

Cirencester Deer Park School

Stroud Road, Cirencester, GL7 1XB

Inspection dates 20–21 June 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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well. They leave the school with GCSE results that are significantly above the national average, which represents good progress given their starting points.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, have high expectations of students, and develop good working relationships in the classrooms.
- As a result of good teaching, all groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. Their positive attitudes in lessons help them learn well, and their polite and courteous behaviour around the school contributes to a very positive atmosphere.
- Students say they feel safe and well cared for, and are proud of their school.
- The school's curriculum is outstanding. It offers students a wide range of appropriate and varied courses that meet the needs and interests of students of all abilities.
- The school is very successful in developing students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in assemblies, lessons, and through many extra-curricular activities and educational visits, including a number of overseas trips.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is well supported by members of the senior leadership team. Together with all staff, they are committed to raising students' achievement and ensuring that teaching continues to improve.
- Governors provide challenge and support for the school. Their wide range of experience and detailed knowledge of the school help them make a major contribution to improving teaching and raising standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and a small amount requires improvement. In some lessons, work is not at the right level for everyone in the class.
- Students do not always achieve as well in mathematics as in other subjects due to variations in the quality of teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 lessons, of which 11 were joint observations with senior leaders. They examined students' books, talked to students about their work, and heard students read in lessons.
- Discussions were held with four groups of students, three representatives from the governing body, a wide range of staff including the headteacher, senior staff and middle leaders, a representative from the local authority, and the school's School Improvement Partner.
- Inspectors took account of 117 responses to the online Parent View survey, six letters from parents and 78 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at examination results and evaluated the school's records of students' progress. They examined records and policies relating to behaviour, attendance and governors' meetings. They reviewed the school's self-evaluation report, improvement plans, performance management systems and the use of pupil premium.

Inspection team

Ann Behan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Shahnaz Maqsood	Additional Inspector
Ian Bryant	Additional Inspector
Lesley Voaden	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cirencester Deer Park School is an average-sized secondary school. It converted to become an academy on 1 April 2011. When its predecessor school, Cirencester Deer Park School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- There are more girls than boys in the school.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are below national averages.
- The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which in this school is used for children looked after by the local authority and students known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average, while the proportion of students supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students attend a part-time vocational course at Sir William Romney's School, Tetbury.
- The school exceeds 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 is outstanding and none is less than good by making sure that all lessons are set at the right level and provide consistently high levels of challenge for all students.
- Raise student achievement in mathematics by ensuring that activities are more closely matched to student needs and build effectively on their prior attainment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is generally above the national average. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of students gaining five GCSE passes at grades A*- C including English and mathematics is significantly above the national average, which represents good achievement given students' starting points.
- Students' progress in mathematics is not as strong as that in English and science. The school has concentrated on improving the teaching of mathematics, and current assessment data show that this is having a positive effect.
- The school has entered students early in Year 11 for GCSE English. This has had a positive impact on results and the percentage of students achieving grade C or above has benefited from this policy. Some of the most-able students have gone on to achieve higher grades at the end of Year 11.
- Disabled students, those who have special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups and students who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as other students because the school provides additional support for each student tailored to meet their particular needs.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium to provide intervention and extra staffing to support students who are eligible. By the end of Key Stage 4, these students attain better average GCSE points scores in English and mathematics than similar students across the country. However, they attain approximately three quarters of a grade lower in English and mathematics than their peers in the school. School records show that current students eligible for pupil premium are making good progress in line with other groups, and the gap in performance is starting to narrow.
- Students eligible for Year 7 catch-up premium make good progress in developing their basic skills, particularly in literacy, because of the effective teaching and additional support that they receive.
- The Key Stage 4 students who study part time off-site make good progress because of good-quality, well-tailored provision. Arrangements for monitoring their progress, attendance and punctuality are good.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the online inspection questionnaire believe that their children make at least good progress. Inspection evidence supports this view.

