

The Warriner School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	123230
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	380625
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2012
Lead inspector	Simon Rowe

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mandy Morris
Headteacher	Annabel Kay
Date of previous school inspection	13–14 June 2007
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Age group	11–16
Inspection date(s)	23–24 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Simon Rowe	Additional inspector
Tom Morrison	Additional inspector
Nardeep Sharma	Additional inspector
Janet Morrison	Additional inspector
Robert Miller	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 53 lessons and 52 teachers. Joint observations were carried out with the senior leadership team. Meetings were held with students, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation document, development plan, records of lesson observations, achievement data, and the latest attendance and exclusion figures. The inspection team also scrutinised questionnaires completed by 112 parents and carers, 253 students and 36 staff.

Information about the school

The Warriner School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. A new headteacher took up post in April 2011 and a new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in October 2011. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school houses a farm which is used to support its curriculum and also offers curriculum provision for students from other schools.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. There are plans to extend the school's provision to incorporate post-16 students from September 2012 and the school is awaiting confirmation of this. Since the previous inspection, the school has received awards for Financial Management Standards in Schools, Specialist Technology College with a Rural Dimension status and International School status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. The new headteacher has worked demonstrably to improve the quality of teaching, raise achievement and improve behaviour since her arrival. She is well supported by a highly effective senior leadership team. Many new initiatives are already having a positive impact but will take time to embed fully. The school is not outstanding as the proportion of good and better teaching to promote rapid progress, which will in turn raise achievement further, is not yet high enough.
- Achievement has improved significantly in the last year and is now good. Students make better progress than those nationally. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress.
- Teaching is good. In the best lessons, work is challenging and students are able to discuss their ideas with each other and their teacher. Opportunities are provided for them to work independently. In less effective lessons, teachers often talk too much, provide limited opportunities for independent and discussion work, and their questioning does not always assess and deepen learning. There is also insufficient challenge for all students.
- Behaviour is good. A new behaviour for learning policy, implemented last year, has been instrumental in improving behaviour, punctuality and incidences of low-level disruption. Students are welcoming, polite and they take good care of their school environment. Relationships in lessons are strong and lead to a positive learning environment.
- The senior leadership team models the highest of expectations and is working effectively alongside middle leaders to raise aspiration and expectations. The leadership of teaching has been instrumental in raising achievement and the school has provided a regular series of professional development opportunities for all staff to improve their practice. Performance is monitored rigorously and managed well.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good and better teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring lessons proceed at an appropriate pace, provide challenge for all students and promote rapid progress
 - ensuring regular opportunities for students to work independently and to discuss their ideas with each other and their teachers
 - using high quality questioning to assess understanding and to deepen learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Most parents and carers feel their children are making good progress. Students are making better progress than all students nationally given their starting points. Groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, are also making better progress than similar groups nationally. In previous years, students have entered the school with high attainment. Current year groups enter the school with attainment that is broadly average. The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grades including mathematics and English is high. The school has allocated male staff to mentor boys and this has been successful in narrowing the gap in their attainment compared with girls.

In lessons, students make the best progress when they are able to get down to work quickly and are provided with opportunities to work independently and discuss their thoughts and ideas with each other and their teacher. The targets that students are set are challenging and these are monitored rigorously. Intervention is timely and leads to good and better progress. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other students in lessons. These students are well supported in their learning through the inclusion department and there is a clear focus on developing their communication skills, especially with regards to reading and writing. The department also provides strategies for teachers to enable them to meet the needs of these students when they are in their lessons.

The school works closely with its feeder primary schools. Students regularly visit the farm for lessons and staff also go into the primary schools to teach. The inclusion department ensures they have identified the needs of students whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable and this has aided the transition process.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall. There is much good and outstanding teaching and the school rightly recognises the importance of increasing the proportion of good and better teaching to accelerate further the progress students make. In the best lessons, students make good or better progress. These lessons proceed at an

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appropriate pace, have a variety of activities and provide adequate challenge and support for students of all abilities. Discussion is a feature of these lessons and teachers use high quality questioning techniques to assess students' understanding and to deepen their learning. Opportunities are provided for students to work independently and with their peers. Assessment criteria are shared with students and these are used so that they can assess their own work but also to see what they need to do to improve. For example, in an English lesson, students were writing a paragraph describing a piece of text from Shakespeare. The students discussed the success criteria and marked some sample work. Their ideas were discussed and misconceptions addressed. This led to the students producing their own piece of written work which was well above their expected level of ability. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Their individual needs are planned for and teaching assistants are utilised effectively to facilitate learning.

