

Barnwood Park Arts College

St Lawrence Road, Gloucester, GL4 3QU

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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.

- Teaching has improved greatly since the previous section 5 inspection. Most teaching is good with some that is outstanding. This is having a positive impact on the progress of students.
- Students' achievement is improving rapidly. They are now making good progress throughout the school and in a range of subjects including English and mathematics.
- Systems for tracking students' progress have improved greatly so that disabled students and those with special educational needs are given well-tailored and timely support. As a result, their progress is now good.
- Students who are eligible for additional help through pupil premium funding are now doing better, and the gap between their achievement and that of other students is reducing.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is much improved since the previous inspection and students are pleased to be part of an improving school community.
- The school works hard and successfully to keep students safe.
- The headteacher, along with other leaders, has brought about rapid improvements across all areas of the school's work. She is well supported by all of the staff.
- Subject leaders are increasingly taking more responsibility for the work in their areas and are making considerable contributions to the improvements that are taking place.
- Governors have benefited from a large amount of training, so that they are now well informed about the school's performance and are increasingly challenging school leaders to do better.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that students make consistently rapid progress.
- Teachers' use of questioning does not always help to improve students' learning.
- Advice about careers is not timely enough to help students to make informed option choices.
- Not all staff consistently apply the new systems and policies that have been introduced to improve the work of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 part lessons, of which 27 were observed together with senior staff. A number of other lessons were visited briefly to look at students' books to check the quality of marking, the promotion of literacy and to verify the accuracy of the school's assessment data.
- Inspectors observed other aspects of the school day including an assembly, registration time, students' behaviour at break and lunchtime, and students' arrival and departure from the school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and five groups of students. Three members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, were interviewed, and a meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 44 parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire, a phone call from a parent or carer, and 47 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a wide range of documents including: the school's own data on students' current progress; its self-evaluation and improvement plans; information on the work of staff; training arrangements for teachers and other staff; checks on teaching, students' behaviour and attendance; the safeguarding of students; teachers' performance management; and the work of the governing body.

Inspection team

Ann Behan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Cliff Mainey

Additional Inspector

Teresa Hill

Additional Inspector

David King

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than average-sized girls' secondary school.
- The majority of students are White British.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above that found nationally. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students receive part of their education away from the school site. They follow courses provided by Hartpury College and Gloscol College, both nearby further education colleges.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, so that all pupils make more rapid progress, by making sure that teachers' questioning makes students think more deeply about what they are learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring all teachers consistently apply the school's policies
 - providing students with earlier advice on careers so that all are clear about next steps in their education.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Actions taken by senior leaders since February 2013 have led to rapid improvements in how well current Year 11 students are doing compared to Year 11 students last year. The proportions of students, including the most able, who are making at least good progress in English and mathematics are now at least in line with the national averages.
- As a result of their rapidly improving progress the proportion of students expected to gain five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, in summer 2014 is predicted to improve strongly to be in line with the national average. This represents good achievement given these students' starting points.
- The accuracy of the school's own assessment of students' current standards of attainment and progress was confirmed by inspectors' examination of students' work and their observations of lessons.
- All groups of students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those for whom English is an additional language, disabled students and those who have special educational needs, are doing much better. This is because their progress is checked more closely by teachers and additional support is given more swiftly when it is needed.
- The gap between the attainment of students eligible for additional funding and other students is closing. School data show that current Year 11 eligible students are approximately a grade behind their classmates in mathematics and about two thirds of a grade behind in English. This is a marked improvement on the position in 2013 when eligible students' results were over a grade lower in mathematics and a grade lower in English. In addition, the gap is reducing across all other year groups. This is because the school is making good use of additional funding to provide extra support for the students who qualify for it.
- The school has now stopped entering students early for GCSE English and mathematics. This is to make sure that the most able students have a better opportunity of reaching the highest grades in GCSE examinations.
- The small number of students who attend work-related courses elsewhere make good progress and most achieve success in their chosen courses.
- Students who are eligible for additional help with literacy and numeracy as part of the government's Year 7 'catch-up' programme are given extra, well-targeted support. As a result, the gap between their achievement and that of other students is narrowing.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved rapidly since the previous inspection and is now consistently good with some that is outstanding. Teachers know their students well and have high expectations of them. They use information about what students can do to provide work that is challenging and interesting so that the progress of students, including the most able, is improving rapidly.
- Rigorous systems have been introduced to track students' progress. Students know what they are aiming for from the targets that they are set for each subject. Progress towards their targets is closely monitored and students know what aspects of their work they need to develop in order to meet or exceed them.
- Teachers regularly check the progress of different groups of students. They know how well, for example, disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are doing. Teachers ensure that additional support is given in good time to those students who need it. Teaching assistants are well deployed and work effectively with teachers to provide good support for individuals and groups of students.
- Much has been done to improve the quality of marking since the previous inspection when it was identified as a weakness. Most students' work is now marked well with clear guidance on how to

improve, and teachers check regularly that students are acting on the advice they are given. However, this is not yet consistent across the school.

