

Waingels College

Denmark Avenue, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4RF

Inspection dates 24–25 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- All groups of students achieve well and make good progress. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make equally good progress as others.
- The school has successfully eliminated the gaps in performance between students eligible for free school meals and other students.
- Students' attainment at GCSE is getting better year on year. The progress students make between the ages 11 to 16 is improving sharply.
- In English and across the curriculum, students' reading and writing skills are very well developed.
- The quality of teaching is good with many examples of outstanding practice. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and most teaching is demanding, exciting and gets the most out of all groups of students.
- Students behave well and feel very safe. They have a good understanding of the school's high expectations of behaviour.
- Leaders, managers and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and have taken decisive and effective action to improve the quality of teaching and to raise students' achievement further. This is a school that continues to improve.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students achieve very well from their broadly average starting points. The subjects and qualifications available to students in the sixth form have been chosen thoughtfully in order that every student can achieve as well as possible and be very well prepared for the next stages in their lives.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make sure that students respond to what has been asked of them when their work is marked.
- Questions are not always used well enough by teachers to encourage students to think deeply.
- In some lessons, there is insufficient challenge for the most-able students.
- Occasionally, lessons are too dominated by the teacher with insufficient opportunity for students to learn independently.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons or parts of lessons, including 10 that were seen together with senior leaders.
- Inspectors listened to students read and visited classrooms with senior staff to look at how well disabled students and those who have special educational needs were learning. Inspectors also visited lessons with senior staff to look at students' progress in mathematics, English, science and languages and at learning in a wide range of other subjects.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a representative of the local authority and groups of students.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of its work and examples of students' work.
- Inspectors took note of the 115 responses from parents and carers on the online questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' and students' responses to the school's own recent surveys and written comments made by parents and carers while attending parents' evenings were considered. Inspectors also analysed 55 questionnaires returned by staff.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Tim Royle	Additional Inspector
Mina Davies	Additional Inspector
Michael Lafford	Additional Inspector
John Worgan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized school.
- The large majority of students are of White British heritage and there is a low proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding from the government for students from service families, looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is low. There are currently three students who are in the care of the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average; the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- A very small number of students spend some of their time studying work-related courses at South Berkshire College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Support students in achieving higher rates of progress by:
 - making sure that all teachers plan work that fully challenges the most-able students
 - encouraging students to be more active and inquisitive in class
 - checking that all students respond to the very helpful marking provided by most teachers
 - making sure that all teachers use questions in lessons which encourage all students to think deeply and give full answers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school with levels of attainment that are broadly average. By the end of Year 11, students' attainment has risen considerably and has been significantly above average for the last three years. For instance, in 2012, nearly three quarters of all students gained five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics. School information shows that this is on track to rise still further in 2013.
- The proportion of students making and exceeding the expected three levels of progress in both English and mathematics is above that seen nationally and is getting better each year.
- Detailed information presented by the school provided firm evidence that all groups of students make at least good progress in most subjects. In lessons observed during the inspection, students' achievement was nearly always good and in some was outstanding.
- Where the school thinks it appropriate, students are entered early for examinations. They follow a well-planned programme that is closely linked to their needs. They make good progress and higher-attaining students are not held back by this policy and are attaining the grades of which they are capable.
- The meticulous attention to ensuring that the needs of all are met extends particularly to disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Well-targeted support for these students by skilled additional adults in lessons enables these students to overcome many of their difficulties and make the same good progress as their classmates.
- The school has used its pupil premium funding to introduce a range of measures, such as one-to-one tuition and additional staffing in some classes, to help eligible students. As a result, those eligible for this additional government funding attain very similar grades at English and mathematics GCSE as other students in Year 11 and make similar rates of progress.
- The school makes good use of funding received through the Year 7 catch-up programme (extra money from the government to support those students who attained below expected levels in English and mathematics in Year 6). Through very careful checking of how well these students do in classes and the provision of additional support to those who need it, such students make good gains in acquiring number, reading and writing skills.
- A small number of students study courses at a local college of further education. The school keeps close checks on the progress of such students. Most are achieving well and are gaining the skills necessary to gain suitable employment or further training.
- The achievement of all groups of students, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with English as an additional language, is similarly strong. This shows that the school's commitment to equal opportunities is completely put into practice.
- The achievement of students in the sixth form is accelerating rapidly. Students show great enjoyment in their courses and learn with eagerness and enthusiasm. Most are making outstanding progress in lessons and a very high number are meeting and exceeding their challenging targets.

