

Oxted School

Bluehouse Lane, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0AB

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2013

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| 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 good school.

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection and is consistently good. There is a small but growing proportion of outstanding teaching.
- Teachers establish a positive atmosphere for learning in most lessons and students are challenged to do their best.
- The sixth form is good. More effective leadership has made a positive impact on attainment.
- A large majority of students, including those in the sixth form, makes good progress in lessons. Different groups of students are progressing equally well.
- Younger students who find reading difficult are very well supported so that they make good, and sometimes rapid, progress.
- Leaders at all levels have been well focused and successful in bringing about improvements in teaching. More rigorous checks on teaching and a well-targeted programme of staff training are helping to improve teaching and, consequently, students' achievement.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning. They are attentive and are keen to improve. They enjoy their lessons, behave well and are respectful of others in the school.
- Governors have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They challenge and support leaders rigorously, holding the school to account well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of written feedback to students does not always match the best practice in the school.
- Sometimes, teachers' questioning is not searching enough and students do not have opportunities to discuss what they are learning.
- Performance in science has not improved as rapidly as other subjects because teaching does not always challenge the more able pupils to do their best.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 part-lessons, of which nine were joint observations with senior leaders. They also observed tutor times. An inspector also made short visits to lessons as part of a learning walk.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students and discussions were held with students throughout the inspection. Other meetings took place with members of the governing body, senior leaders and school staff, including those responsible for subjects. Discussions with the local authority advisers were also held.
- Inspectors analysed the 210 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and a questionnaire completed by a minority of staff. Account was taken of a small number of telephone conversations with parents
- Inspectors observed the work of the school overall. They looked at recent data on students' progress and attainment, the school's improvement plan and the school's own analysis of how well it is doing. Inspectors also examined the system for managing the performance of teachers, minutes from governors meetings and a wide range of policy documents.
- Inspectors also scrutinised records relating to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding, and a large sample of students' work.

Inspection team

Hugh Betterton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

Julie Miriam

Additional Inspector

Trevor Woods

Additional Inspector

Jason Wye

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- A small percentage of the students is supported at school action. This proportion is well below national average. The proportion of those supported at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs is below the average.
- The school has a resource unit for students with visual impairment, currently supporting 7 students.
- A lower than average proportion of students is supported through the pupil premium which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The school uses part- and full-time alternative off-site provision for 12 students at local colleges and workplace providers. The school quality assures these institutions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that:
 - teachers take more opportunities to stretch the more able students by consistently providing more challenging tasks and by making them think harder about their learning
 - the best practice in using assessment information to plan better learning is firmly established throughout the school
 - questioning is always searching and there are frequent opportunities for students to improve their understanding through discussion about what they learn in lessons
 - teachers talk less and give students more opportunities to take responsibility, including learning by themselves.
- Improve the provision and outcomes in science by ensuring that:
 - the new staffing structure is fully embedded
 - teaching challenges younger, more able students to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to prepare them better for enhanced performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When students join the school their attainment is broadly average. The percentage of students who achieved five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics was above average in 2012, a good improvement since 2010. Some variation in performance of subjects at GCSE and A level was apparent in 2012. But performance in mathematics at GCSE in 2012 was significantly above that recorded nationally.
- Detailed information provided by the school gave firm evidence that students now make rapid progress in most subjects, including mathematics and English, across year groups. In lessons observed during the inspection, students' achievement was almost always good. In the sixth form, students' progress is good overall, and where results are not quite as good, performance is improving well.
- Groups that underachieved in 2012, particularly boys, are well on track to do significantly better in 2013 and differences in progress between boys and girls are no longer evident. Students who study vocational courses at the local further education college make equally good progress as their peers. However, performance in science is not as good as in other subjects, especially for the more able pupils.
- Almost all students are entered early for the mathematics GCSE examination. They perform very well, gaining high grades. No disadvantage is evident to students by this action.
- More able students usually make good progress, although they are not always sufficiently challenged. Proportions of students gaining the highest GCSE grades are predicted to be even better in 2013 across many subjects, particularly in English, humanities and French, as work is more closely matched to their needs.
- Students known to be eligible for free school meals have improved their achievement as quickly as others. The gap between their attainment in English and mathematics and national averages for all students is closing well at the end of Key Stage 4. Pupil premium funding has been used wisely to support these students. Additional staffing and resources provide effective personal and academic support.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress across subjects because staff know their needs clearly and additional adult support is well managed.
- The school ensures that all students develop good reading skills. Students are articulate, and reading and writing skills are well developed throughout the curriculum. Those with weaker skills in reading are supported effectively, and they gain quickly the skills they need.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. There is a small proportion of outstanding teaching. This confirms the school's own view of teaching in the last year. This has been brought about by the range of high quality support and training for teachers within the school. Good teaching is found across all subjects. This good teaching is leading to the improved rates of progress now evident. This makes an important contribution to students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.
- Supportive relationships between teachers and students are well established. Disabled students and those with special educational needs benefit from well-targeted support. Teaching assistants are well managed so that they support students effectively and encourage them to develop independence in their learning.
- Teaching is good in the sixth form. An outstanding Year 13 mathematics lesson saw students grasping complex concepts well about use of polar coordinates. This was a result of well-structured questions and students confidently employing previously learnt skills and techniques collaboratively.
- In most cases, students are given work at the right level of difficulty which engages them fully with their learning. However, occasionally, work is not demanding enough to stretch more able students and to make them think hard. This is particularly true in science where students are not

always challenged to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills sufficiently for them to make consistently good progress.