- Since the previous inspection there has been a clear school focus on developing students' literacy and communication skills across all subjects. This is contributing greatly to students' overall progress and success. For example, technical terms relevant to subjects are displayed in classrooms and there are agreed guidelines on how students must write reports and descriptions about the topics they are studying. This has improved the quality of writing across the school.
- The quality of questioning is not consistently good. In lessons where learning is less effective teachers too often ask questions that require little thought or explanation from students, and do not enable them to think more deeply about their responses.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. It has improved greatly since the previous inspection. Students are polite and friendly and show respect towards one another and adults.
- Students' attitudes to learning are good in most lessons because teachers support, challenge and engage them through good teaching. Year 11 students told inspectors that there has been a marked improvement in behaviour in school and that there is now a better atmosphere for learning.
- Occasionally, when teaching is less than good, students are not always engaged fully in their learning. A few students, while saying behaviour is now much better, reported inconsistencies in the way some staff manage unacceptable behaviour.
- Exclusion levels rose in 2013. This was because the school had raised its expectations of the students' behaviour and there was a period of adjustment. As a result, exclusions are now reducing and behaviour is improving rapidly.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students told inspectors they value the information that they gain about how to stay safe, the dangers of alcohol and substance abuse, and the advantages of a healthy lifestyle.
- Students have a clear understanding of different kinds of bullying and understand about the potential dangers of the internet and mobile phones. They say incidents of bullying are reducing and that they are dealt with effectively.
- The school has succeeded in improving students' attendance by raising parents' and carers' awareness of its importance, and by providing additional support for students who are likely to become persistent absentees. Current figures show that attendance has risen considerably to be in line with national figures and that there has been a decline in the number of students who are persistent absentees.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by other leaders, has worked relentlessly to improve the quality of education provided for students. Her dedication and commitment is shared by all staff and as a result there have been rapid improvements in all aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection.
- Leaders' judgements about the strengths and weaknesses of the school are detailed and accurate. This shows leaders' clear understanding of the need to continue to work hard on improving the quality of teaching and raise the achievement of students. They have introduced a number of policies to help the school improve which are having a positive effect. These include measures designed to improve teachers' marking and their management of students' behaviour, and to support students' progress in literacy. However, the new policies are not yet being consistently applied by all staff.
- The effectiveness of subject leaders was identified as a weakness at the previous inspection. The highly effective training and support they have received has enabled them to play a much

greater role in checking the quality of teaching and tracking pupils' achievement in their areas of responsibility. They are clear about what needs to be done and keen to make a difference. This means the school is now able to maintain the rapid pace of improvement evident this year.

- The management of teaching is now strong. Leaders make accurate assessments about the quality of teaching, which is checked regularly by senior staff and external advisers. Any pay increases for teachers are closely linked to their performance and they do not progress to the next level of pay unless they meet their targets. Good training and support for teachers over the last 18 months has meant teaching has improved greatly from being inadequate to consistently good.
- The revised programmes offered to students enable them to develop a breadth of skills and talents which provide more opportunities when they leave the school. Students value the external careers support that they receive. However, they do not always receive timely enough advice on choosing options or sufficient information about the different educational opportunities that are available to them.
- The school offers a wide range of after-school clubs and opportunities to take part in educational trips in this country and overseas. This contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Since the previous inspection robust systems have been introduced to check how well students are doing. These make sure that those students who are in danger of falling behind are spotted quickly and suitable help is given to support them to achieve their best. The school works effectively to make sure that all students, regardless of their background, benefit equally from anything it has to offer. There is no evidence of any discrimination.
- Expertise from external advisers and collaboration with other schools have been used effectively to help the school improve at a fast rate. In addition, the local authority has provided a wide range of support and advice in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and most responding to Parent View were very positive about the education and care that it provides for students.
- The school meets all government requirements in relation to safeguarding, including recruitment. All policies and procedures are in place to ensure students' health and safety.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have benefited from a large amount of training since the previous inspection from external consultants and the local authority. They are now very well informed about the quality of teaching and how well students are doing. Governors contribute fully to discussions about teachers' performance management, and are fully aware of how pay increases are linked to teachers' achievement of their targets. They are able to compare the performance of the school against others' nationally and ask searching questions to make sure that the headteacher and other leaders keep focused on improving the school.
 - Governors monitor the school's finances closely and are clear about how any additional funding is used and its impact on the progress that students make.
 - Governors make sure that all required child protection and safeguarding procedures are met and undertake relevant training to keep abreast of any changes.

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	115720
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	441907

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	659
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sylvia Odell
Headteacher	Sarah Tufnell
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 February 2013
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