

Carwarden House School

118 Upper Chobham Road, Camberley, Surrey, GU15 1EJ

Inspection dates 11–12 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Leadership and management have not been fully effective in eliminating bullying in the school. Insufficient use is being made of information recorded about behaviour incidents to bring about improvements.
- There are too many occasions when a small minority of secondary students behave in an inappropriate manner. Not all staff have the confidence and skills to manage these incidents effectively.
- Very occasionally teachers do not ensure that work fully stretches higher-ability students.
- The marking of students' work does not always help them to know how well they have achieved and what they need to do to improve.

The school has the following strengths

- The school's teaching is almost always good and sometimes outstanding. It often successfully engages students actively in learning. The sixth form is good, with students enjoying the more adult approach that is taken to support them.
- Students throughout the school achieve well, with many making or exceeding expected rates of progress from their low starting points.
- The new leadership team, with the support of governors, is raising standards across the school. There is a stronger focus on improving teaching and learning because expectations of the performance of all staff have been raised.
- Rigorous self-evaluation has led to the school having a very clear idea of aspects of its work requiring improvement. Good staff training opportunities are increasing the capacity of staff to improve themselves.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 12 lessons taught by 12 different teachers. They also sampled teaching and learning in a number of classes.
- Inspectors held meetings with a group of students and members of staff. Meetings were also held with two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at students' work, teachers' lesson plans and tracking data showing students' progress. Students' behaviour was observed during breaks and lunchtimes.
- School policies were sampled and the minutes of recent governing body meetings reviewed.
- The inspectors took account of responses from 11 parents and carers in the online Parent View survey and 34 staff completed inspection questionnaires.

Inspection team

Charles Hackett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynne Kauffman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Carwarden House has traditionally catered for students with moderate learning difficulties. While still accommodating such students, it now takes students with a wider range of special educational needs. These include speech, language and communication difficulties and an increasing number of students on the autistic spectrum.
- The school has a below average number of students who are eligible for additional money through the pupil premium.
- Most of the students are of White British heritage and the remainder come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number of students are in the care of the local authority.
- Since its previous inspection there have been a number of significant staff changes. These include the retirement of the previous headteacher after 37 years at the school.
- The current headteacher took up his post just over a year ago. A new senior leadership team was established for the start of the current term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Immediately bring about improvements in the behaviour and safety of students by:
 - increasing even further the work it has started to prevent any form of bullying within the school
 - increasing the confidence of all staff in using the methods of managing students' behaviour learned in recent training.
- By the start of the spring term 2013 improve the impact of leadership and management on behaviour and safety by:
 - recording more detailed information on students' behaviour
 - using the records of behaviour incidents to inform individual students' behaviour management plans and review the effectiveness of behaviour management policies and procedures.
- By the end of the current academic year improve teaching by:
 - sharing the characteristics of outstanding teaching practice with all teachers across the school
 - ensuring all teachers always plan learning activities that will challenge the more-able students within each class group
 - making sure that marking tells students how well they have done and what they can do to be even better.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Students' progress is shown clearly to be good when comparisons are made with the nationally expected rates of progress for students from similar starting points. The best progress last year was in mathematics, where the majority of students made better than expected progress.
- Almost all students usually make good progress in lessons. They particularly enjoy practical activities, such as food technology, where they are actively engaged in learning. Progress in both literacy and numeracy is good for all groups.
- Those students with speech, language and communication difficulties make good progress in being able to relate effectively to both staff and other students. They gain the confidence to put over their views and opinions in lessons and in the good variety of social opportunities provided for them.
- Very occasionally a few students fail to make the progress they should in lessons because their behaviour slows down their learning. It is very rare, though, for the behaviour of one student to have a negative impact on others.
- In a very few lessons, more-able students do not achieve as well as they might because the work does not stretch them as much as it could.
- Sixth form students achieve particularly well in developing skills that will benefit them after school. For example, in mathematics they were seen making good progress in recognising and using 'real' money to purchase items from the school's own grocery store.
- Year 11 students make good progress in developing their confidence to take on the challenge of attending college or undertaking work experience. This includes those students on the autistic spectrum, who often find such social gatherings difficult to manage. A visiting Year 11 student from last year happily told staff how much she was enjoying college and making new friends.
- The different groups of students within the school, including the small numbers from minority ethnic backgrounds and in the care of the local authority, make similar good rates of progress to others. These include those students who qualify for additional money through the pupil premium.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Teaching is almost always good and there are examples of outstanding practice within the school. For example, the teaching of music is very successful in engaging students in playing different instruments and evaluating the quality of their work.
- Most lessons are well planned to include a variety of activities in which all students can take part. A Year 7 English lesson successfully used games to help students understand what is needed to write a good sentence.
- Teachers and teaching assistants often work very well together in encouraging students to try a range of different activities. For example, in a food technology lesson, the teaching assistant very effectively supported a group of less-able students to closely follow the directions of the teacher and complete their tasks independently.
- Just occasionally lessons are not hard enough for the more-able students and so they do not achieve as well as they might.
- The teaching of all groups of students in the school is usually equally effective. On a few occasions, though, staff lack the confidence to give effective support to the few students whose behaviour is not good.
- Teachers promote students' literacy and numeracy skills well in the teaching of all subjects. For example, in art, students were carefully helped to understand key words that would help them assess their work.
- Staff speak encouragingly to students but the quality of written comments varies. Marking does not always tell students how well they have done and what is needed to make it even better.
- Teachers successfully improve students' cultural development through providing a wide

