

The Westgate School

Cippenham Lane, Slough, SL1 5AH

Inspection dates

20–21 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- From below-average starting points, students in Key Stages 3 and 4 make outstanding progress so that they achieve above-average results at GCSE.
- Students do exceptionally well in English and are now also making very rapid progress in mathematics.
- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. They have high expectations of students and develop excellent working relationships in the classroom.
- The headteacher and other leaders have a determined focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers are committed to working together and sharing ideas so that they provide the best possible education for their students.
- Students are very proud of their school. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They enjoy school and are determined to do well.
- Students behave very well in lessons and around the school and show high levels of respect and courtesy to each other and to adults. They feel very safe in school.
- The outstanding curriculum is supported by a wide range of exciting and varied additional activities which promote the excellent social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the students.
- The highly effective partnerships with a wide range of businesses and other organisations provide exceptional opportunities for students to gain experience of work beyond school.
- The sixth form is good and improving. Students make good progress. They receive excellent advice and guidance so that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their education or for employment or training.
- The skilled and experienced governing body provides strong strategic leadership and very effective support and challenge to ensure the school continues to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 part-lessons, eight jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the school and in the playground, visited the library, and scrutinised students' work. They also visited the resource base.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, groups of staff, a group of governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and the headteacher of another school in the Cippenham Schools' Trust. Discussions took place with groups of students, both formally and informally.
- The inspection team scrutinised school documents including the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, school and departmental development plans, records of the school's lesson observations and statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) along with the results of a number of questionnaires which the school had given to parents. Inspectors also analysed 41 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Ann Short , Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Karen Roche	Additional Inspector
Christopher Anders	Additional Inspector
Gary Holden	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school converted to academy status in April 2012. It is part of the Cippenham Schools' Trust with Cippenham Primary and Infant schools. When its predecessor school, also The Westgate School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and those with parents in the armed services, is slightly above average.
- Close to 35 Year 7 students are eligible for catch-up funding, which is for students who did not attain Level 4 in English or mathematics at the end of primary school.
- A high proportion of students come from minority ethnic groups. The largest groups of students are White British, Pakistani and Indian.
- More students than usual speak English as an additional language. Only a small number are in the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of students who join the school part way through their education is lower than average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has a specially resourced provision, known as the resource base, for students with physical disabilities. There are currently 15 students on roll.
- A small number of Years 10 and 11 students attend construction courses at Haybrook College for part of the week.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure, by careful checking, that all teachers give students regular written and verbal feedback about how to improve the standard of their work even further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students join the school with levels of attainment below national averages. They then make outstanding progress. In 2013 the proportion gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics was above the national average. The school's careful checking of students' progress in other year groups suggests that results should improve further.
- Students consistently make outstanding progress in English and are now also making excellent progress in mathematics and in science as well as in a number of other subjects.
- The school has rigorous systems to check the progress of students so that any students who are falling behind are quickly identified and the right extra support is put in place to help them.
- The achievement of students supported through the pupil premium has risen rapidly. The gaps between their achievement and the achievement of their classmates in English and mathematics are closing; in 2013 there was a difference of about half a grade in both subjects at the end of Year 11. The funding is well used to provide support for these students.
- Many of the Year 7 students who are supported by the catch-up funding make rapid progress in English and mathematics so that they develop the skills they need to do well.
- Students in the resource base with physical disabilities and others with special educational needs make outstanding progress because of the excellent support that they are given.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress in line with their peers.
- The most-able students usually make very good progress in lessons because they are challenged to achieve very well. There are now additional strategies in place to challenge these students even further so that more can achieve the highest grades in their examinations.
- There are some very good strategies in place to improve students' literacy and to develop their love of reading. The library is an excellent resource and large numbers of books are borrowed weekly. There are many opportunities to read in school and students are encouraged to read at home.
- Students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or for training and employment because they have a good grounding in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. They receive excellent advice and guidance when they are faced with a choice of options and the school continues to improve this provision, for example through a new information evening for Year 9.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good overall and is improving. Students make good progress in their vocational and academic courses because of good teaching, excellent support and their outstanding attitudes to learning. Retention is good. Most students go on to university although some choose to enter employment or join apprenticeship schemes.
- The school no longer enters students early for GCSE mathematics. Some students are entered early for GCSE English but only when the school is confident that they will achieve their target grades. The very few who do not do as well as expected are given another opportunity to take the examination.
- The progress and attendance of the small number of Key Stage 4 students who attend construction courses at Haybrook College are carefully monitored and they achieve well.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers are highly enthusiastic and have excellent subject knowledge. They plan well and motivate and challenge the students through a variety of engaging activities.
- Relationships between teachers and students are outstanding and teachers and students have very high expectations of what students can achieve.
- Students feel able to take risks during lessons and are not worried about making mistakes. This

helps them to make rapid progress.

