

The Winston Churchill School: A Specialist Sports College

Hermitage Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey, GU21 8TL

Inspection dates 27–28 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The inspiring leadership of the headteacher has ensured the school goes from strength to strength. The leadership of the senior team, governors and staff is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and speeding up students' progress.
- Over time, teaching is good with increasing aspects that are outstanding.
- In 2014, just over two thirds of Year 11 students gained five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics. This is above the national average.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it to plan activities that motivate students to learn well and enable them to make good progress.
- Keeping students safe is a high priority. As a result, students feel safe and secure.
- Students' behaviour both in and out of classrooms is good. Relationships are respectful and students' attitudes to learning are positive.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. The variety of interesting courses and the rich programme of other activities ensure students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Middle leaders are increasingly involved in the monitoring of teaching and they make a strong contribution to speeding up students' progress.
- Governors are passionate about the school and proud of its recent achievements. They are effective and totally committed to supporting it to become outstanding.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough students achieve the highest grades at GCSE in some subjects.
- Some disadvantaged students do not make as much progress as other students.
- Not all teachers provide clear and precise advice for students on how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 56 lessons or parts of lessons, almost all of which were observed jointly with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with two groups of students, four governors, a representative from the local authority and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s information on students’ progress, planning and monitoring documentation, the school improvement plan and self-evaluation summary. Inspectors also reviewed the safeguarding policies, records of checks on the suitability of staff and adults to carry out their roles in the school, and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors took account of the 104 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspection team also took into consideration a letter received from a parent and held a telephone conversation with two parents.
- In addition, inspectors took account of the 119 responses to a questionnaire for members of staff.
- Inspectors talked to students about the school’s work and listened to some students reading in class.

Inspection team

David Scott, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector
John McAteer	Additional Inspector
Neil Gillespie	Additional Inspector
Fiona Hammans	Additional Inspector
Fatiha Maitland	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The large majority of students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is broadly average, with the largest group being of Pakistani heritage. Around one student in six speaks English as an additional language, which is just above the national average.
- One in four students are eligible for additional government funding, the pupil premium, which is below average. The funding is used to support students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Just less than one in 10 students is disabled or has special educational needs, which is average.
- The school is a specialist sports college and supports work in four primary schools.
- The school uses alternative training providers for its students. These are Merrist Wood, Guildford College, Lewis Services Europe, Eastleigh College, Circus into Schools Ltd and Woking College.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher and a new assistant headteacher were appointed in September 2013. Further middle and senior leaders joined the school in September 2014, including an assistant headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to outstanding and raise achievement by:
 - ensuring teachers provide activities that consistently challenge the most-able students so that they achieve the highest grades at GCSE
 - increasing the quality and consistency of marking and feedback as a means of raising students' achievement
 - speed up the progress of some disadvantaged students eligible for the pupil premium so that it matches that of other students.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The consistently high expectations of the headteacher and senior leaders have been the key to the school's sustained improvements. Together, they have created a school community where students' learning and behaviour can flourish.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership, together with a passionate commitment to ensuring all students achieve as well as they possibly can. She is supported wholeheartedly in this by staff and, as a result, morale is high. This is clear from the positive responses to the staff questionnaires. As one member of staff commented, reflecting the views of others, 'This school has been transformed by the inspirational leadership of the headteacher.'
- Since her appointment, the headteacher has refocused the school's priorities to improving teaching and learning. For example, she has established a team of leaders dedicated to improving the quality of teaching. Through an innovative training programme, effective monitoring and coaching is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and raising students' achievement.
- The additional government funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of most of the disadvantaged students. However, leaders know there is more work to be done to ensure all groups of students achieve as well as each other, particularly the disadvantaged students and the most able.
- The headteacher uses information about students' performance to inform decisions about staffing. She is also willing and able to take decisive action when needed, and has not shied away from difficult conversations with staff to improve the quality of teaching. Arrangements for setting and reviewing targets for staff are thorough and salary increases are firmly linked to students' progress. As a result, students' achievement has been rising.
- Effective systems to track and check students' progress have recently been introduced. This means that students' progress is tracked more carefully, so that support for their learning can be provided swiftly when it is needed. However, these systems have only been used for a relatively short time. Although there has been staff training, not all staff are fully confident in using information about students' achievement. The school has already taken steps to address this by appointing a senior leader to help staff improve their understanding and confidence in using information on students' progress. A comprehensive staff training programme is firmly in place to address this issue.
- There is a wide range of interesting courses and a rich variety of activities outside the classroom, particularly in music and sport. This is a significant strength of the school. Leaders have expanded the range of both academic and work-related courses to meet more closely the individual needs of students. These courses include graphics, nutrition and sport. AS level philosophy and ethics, further mathematics or statistics have also been recently introduced for the purpose of providing interest and challenge for the most-able students.
- The school makes a strong contribution to promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is provided through assemblies and personal development lessons which enable students to gain a mature appreciation of people in British society with different lifestyles, faiths and cultures. Students regularly take part in trips and residential visits to places of interest within the United Kingdom and overseas. All these activities prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders ensure that staff discuss with students political ideas or other issues currently in the news. For example, the prevention of radicalisation and sexual exploitation have been the themes of recent staff training. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and tackles any forms of discrimination rigorously.
- Middle leaders, particularly those newly appointed, praise the excellent training and support they have received. Regular reviews of subject departments by local authority consultants have helped to ensure that teaching has improved. Middle leaders are increasingly involved in checking the quality of teaching. As a result, they are making a strong contribution to the improvements in teaching and students' progress. For example, they have recently made changes to subjects to ensure that the most-able students take part in stimulating activities that challenge their thinking and understanding.
- The large majority of parents who responded to Parent View are supportive of the school and would recommend it to others. Most parents agreed that their son or daughter is kept safe at the school. In addition, the recently established parental workshops have been introduced to discuss ways to support the learning of their children. For example, they have held discussions in understanding and managing the behaviour of teenagers.
- Students take part in worthwhile work experience placements and receive good careers advice. This enables them to make well-informed decisions about the next stages of their education and employment

