

Cirencester Kingshill School

Kingshill lane, Cirencester, GL7 1HS

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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 headteacher, other senior leaders and a very effective governing body have high ambitions for the students and a good understanding of where improvements are needed.
- They have carried out a range of initiatives, particularly at Key Stage 3, which are already having a positive impact on students' achievement which is good overall.
- The percentage of students achieving five or more grade A* to C grades in GCSE examinations, including in English and mathematics, has been consistently above average over the past few years.
- Students' behaviour, both in lessons and around the school site, is good. They are proud of their school community, feel safe and treat each other with respect and courtesy.
- Teaching is good. In the best teaching, teachers understand the ability levels of each student and plan challenging lessons accordingly, enabling students to become actively and independently engaged in their learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- The rate of progress for a very small number of students, particularly those eligible for the pupil premium, is slower than that of other students in the school.
- Marking and feedback is not consistently helpful, so some students do not know how to improve their work.
- A small minority of teaching does not always use students' prior assessment data to plan lessons so that occasionally work set is not at the right level for individual students.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 46 lessons, including 14 lessons which were jointly observed by inspectors and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of 112 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and analysed questionnaires from 68 members of staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and students' assessment information, as well as examples of students' work.
- They held discussions with the Chair of the Governing Body and other members, staff and groups of students.

Inspection team

Helen Matthews, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional Inspector
Jean Whalley	Additional Inspector
Stephen Williams	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cirencester Kingshill School is a smaller-than-average academy.
- Cirencester Kingshill School converted to become an academy school on 1 August 2011. When its predecessor school, Cirencester Kingshill Secondary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school has science and sports specialisms.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage and speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent or carer in the armed services) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- The school intends to enter students early for a small number of GCSE examinations in the current series.
- 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 so that more of it is outstanding by making sure that:
 - all teachers consistently use available information regarding students' prior ability to plan appropriately challenging and interesting lessons that are pitched to the individual needs of students
 - there is a consistent approach to marking and feedback so that students clearly understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Close gaps in the attainment of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium with that of their peers so that all make rapid progress, by:
 - closely monitoring the progress of different groups of students, giving appropriate early support as required and checking the impact of this support on their progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. By the time students leave school, at the end of Year 11, the proportion of students achieving five or more grade A* to C GCSEs, including English and mathematics, is above average.
- Students have previously made faster progress in mathematics than in English. Their progress in English has been average whereas their progress in mathematics has been good. The school's performance data and students' work show that the current rate of progress is good in both English and mathematics.
- Attainment in the majority of GCSE subjects is just above average. In 2012, students did particularly well in art and design, geography and mathematics.
- The progress of the very small number of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is checked carefully and over the past couple of years has been above average in mathematics. In English, progress was also above average for this group in 2011 but below average in 2012. As a result, the school has carried out a range of targeted literacy strategies and analysis of current progress indicates students are making good progress in English.
- Over time, the gap in attainment between the small group of students eligible for the pupil premium and their peers has reduced significantly in mathematics, but less so in English. However, there is still a grade difference between the attainment of this group and that of their peers in English and mathematics. School leaders are using the pupil premium funding to provide targeted in-class support using teaching assistants, intensive interventions at Key Stage 3 and smaller classes at Key Stage 4. Leaders are beginning to track the impact these interventions are having on students' attainment and progress, but this work is at an early stage.
- The school is carrying out a range of strategies to improve and promote reading, writing and communication skills across the key stages.
- The literacy lead teacher has implemented a range of initiatives, supported by senior leaders, to improve literacy across the curriculum, and some pupil premium funding is being used to provide an accelerated reading programme for targeted students. Though in the early stages of delivery, it is beginning to have an impact on students' learning, particularly in Key Stage 3.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View were pleased with the progress made by their children.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best teaching, teachers displayed high levels of subject expertise and planned engaging activities using appropriate, high-quality resources. They built on students' prior knowledge and encouraged high levels of active engagement and independent learning. Students were encouraged to work together, share ideas and solve problems.
- For instance, in an English lesson, students worked in pairs to analyse a text, create model examination questions and then share their responses with another pair in order to broaden their understanding of the set novel.
- In a music lesson, students were independently composing their own music, while the teacher targeted challenging and thought-provoking questions at individuals, to make sure that their final pieces were of very high quality. Students were encouraged to evaluate their finished pieces and make necessary changes.
- In a science lesson, students were asked to produce a descriptive leaflet using information they had studied in class. They were given a clear set of assessment guidelines so that they could check the progress of their work.
- While the majority of marking and feedback are of good quality, this is not consistent across all subjects and year groups. Some marking is too vague, relying on general comments about effort

and presentation and with little guidance on how students can improve their work. Equally, some teachers within the same department use different systems for feeding back to students.