- Teachers regularly check students' progress. Some marking of books is of very high quality. Teachers make it clear to students what they must do to improve. Students have a chance to respond and teachers check the progress that the students make. But this best practice is not yet embedded across subjects.
- Occasionally, students have to listen to teachers for too long, which in turn reduces considerably the time for them to find things out for themselves, share ideas or work in pairs and small groups.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students behave well on and off site so that all can learn. They understand the systems for maintaining good behaviour and follow school rules well. Students say that behaviour is better now than two years ago.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning and develop high aspirations for their futures. They enjoy learning, especially when carrying out practical, challenging tasks. Their attention sometimes wanders a little if work is too easy or they are not involved enough.
- Students work well together in small groups, sometimes in other school settings, helping each other, listening to each other's ideas and comment about what they are learning. They collaborate well in practical activities and in producing group decisions about what they have learned.
- Exclusions have fallen over recent years and there have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years. On rare occasions, behaviour is not managed well as it could be, but disruption to learning in lessons is uncommon. A growing emphasis on students taking responsibility for their own, and others, behaviour is evident.
- Students say they feel safe in school, and parents and carers agree. Students are well briefed on different forms of bullying and know what to do should it occur. When bullying does occur, students say that it is dealt with well and 'often subtly' as one Year 9 student observed.
- Attendance has improved since 2011 and is above the national average. The school continues working effectively with students and their families to encourage better attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership team and governors have a well-judged view of how to improve the school. Leaders' evaluation of the school's work is accurate. The leaders have acted well in the last two years to improve the quality of teaching and successfully accelerate students' progress. This is linked directly to effective performance management and teachers' pay increases. All staff are held to account more regularly than in the past.
- More challenging academic targets and thorough systems of checking on students' progress in all subjects and year groups across the school are helping to check underperformance more swiftly than before. As a consequence, the school is on track to achieve better results at both GCSE and A level this year.
- The school's emphasis on equality of opportunity is demonstrated well by the care it takes to make sure that students make good progress. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in the school.
- Performance in science is still below that of other subjects because difficulties in recruiting high quality staff have lessened impact on performance. However, it is evident that a new staffing structure is beginning to address this.
- Staff training has helped teachers to raise achievement. It is well directed towards the school's priorities as well as individual staff needs, sharing what works well more routinely with staff. Effective use is made of advanced skills teachers now holding important middle leader posts.
- Middle leadership is strengthening and good practice in departmental monitoring is increasingly

evident, leading to greater consistency in leadership across all subject areas.

- The curriculum meets students' needs well in both the main school and the sixth form. It has broadened considerably since the previous inspection to include more vocational courses for older students. Opportunities in lunchtime and after-school activities give pupils the chance to develop musical, dramatic, scientific and sporting skills. Activities such as those for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme help some pupils to develop self-confidence, resilience and leadership skills. The curriculum promotes students' spiritual, moral and social development well.
 - Since the last inspection the school has been well supported by local authority advisers who have worked successfully with the school to improve the quality of teaching, and leadership, at all levels.
 - The pupil premium funding is well planned and managed so that the students who require extra support keep pace with their peers in their learning. Senior leaders are well aware of the need for this to be fully monitored as part of their monitoring programme.
 - All statutory safeguarding procedures are met well.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The appointment of several new governors and a new Chair of the Governing Body has strengthened governance in the last year. The governing body has not flinched from taking difficult decisions about overall effectiveness. The governors have a very shrewd grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, working hard to shape and guide necessary improvements. Senior leaders are held robustly to account for all aspects of the school's performance. Governors rigorously question any data provided by leaders and they evaluate this information against the school's key priorities for improvement. They have been very clear with their expectations for improved student progress for this year, for example insisting that the school website properly indicates the impact of pupil premium funding on students' progress. Members of the governing body regularly scrutinise records of teaching, so that they know its strengths and understand how much it has improved. They maintain a good oversight of the new performance management system, and ensure that teachers only receive pay increases in keeping with the quality of their teaching and progress made by students. Governors manage school finances well, ensuring that expenditure is focused on school priorities. They meet statutory requirements for safeguarding, child protection and recruitment procedures
-

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 | 125253 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 406306 |

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 | 11–19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1993 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 370 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Brian Taylor |
| Headteacher | Guy Nelson |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16–17 March 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01883 712425 |
| Fax number | 01883 723973 |
| Email address | frontdesk@oxted.surrey.sch.uk |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