- Teachers use questioning very well to develop students' thinking, to promote discussion and to check students' understanding. In a Year 7 English lesson the students made outstanding progress in developing their understanding of the play they were studying by interrogating other students who had taken on the roles of characters in the drama.
- Teachers check how well students are learning throughout lessons and often ask them to reflect on what they have learnt. In an outstanding Year 8 physical education lesson all the students had opportunities to review their own skills as they took part in a fast-paced sequence of activities. They all gained confidence and made rapid progress. In a Year 10 English lesson students were asked to identify one piece of advice they would give to their peers in tackling an activity they had just completed. This quickly helped them to share ideas about how to improve.
- Teachers regularly plan time at the start of lessons for students to reflect on the feedback they have been given. Students are given the opportunity to mark their own work, or the work of their classmates, and are usually given clear advice about how to do this. Sometimes, however, written feedback is not frequent enough and does not give the students clear enough advice about exactly what to do to improve.
- Additional adults are used very well in the classroom to support the learning of all students. They ensure that the students from the resource base are able to participate comfortably in the lessons.
- Homework is purposeful and contributes to the outstanding progress students make.
- Teaching over time in the sixth form is good overall, with examples of outstanding practice. This is contributing to the good and improving progress students make.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. They enjoy their learning and want to do as well as they can. They work very well with their classmates and support each other to make rapid progress. Around the school they behave in a sensible and mature manner.
- The attitudes to learning of sixth-form students are exceptionally positive. They manage their own learning very well. In one religious studies lesson Year 13 students had given up their own time to make a presentation to Year 12 students. Students shared their personal knowledge and understanding of different religions in a thoughtful and sensitive manner, with little intervention from the teacher.
- No time is wasted in managing behaviour because students know exactly how the school expects them to behave. The highly effective behaviour management policy is focused on ensuring that good behaviour is recognised and that measures are in place to prevent poor behaviour. There are few exclusions from school and the small number of students who have difficulty in managing their behaviour are effectively supported so that they can succeed. Staff, students, parents and governors all agree that behaviour in the school is very good.
- The learning and caring ethos of the school is exceptionally strong. Tutor groups made up of students from the different year groups, including the sixth form, help to ensure that the older students can support and help the younger students. The older students lead by example and are excellent role models.
- Students with physical disabilities play a full part in the life of the school and are well supported by other students and adults. They are happy to be at the school and enjoy the many rich experiences which the school offers them.
- The school has worked hard to improve attendance and has been successful in reducing the number of students who miss too much school. Attendance is broadly average. Punctuality to school and lessons is very good.
- Students care for and take pride in the school, the school buildings and their school uniform. They enjoy the many opportunities to take responsibility.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. All students say that they feel safe at all times in school and parents and staff agree that the school is a safe place.

- Students say that there is hardly any bullying in school and if it does happen it is dealt with immediately and effectively. They have a good understanding of different kinds of bullying, such as cyber, homophobic or racist bullying. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet, in lessons and assemblies.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Staff, students and parents all agree that the school is very well led. The headteacher and senior leaders consistently reinforce the school's very high expectations and are determined to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Subject leaders enthusiastically promote a collaborative approach to improving teaching and to developing consistently outstanding practice across the school. Teachers share ideas and learn from each other and students contribute through their roles as learning champions and lead learners.
- Teachers are set challenging targets and are supported to achieve them through training and development. The links between the achievement of students and teachers' pay increases are clear.
- The school makes an accurate analysis of its own performance and leaders correctly identify where improvements should be made or new developments put in place. Decisive and effective action is taken to ensure that necessary improvements happen quickly.
- The outstanding curriculum promotes the outstanding social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of the students. It is adapted to meet the needs of individuals and is broad and balanced. It provides a rich range of activities both within and beyond the school day. The highly effective links with the community and local businesses contribute to the excellent opportunities offered to the students.
- The leadership of literacy is strong and there are good strategies in place to promote the development of literacy across the curriculum.
- The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education, for example by inviting them to breakfast and homework clubs. Attendance at parents' evenings and information evenings is high, and the school carries out regular surveys of parents' views.
- The outstanding leadership of the sixth form is bringing about rapid improvements.
- The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is shown by the high expectations of staff and the inclusive ethos, including the inclusion of the students from the resource base which is well led and managed.
- The leaders of the three schools in the Crippenham Schools' Trust work together to implement a shared vision and to support developments across the schools.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body plans strategically to ensure the school continues to improve. Governors are highly skilled and well organised. They visit the school and are very well informed about its work not least through presentations from students and regular contact with parents. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well and act decisively and promptly to address any concerns.
 - Governors know how to use information about students' achievement to judge how well the school is doing compared to others across the country and how to evaluate the quality of teaching. They receive training to enable them to carry out their duties effectively. They ask challenging questions and hold senior leaders firmly to account.
 - Governors closely monitor the use and effectiveness of resources, including additional funds provided to support particular groups of students. They are clear that these funds should be used to give all students the best possible chances. They understand how setting targets for teachers contributes to the improvement of the school, and the links between good teaching and salaries.

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	138012
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	441138

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
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	981
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Edward Picton
Headteacher	Darren Nicholas
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2011
Telephone number	01753 521320
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