- Students are often encouraged to assess their own work or that of their classmates, indicating areas of strengths and weaknesses. When done well this is a productive activity and speeds progress.
- Some teaching lacks pace and challenge, relying on a range of often unchallenging activities that are not particularly engaging and hinder students from making progress. Often in these lessons, all students are doing the same task at the same speed, as the teacher's planning gives insufficient consideration to students' individual ability or prior learning.
- The vast majority of parents and carers on Parent View indicated that they are very positive about the quality of teaching.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons, using interconnecting rooms and around the school, is good. Students are respectful and courteous to each other and are polite and helpful.
- Students are proud of their school and were keen to share their positive experiences with inspectors.
- Students enjoy activities that encourage them to work in groups; they listen carefully to each other and are supportive.
- Any minor disruptions to learning are handled quietly and firmly by the teacher, using the school's behaviour code and there is an inclusion room for those needing some time out from lessons.
- Pastoral support is managed effectively through heads of year.
- Students feel safe and can explain in detail issues around their own safety, particularly with regard to e-safety.
- Responses from Parent View indicate that the majority of parents and carers believe that their children are safe and happy at school.
- Bullying is rare and the school makes sure that students are made aware of different types of bullying through their effective personal, social and health education programme, assemblies and registration time. The school has been particularly active in tackling issues to do with cyber-bullying, seeing that students are aware of and know how to deal with different situations.
- Students are encouraged to celebrate differences. There are regular opportunities for students to study an issue in more depth during themed curriculum days.
- Attendance is above average and continues to rise. This reflects students' enjoyment of school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is well regarded by staff, students, parents, carers and the governing body. She has a detailed understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the school and effectively communicates her vision in the wider community. As a result, the school is oversubscribed and due to increase its intake.
- The headteacher is well supported by effective senior leaders who work hard to promote equality of opportunity and tackle discrimination.
- The headteacher and other leaders in the school have worked hard to build positive relationships with parents and carers and local schools. This is reflected in the very positive staff questionnaires and responses on Parent View.
- The headteacher effectively manages teachers' performance. There is a structured system of formal lesson observations, linked to clear teacher targets that can be easily measured. As part

of the performance management system, teachers are given opportunities to develop their own professional skills through the school's own training programme, which is linked to the school's development plan and is tailored to the needs of individual teachers.

- A data manager has been employed to track the progress of all groups of students, including those receiving pupil premium funding, and is overseen by a senior leader. As a result, a range of interventions has been introduced at Key Stage 3 and the impact is being monitored. Current analysis of the data indicates that the gaps in progress of particular groups are closing in Key Stage 3.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of courses, with appropriate opportunities available for the most able and those requiring further support. The school offers good advice for students at the end of Year 11 as they transfer to post-16 courses and as a result, the number of school leavers not going on to employment or further training is low compared to national and local averages.
- The impact of the science and sports specialism is high, allowing the school to provide a range of BTEC and GCSE awards in those subjects, extra-curricular opportunities and specialist curriculum days. Attainment in physics, chemistry and biology is above the national average.
- The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through planned assemblies and lessons is very good. There is a school council with a representative from each year group.
- Over 40 enrichment activities take place each week and participation rates are high and tracked carefully by senior leaders.

■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body was instrumental in supporting the headteacher and senior leaders through the conversion to academy status. The governing body has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for development. It knows about the quality of teaching and students' achievement. It communicates well with the headteacher and senior leaders and is clear about its role in holding the school to account and its statutory duties relating to students' safety. Safeguarding requirements are met and the school is financially stable. Link governors work closely with leaders of subjects and aspects of the school's work, meeting formally twice a year to discuss performance data. The governing body understands assessment data and as a result, is aware of the performance of particular student groups and the emerging impact of pupil premium funding on students' achievement. The governing body works effectively with the headteacher to make sure that teachers' performance is managed robustly. It knows what the school is doing to reward good teaching and to tackle any underperformance.

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	137217
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	412189

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	828
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Johnson
Headteacher	Christine Oates
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01285 651511
Fax number	01285 885652
Email address	office@cirencesterkingshill.gloucs.sch.uk

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