

Carshalton High School for Girls

West Street, Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 2QX

Inspection dates 27–28 March 2014

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.

- Students achieve well and the progress of different groups of learners is improving rapidly.
- The quality of teaching is good and continuing to improve with some examples of outstanding practice.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. Their conduct, manners and punctuality are good. They are courteous to adults, welcoming to visitors and respectful of one another.
- Students say they feel safe at school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- The headteacher and the governing body have encouraged improvements to teaching and students' achievement. They have the ambition to take them to the highest levels.
- The balance of vocational and academic courses and the range of after-school activities help accelerate students' progress.
- The sixth form is good. Students are well supported by their teachers to ensure that they make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not consistently provide frequent and regular written feedback to students about the next steps in their learning.
- Leaders do not always check regularly enough on the quality and impact of marking.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons or part lessons, involving more than half of the teachers. A small number were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, staff, including senior and other managers, and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, including the offer it makes for disabled students and those with special educational needs.
- They looked at a number of documents, including information about safeguarding; the school’s own information on students’ current progress and parents’ and carers’ views; its view of itself and records of monitoring in relation to teaching, students’ behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors observed students’ workbooks in lessons in order to help evaluate their progress over time. A number of exercise books from a range of teaching sets were checked against students’ progress information.
- Inspectors took account of the 61 responses to the online Parent View survey and considered the 54 responses made by staff in the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Haydn Evans, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Olsen Davis	Additional Inspector
Janet Hallett	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Jenkins	Additional Inspector
Susan Willman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than most secondary schools.
- A substantial proportion of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups represented are of Black African, Black Caribbean and Asian heritage.
- The proportion of students supported by the additional funding provided for looked after children and students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding is above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Students are entered early for GCSE in mathematics and English.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement and the quality of teaching by making sure that all:
 - students are informed frequently and regularly about what they should do to improve their work
 - leaders regularly check the quality and impact of marking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of students is good

- Students join the school with significantly below average levels of attainment. They make good progress, so that by the end of Year 11 attainment is near the national average.
- Students achieve well and the progress of different groups, including the most able, is improving.
- Students' achievement is not yet outstanding because students' progress in one key subject, mathematics, is below average. This is partly because some teachers do not always check students' progress to fully engage them in their learning.
- All students are encouraged to read as often as possible. For example, reading for comprehension was a recurring feature of the lessons observed during the inspection.
- Those students in Year 7 eligible for additional funding receive targeted support. This enables them to achieve as well as their peers.
- The school's examination results are improving. The tracking of students' progress has become more rigorous and frequent. Leaders have the capacity to identify underachievement more effectively.
- Achievement in English, science, modern languages and the humanities is significantly above average. The proportion of students making good progress in mathematics is also improving.
- Students are generally well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment and the proportion of Year 11 students who remain in education, training or work on leaving the school is well above average.
- The rates of progress in Years 10 and 11 are increasing rapidly. These evaluations are based upon the tracking information on students' progress and the results of examinations for students entered early. The school's tracking information and students' written work in key subject areas confirm that they make good progress over time.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those of Black African, Black Caribbean and Asian heritage, are achieving in line with other students in the school. This is because the monitoring of students' progress is now more rigorous and frequent. This enables more effective help to be given.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is in line with other students in the school.
- A minority of students who are known to be eligible for additional funding achieve well. In the 2013 GCSE examinations, students supported by the pupil premium were a grade behind their peers in both English and mathematics. However, the gaps in attainment between these and other students in English and in mathematics are narrowing rapidly, and are currently insignificant.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Pass rates are improving and completion rates and retention rates are above average. Students' progress is improving, in both academic and vocational subjects, and this is supported by the partnerships developed with local schools.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is typically good and is improving. Variations in the quality of teaching across different subject areas exist but are minor.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is generally strong. In a substantial majority of cases, teachers plan lessons that are organised, well resourced and innovative. They are supported effectively by additional adults. In many lessons observed, the rate of progress in learning was good and students' attitudes to learning very positive.
- Students make rapid progress when teachers very effectively inform them through written comments about how they can improve. Teachers give help promptly and this inspires students to improve their work and achieve at the highest level of their ability.