The quality of teaching

is good

- In most cases, teachers' strong subject knowledge helps them confidently deliver well-planned lessons. Explanations are clear and engaging and are often very well supported by lively presentations using the interactive whiteboard.
- There are some strong practices to be found in all aspects of teaching in the school, although these are not fully evident across all subjects. For example, in mathematics, the quality of marking and feedback to students is excellent. Marking is regular, with very specific advice given to students as to what needs to be improved. They are expected systematically to respond to this guidance. This has an immediate impact on students' thinking about the quality of their work. This level of dialogue is evident in other, but not all subjects and in some cases teachers

do not make sure that all students have acted on the advice they have been given.

- Teaching assistants work effectively with teachers to ensure that materials are suitably adapted for disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- In the most effective teaching, teachers ask probing questions that extend students' understanding and provide extensive opportunities for students to work independently and think for themselves. Lessons are imaginative and make sure that students' interests and enthusiasm are captured well. As a result, students put a great deal of effort into their work and keep up good levels of concentration.
- In an excellent Year 11 physical education lesson developing football skills, all students were fired-up to do their best by the teacher's use of a video recorded pre-match 'press conference' which summarised skills achieved in the previous game and what they needed to improve further.
- Students are given clear targets to aim for in their work. Their progress is carefully checked by teachers to identify any who are not on track to achieve their target grades and levels.
- Where teaching falls short of excellent, lessons are too dominated by the teacher, which does not help students to practise what they have learnt. Some lessons lack imagination and challenge, especially for the most-able students, who are not always stretched as much as they could be. Questions are not always used as well as they could be to probe students' understanding and to prompt them to fully explain their answers.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Teachers frequently develop high-powered class discussions by encouraging students to research a topic or idea and then share the result of their research with others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The majority of students have positive attitudes toward their learning and respond well to the schools' effective systems to manage behaviour. Staff promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and this contributes to their consistently good behaviour around the school. Inspectors found students to be invariably polite, courteous and friendly and this is endorsed by parents and carers and other visitors to the school.
- Students feel safe in school and say that if they have a problem they can talk to a member of staff who will sort it out.
- Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say that incidents of unkind behaviour are extremely rare. Students are confident that the use of racist or homophobic language would be challenged and dealt with successfully by staff. The school actively encourages all students to express their individuality and appreciate that people are different. They know that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Attendance has continued to improve since the last inspection and is above average. The school chases up the absence of any students with a history of poor attendance relentlessly.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in some lessons, students can be passive and over-reliant on the teacher, and in a few lessons are less than enthusiastic in their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, key leaders and the governing body set high expectations of the school community. Since the last inspection, they have brought about significant improvements in students' achievement.
- Leaders have an accurate view of how well the school is performing. Action plans set out clear priorities and underpin the drive for improvement. Strong systems for checking on the performance of students and staff are helping to support continuous improvement.
- Students are given challenging academic targets that have raised their ambitions. Leaders at all levels make good use of information on students' progress to check any that are slowing down.

Checks are followed up quickly with well-thought-out support that helps students catch up.

- Teaching has improved because leaders carry out rigorous checks on its quality. This leads to staff training and support that is well targeted to the areas that need to improve. Systems to manage the performance of staff are rigorous and linked to school priorities and current national teaching standards. Staff are gaining confidence in leading staff training.
- The courses and subjects on offer have much improved. More students are able to pursue the subjects included in the English Baccalaureate. A range of work-related courses meets students' needs well. Students' communication, literacy and number skills are practised often in different subjects.
- The local authority has deemed that this successful school is in need of minimal support. It has worked well in partnership with the school to support its most effective teachers in spreading outstanding practice across the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors bring a good range of relevant skills and have had training on their roles. They have high ambitions for the school, hold leaders closely to account for the school's performance and are kept well informed about students' achievement compared to the national picture. They make sure that better pay and promotion of staff are closely related to performance in the classroom. They are aware of where teaching is in need of additional support and how the performance of staff is managed. Governors work effectively with the local authority to maintain a balanced budget. They know how pupil premium funding is spent and that achievement for these students is improving, and have looked closely at the impact of each of the different ways in which the funding is used. Governors make sure that students and staff are kept safe.

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	110070
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	413432

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,403
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Hutchinson
Headteacher	Ann Keane-Maher
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2009
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