range of experiences in art, music and drama lessons and celebrating their achievements in these .

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The school is experiencing a transition period in the effectiveness of its procedures for the management of students' behaviour. Expectations for all staff to contribute to the management of students' behaviour have been increased. This is not proving to be fully effective and is the key reason why behaviour and safety require further improvement to be good.
- A number of staff remain concerned about behaviour and safety. Although recent training has been given to staff in behaviour management strategies, not all staff demonstrate the confidence to show the benefit of these. This reduces their ability to support students' social and moral development.
- Action has been taken to reduce bullying but incidents of both verbal and physical bullying are still being recorded. Improved processes are being developed to resolve these and a very recent focus has been put on promoting anti-bullying strategies.
- Governors are fully supportive of the change of emphasis in the management of behaviour. They recognise the validity of these new developments but recognise that behaviour and safety are not yet good.
- Improvements to behaviour and safety are starting to be made. These include stopping the informal exclusions of students and the appointment of a behaviour mentor.
- New, improved systems were started last term to record inappropriate behaviour. These are now in place, although as yet not enough detail of each incident is being recorded to allow a full analysis.
- The attendance rates of students are good. Pupils speak about how much they enjoy school and feel the staff support them. For example, three new Year 7 students happily talked about how much they had enjoyed their first few weeks of life in a secondary school and that they had not seen any incidents of bullying.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The new leadership and management team has not been able to ensure that behaviour and safety are good. Senior staff and governors have not convinced all staff that the higher expectations for them to manage students' behaviour are an effective way to move the school forward. This is the key reason leadership and management require improvement.
- Despite the introduction of new policies and procedures for behaviour management, bullying remains a problem for a few students. Although the number of bullying incidents is being reduced, incidents of verbal or physical bullying are still too frequent.
- The senior team and the governing body share high levels of ambition for the school to return to its previous rating of 'outstanding'. Much has been done to start the journey to this level in a relatively short time.
- An excellent focus has been put on teaching and learning. Senior staff and governors have ensured that the performance management of staff is now far stronger and teachers paid on higher salary levels now have much more demanding roles to play within the school.
- Much has been done by the new headteacher to increase the involvement of all staff in taking responsibility for the school's development. Members of the new senior team now have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and this is already starting to improve the way they manage their staff teams.
- There has been a considerable improvement in the range of activities and courses students can follow and these are available to all. This has proved to be particularly effective in the sixth form, where the number of vocational training opportunities has been increased.
- A very rigorous process of self-evaluation has led to the school developing an appropriate

detailed school development plan. Staff and governors have had good opportunities to contribute towards this.

- Good attention has been given to establishing effective child protection procedures and working well with other agencies. Outreach work with parents, carers and other schools is also being developed well.
- The financial management of the school is secure. Students allocated additional money as part of the pupil premium have been given positive additional support. For example, additional software has been purchased to improve their communication skills and increased opportunities have been offered to these students to take part in off-site clubs and activities. Students appreciate these new opportunities and are showing an increased interest in taking part in sports clubs.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school in its efforts to improve behaviour and safety, and supported the headteacher to redevelop the senior leadership team.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have supported the increased rigour given to performance management, including that of the headteacher. They have fully supported the new management team and relished the increased opportunities they have to hold the school to account for its work. They contribute very positively to the drive for excellence that exists throughout the school. Governors ensure that finances are managed well and policies are regularly reviewed.

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	125465
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	403805
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	22
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eddie Owen
Headteacher	Jarlath O'Brien
Date of previous school inspection	30 June–1 July 2010
Telephone number	01276 709080
Fax number	01276 709081
Email address	office@carwarden.surrey.sch.uk

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