- For example, in a mathematics lesson seen during the inspection, students progressed rapidly because the teacher built on what students had securely learned in the previous lesson. In a highly successful geography lesson, no time was wasted because the teacher had planned the materials very carefully based on her thorough assessment of students' competency in key skills. The teacher was able to question her students at pace because she knew her students' level of understanding very well and was able to intervene skilfully when they needed further explanation or challenge.
- Homework is usually set and marked frequently and regularly.
- On a few occasions teachers do not make sufficient use of information about students' prior attainment to plan their learning in a way that fully challenges all students. Consequently, the progress made by students is sometimes slower than that of their peers.
- Most teachers mark students' work regularly and frequently. However, this is not consistently strong across the school and, where it is less effective, students are not given enough specific advice and guidance about how to improve.
- Overall, the teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is effective. The great majority of teachers plan activities that reinforce these important skills.
- Students are given good quality advice about how to stay healthy and how they can be active citizens. Students feel well supported when they make decisions about the next stage in their education.
- In the best sixth form teaching, expectations are high and the questioning of students helps develop their understanding. Consequently, most students make at least good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. Students are keen to do well; they respect their teachers, enjoy their learning and appreciate the opportunities offered to them. They conduct themselves well, are polite and respectful of each other and are punctual to school and their lessons.
- Students have good attitudes to learning; they work enthusiastically, respond readily in class and show a collective ambition to do their best.
- Students have positive relationships with each other and adults. They value the responsibilities they are given to be ambassadors for the school. For example, they represent the school at parents' evenings and contribute to charity work, such as fundraising.
- Attendance is below the national average but improving. The proportion of students who regularly fail to attend has fallen as a direct result of the school's focus on improving attendance.
- The school manages those students with known behavioural problems well.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because in a very small minority of lessons where the teaching is less effective, behaviour declines. This is confirmed by students who say that low-level disruption occasionally occurs in a few lessons.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students and their parents and carers confirm that students feel very safe in school. Few incidences of bullying occur and, when they do, students are confident that they are dealt with promptly and effectively. Students understand what constitutes bullying, including homophobic, racist and cyber-bullying.
- The good behaviour of the sixth form contributes to the positive ethos of the school. Sixth formers lead by example and are good role models to the younger students. For example, they help the learning of students in the main school through one-to-one mentoring.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the governing body have a clear vision for the improvement of the school. The headteacher, through supportive leadership and management, has improved teaching and learning throughout the school by working in partnership with her experienced senior leadership team. Her determined and systematic approach to improving teaching has resulted in an increase in students' progress and the promotion of consistently good learning throughout the school.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have been successful in raising standards of teaching by ensuring that the quality of teaching and students' achievement are closely aligned with teachers' salaries.
- Further improvement is still needed in some subject areas, such as mathematics and computing studies, to secure outstanding teaching and learning overall. However, this is being attended to through setting targets for teachers, including the sharing of best practice and a systematic approach to professional training.
- The contribution of middle leaders to raising standards of teaching and learning has been important. However, on occasions books have not been checked regularly enough to ensure that teachers' marking gives students high-quality guidance about how to improve.
- The school has managed its finances very well. For example, the targeted resourcing of the more vulnerable students has resulted in a rapid improvement in their progress.
- The school is resolved to involve everyone in their learning. It offers equal opportunities for all and is committed to ensure that no student group is discriminated against.
- There is a good balance of academic and vocational courses offered at GCSE. The range of after-school activities focuses mainly on the extension of students' learning. These are popular with the students and are well attended.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs of students are extremely well met through lessons, other activities and particularly the after-school programmes.
- The partnership between parents and carers and the school is positive and has supported improvements. For example, the school engages with parents and carers who are difficult to reach by making home visits.
- The partnerships with the feeder primary schools are good. They have helped the transition of students into Year 7 and improved the learning of those who enter the school with low levels of attainment.
- Senior leaders have ensured that all safeguarding procedures are securely in place and meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and of the school's analysis of students' progress. This enables them to hold senior leaders to account by asking challenging questions. Governors are fully aware of how the performance of teachers is managed, including the use of the Teachers' Standards, and support the headteacher effectively in improving the quality of teaching. The governing body ensures the efficient management of financial and other resources, and supports the headteacher well in determining priorities within financial constraints. They check carefully the use of additional funding received and monitor the impact on the achievement of those students supported through it. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory requirements, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.

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	136797
Local authority	Carshalton
Inspection number	441119

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

Type of school	Non-selective
School category	Convertor academy
Age range of students	11–18
Gender of students	Girls
Number of students on the school roll	1250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Harding
Headteacher	Vivien Jones
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0208 6478294
Email address	cargirls.office@suttonlea.org

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