The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is typically good, and some is outstanding. Evidence from lesson observations, and from looking at the quality of students' work and assessment data, shows that good teaching has helped all groups of students to achieve well.
- In the best lessons, teachers use good subject knowledge to plan activities carefully, paying attention to assessment data and individual learning needs. They use questioning effectively to check students' understanding and adapt their teaching styles appropriately. This was seen in a Year 9 tennis lesson on developing backhand skills where learning was outstanding. The teacher explained the purpose of the lesson clearly, students were given opportunities to practise and develop skills, high-level coaching advice was used to help individuals and groups improve, and good peer evaluation and support culminated in students applying their skills in short games of tennis which they enjoyed thoroughly.
- Where teaching is less effective, particularly in mathematics, teachers do not plan activities that take account of different starting points and that are at the right level for different ability groups. In these lessons, students are not challenged sufficiently and there are missed opportunities to

fully extend students' knowledge and learning.

- Marking usually gives clear guidance about what students need to do to improve, and in the best practice, students are provided with opportunities to reflect on teachers' feedback and to respond to the advice they have been given.
- The skills of additional adults are well used to give help to those students who need it. Support for students who have special educational needs, those from minority ethnic groups, students who speak English as an additional language, and those who are eligible for pupil premium is consistently good. As a result, these students make at least good progress.
- The majority of parents and carers responding to the online questionnaire said that teaching is good.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is excellent. Students are courteous, polite and friendly to one another and to adults. Relationships are built on respect, students enjoy working together, and there are positive attitudes to learning in lessons.
- Students are proud of the school. Those spoken to during the inspection said they feel well cared for and safe. They said bullying is rare and, when it does occur, it is dealt with effectively by staff. One student said, 'Deer Park is a friendly school that includes everyone. It is a brilliant school to be a pupil in.' Parents and carers supported these views in their responses to the online questionnaire. They said students behave well, are well cared for, and are safe.
- The curriculum is well planned to ensure students have a good understanding of how to stay safe, that they know about different kinds of bullying, including homophobic and cyber-bullying, and that they are aware of the dangers of the internet. They are taught about the advantages of healthy living and the effects of different kinds of substance abuse.
- Exclusions have reduced significantly and there are very few repeat offenders. This is due to the very effective pastoral systems and the positive support given to vulnerable students through the school's inclusion unit.
- Attendance is broadly average. The school monitors closely the attendance and punctuality of all students. It has recently employed its own attendance officer, through pupil premium funding, to improve attendance and to further reduce persistent absence.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the senior management team provide strong leadership, and are committed to raising standards and working positively with the local community. They know the school's strengths and what needs to improve through their regular and rigorous checks of the school's work. Their development planning is thorough and focused on providing the best opportunities for all students, particularly in mathematics.
- The regular and systematic monitoring of lessons, supported by well-targeted training, has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Teachers' annual performance targets are monitored closely and pay awards are directly linked to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. This is having a positive impact on students' achievement.
- Staff morale is high. Most responses to the staff questionnaires were positive. One member of staff commented, 'An excellent, caring, first-class learning environment. Great atmosphere to work in.'
- Funding for eligible students through the pupil premium is used well to provide additional teaching in English and mathematics, small-group and individual work, and to ensure eligible students have full access to extra-curricular and cultural activities. This reflects the school's

commitment to equal opportunity for all students, in tackling discrimination, and in being fully inclusive.

- The school provides an excellent range of courses that are well suited to the needs of students and reflect the various specialisms that the school previously held. Partnerships with the local authority and local primary and secondary schools, colleges and other educational businesses and organisations are a key strength of the school and enhance students' learning and future opportunities.
- The wide range of experiences available to students make an outstanding contribution to their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. This is evident in assemblies, in lessons and through numerous extra-curricular opportunities and cultural visits and activities. These include educational trips to many destinations in Europe and other continents.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough, including the risk assessments for when students are educated off-site.
- Responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire, and letters sent to the inspectors, indicate that they are overwhelmingly pleased with the education provided by the school. One parent wrote, ' I will never stop thanking the school for the support that it has given my child'.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are wholly committed to providing the best education for students, and ensure that all statutory requirements are met. They are proud of the school and the role that it plays in the local community. Governors have a good knowledge of data and know how well students are achieving compared to other schools. They have an impressive range of skills through the training that they have received, and through their own experience in education and business. They are well informed about the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and take an effective, strategic approach to supporting and challenging the school. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and achievement, and are totally committed to raising standards. They make a clear link between teacher appraisal and salary awards and pay progression. They monitor expenditure closely and are rigorous in ensuring that resources are used effectively to benefit students, including the use of pupil premium.

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	136527
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	412156

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy Converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	993
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Beckerlegge
Headteacher	Chiquita Henson
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	01285 653447
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