's leadership team, all with a focus on teaching and learning. Almost all weak teaching has been eradicated and several new teachers have joined the school, bringing with them new skills. All these measures have contributed to the improvements in teaching, which are supported by the school's own clear records and detailed projections for improved student outcomes in 2014.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge. They set high expectations and show enthusiasm for their subjects, and students respond well to the tasks provided for them, extending their knowledge and deepening their understanding.
- In the best lessons, teachers make sure that work is provided at the right level for all students, probe understanding with skilful questioning and give students opportunities to undertake a variety of tasks. In less successful lessons, which make up only a small minority, students are not given enough opportunity to make use of what they have learnt.
- Lessons are well planned. In an outstanding English lesson, students worked in pairs and used a poetry 'toolkit' to explore the themes of a range of new poems. They made excellent progress and were able to use examination criteria to judge their success. However, this practice is not shared more widely across the school so that all staff have equal levels of pace, challenge and questioning.
- Students are eager to contribute to their lessons and to enter into discussions. In a Year 7 drama lesson, students were completely engrossed in their learning, working collaboratively in groups and developing their oral skills.
- The good standard of teaching observed in the main school is also found in the sixth form. In an outstanding chemistry lesson, students were challenged to develop as learners by working in pairs to first analyse an extended examination question and then construct their own question together with a mark scheme.
- There is a strong drive to improve literacy across all subjects and a senior leader has been appointed to strengthen this programme. Work is also underway to coordinate the development of mathematical skills across several subjects.
- Some teachers mark students' work regularly, and in detail, encouraging students to take responsibility by involving them in assessment and giving them clear advice on how to improve. However, this good practice is not consistent and in some classes marking is brief, lacks detail and does not involve students in the ongoing assessment and improvement process. Students are not always given the opportunity to respond to their teachers' comments.
- Almost all parents and carers who expressed a view were confident that their children were benefiting from good teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. In almost all lessons students concentrate well, showing positive attitudes and a desire to learn. The cooperation that they show to their teachers makes a strong contribution to their progress.
- Teachers are skilled in managing students' behaviour and they follow consistent policies so that students know there are high expectations. On the rare occasions that there is disruption in lessons it is dealt with effectively.
- Students show courtesy and good manners to each other and to staff. They are very proud of their school and wear their uniforms exceptionally well. There is little litter around the school site and no evidence of graffiti.

- Students move sensibly and safely between different parts of the school so that they are punctual for their lessons.
- Students feel safe in school and the curriculum supports them well in learning how to stay safe. They have a good understanding of e-safety, including how to avoid unsafe websites.
- Students report that incidents of all types of bullying, including cyber bullying, are rare and are dealt with swiftly by the school's staff. There is hardly any evidence of racial or other forms of prejudice-based bullying. The school promotes good relations, equal opportunity and will not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- The school council enables students to express their views and contribute to school improvements. Their opinions are respected.
- Attendance is average and is monitored closely. The frequency of fixed-term exclusions is consistently below average.
- Sixth form students display mature good manners and are good role models for younger students.
- The school checks that all students attending off-site provision attend regularly and that there are no concerns with their welfare.
- Almost all respondents to Parent View considered that behaviour is managed well, that their children are happy at school and feel safe there.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders set high expectations for staff and students. They have taken effective actions to raise students' attainment and standards of teaching. The headteacher's commitment to further raise standards is shared by all staff and recently-introduced improvement strategies are showing a positive effect.
- The management of teaching and its impact on learning are good. Joint observations during the inspection showed that the school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate.
- There has been a focus on improving the effectiveness of middle leaders in raising standards. They have benefited from skilled coaching and now almost all are making strong contributions to school improvement.
- There is regular monitoring and evaluation of students' achievement and the results are used to produce well-focused improvement plans.
- The results of departmental evaluations are used to provide a range of appropriate professional development which responds to the needs of staff and has led to improvements in teaching.
- The system of managing teachers' performance is well organised and has recently been updated. There is evidence that the impact of teaching is monitored closely and that salary progression is taken seriously, occurring only when merited by sustained good performance.
- The school provides a good range of subjects and courses in Years 7 to 11 that is responsive to the needs and interests of its students. At Key Stage 4 there is a good balance between GCSE courses and high-quality work-related courses. Sixth form provision, delivered in partnership with a neighbouring school, consists mainly of A-level and AS courses, but the school is planning to broaden the range of post-16 opportunities. All students benefit from a wide range of activities outside the school day.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, both through the curriculum and in the wider life of the school. It is fostered by a range of visits and by the wide variety of opportunities in music, art, drama and sport, together with effective assemblies and religious education lessons that give many opportunities to reflect on serious issues. Many students speak warmly about the impact of visits to the school by musicians from other countries.
- Students receive good careers information throughout the school so that they are able to make informed decisions about their future.
- All aspects of safeguarding are fully met. The governing body and senior leaders consider that

keeping students safe is one of their prime responsibilities.

- The local authority works closely with the school. Accurate evaluations help the school to address its less successful areas and support is provided for staff development.
- Parents agree that the school is well led and managed and this is supported by the school's staff. Of the parents who offered their views, almost all would recommend the school to other parents.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body makes effective contributions to the planning and checking of the school's work. Senior leaders provide information about the school, including about students' progress and the quality of teaching, which is scrutinised and challenged by governors. The governing body shows a detailed knowledge of the school, such as the previous weaknesses in English and what has been done to bring about improvement, and this enables it to hold school leaders to account. Governors are able to analyse school data using the 'data dashboard' and Raiseonline. They receive regular training on issues such as safeguarding and regulations regarding teachers' pay and performance. Governors monitor the use of the pupil premium and other specific funding to make sure that they are used effectively. They are involved in decisions about the management of teachers' performance and pay, and how pay increases are related to students' progress. They also know what is being done to tackle any underperformance. Governors make sure that financial resources are managed effectively and have been fully involved in the recent decision to form a cooperative trust.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	109324
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	426796

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	707
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Katie Mansfield
Headteacher	Gareth Millington
Date of previous school inspection	December 2011
Telephone number	01454 862900
Fax number	01454 862901
Email address	enquiries@chippingsodbury.school.com

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