In satisfactory lessons, teachers often talk for too long, leading to a lack of pace and engagement. On some occasions, this leads to low-level, off-task behaviour. Work is not always well matched to students' individual needs and there are limited opportunities for students to work independently and with their peers. Questioning is not used effectively to assess students' learning or to deepen their understanding.

The school's farm is used in lessons regularly throughout Years 7 and 8 and for other subjects at Key Stage 4. Students are very proud of this provision and it has been instrumental in contributing to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly around a sustainable environment but also the ethical and moral issues associated with breeding animals for food.

A very large majority of parents and carers feel their children are taught well, a view that is supported by the evidence from the inspection. Most students agree that teaching is good. In discussions with students, they indicated that the quality of teaching had improved recently and the best lessons were when they were well planned, had a variety of activities and they were fully involved.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students are typically considerate, courteous and respectful to each other and to staff. A new behaviour for learning policy, introduced in September 2011, is designed to improve punctuality to lessons, ensure students take responsibility for being prepared for learning by bringing the correct equipment and to eradicate low-level disruption. In discussions with students, they were overwhelmingly positive about the impact of this initiative and feel that the standard of behaviour has improved. The school has implemented restorative approaches, which enable students to understand the impact their actions may have on others and to make amends for this. Students' artwork is displayed inside and outside of the school and this, along with the school environment, is well cared for by students.

Although most parents and carers consider that behaviour and safety are good, a small minority indicate that their children's lessons are sometimes disrupted by poor

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behaviour. This was also the case for students. In the overwhelming majority of lessons observed by inspectors, students demonstrated high levels of engagement and positive attitudes to their learning. When students' attitudes were less positive and there was some low-level disruption, this was usually due to the quality of teaching and work not being matched well enough to students' needs. Students feel safe, understand what constitutes different forms of bullying and know how to keep themselves safe. They indicate that bullying is rare but that when it does occur, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.

Attendance has improved over several years and persistent absence is reducing as are incidents of poor behaviour and exclusions. This is due in part to the support that the school provides for students and their families through the inclusion department to ensure they have the key social and academic skills to be able to access the curriculum.

Leadership and management

The new headteacher, since her arrival one year ago, has provided transformational leadership. She has a clear vision of aspiring to be an outstanding school. Her senior leadership team provides strong support to this vision and they model good practice and high expectations. All members of staff who returned the questionnaire indicated that they were proud to be a member of staff at the school.

Fundamental to improvement has been the drive to develop the quality of teaching in the school. There have been regular continuing professional development opportunities for staff to understand what constitutes good and better teaching. Through the 'good to outstanding' programme and the formation of 'teaching communities', teachers are able to work alongside colleagues from different departments to practise new teaching techniques, try out new ideas and take risks in their teaching. In joint lesson observations with the senior leadership team, judgements were in agreement and the school can clearly identify the key strengths that constitute good teaching.

The senior leadership team is working alongside middle leaders to raise expectations and develop their leadership qualities. They have implemented departmental reviews which are rigorous and hold middle leaders to account for each aspect of their department. These initiatives are relatively new and are showing signs of fruition but they will take time to embed and have a full impact.

The school has implemented a new target-setting process which is raising achievement. These targets are monitored robustly at a whole-school, department, teaching group and individual student level, and intervention is timely and effective. These raised targets are incorporated into the performance management process, along with whole-school and wider school life priorities. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

The curriculum meets the needs of students and is flexible to accommodate different

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cohorts. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural opportunities are regular through assemblies, personal, social and health education, citizenship, tutor time and philosophy and ethics lessons. For example, in a philosophy and ethics lesson, students were discussing equality and prejudice and linking this to Biblical teaching. Students participate in regular cultural activities, including a music festival, and artwork is a feature of the school. Students also act as 'listeners' to support other students. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well as is shown by improved achievement, attendance and behaviour.

The governing body provides strong support to the school and has obtained external advice to ensure a more rigorous challenge when reviewing the school's data. The arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements and give no cause for concern.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of The Warriner School, Banbury OX15 4LJ

Thank you for your help during the school's recent inspection and for taking the time to talk with us. I am writing to tell you about our main findings.

We judge your school to be good overall. The headteacher has made many changes since she took over, which have improved many aspects of your school, especially the quality of teaching, the progress you make and your behaviour. The new behaviour for learning policy means that your lessons start promptly and you are well prepared to learn.

The school cares for you well and you feel safe. You are very proud of the farm and you take good care of your school environment.

This is what we have asked leaders and managers to do to improve the school further.

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching by:
 - ensuring lessons proceed at a good pace and provide work which challenges you
 - ensuring there are regular opportunities for you to work on your own and to discuss your ideas with each other and your teachers
 - ensuring teachers use questioning well to develop your learning.

You can all help by continuing to behave well and contributing as much as possible to your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Simon Rowe
Lead inspector

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