options.

- The progress, attendance and behaviour of those students who attend off-site training are well monitored by leaders. They visit and receive regular updates from the providers to ensure students are safe and that the courses meet their needs.
- The school receives effective support from the local authority. The School Improvement Partner knows the school well through her regular visits. She has provided very helpful advice and training. For example, she has observed lessons with senior and middle leaders to help ensure their judgements on the quality of teaching are consistent. She has also arranged additional expertise from external consultants to review a number of subject areas, which has already had a positive impact.
- Safeguarding has a high priority. Arrangements to keep students safe meet current statutory requirements and are effective. Records and checks on staff suitability to work with students are fully in place.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are passionate and have been effective in improving the quality of education at the school, and are proud of its recent achievements. They are committed to doing all they can to assist the school to become outstanding. They were involved in the appointment of the headteacher, and play a very active role in the recruitment and selection of middle and senior leaders.
- Similarly, they are extremely knowledgeable about the process for setting targets for staff and the procedures for tackling staff underperformance. They rigorously check and challenge the evidence provided to ensure good teaching is rewarded and that salary increases are linked to students' performance targets.
- There is a wide range of relevant skills and expertise on the governing body, including in the fields of education, local government, finance and human resources. Governors undertake regular training in all areas of governance to ensure they are up to date. This gives them the confidence to challenge leaders and hold them to account. For example, they understand statistics about students' performance and how they compare with those for students nationally.
- Governors are attached to individual departments. They visit and report back their findings to the governing body so that members have a good understanding of the quality of teaching.
- The governing body has a well-planned committee structure. The heads of committees meet regularly to plan the work of all the committees. They ensure actions are carried out and that there is no duplication.
- The checking and auditing of finances are robust. As a result of prudent budgeting and working to a six-year plan, governors have been able to support the school's projects as part of its drive to improve both the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Governors check and evaluate the impact of additional government funding well. They have ensured that the progress of disadvantaged students is beginning to speed up and the gap is narrowing between them and the other students in the school.
- Governors are well trained in safeguarding, child protection and safer recruitment of staff, and as a result, they ensure all safeguarding requirements are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **are good**

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students display positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions and requests. They take pride in their appearance and in their school uniform. The school campus is free from litter and graffiti.
- Good relationships, between students and between students and staff, ensure that learning flows with little interruption. Students behave well in classrooms and around the school site. They show consideration to one another and are courteous to visitors.
- Staff and parents are very positive about how the behaviour of students is managed.
- Those students who are from different cultural backgrounds play and work together in harmony with their classmates. Through effective staff training and support, the school has taken effective steps to help students whose behaviour is occasionally challenging. As a result, the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced. The number of exclusions has also fallen markedly in the last year. Nevertheless, leaders recognise that exclusions are still too high and need to be reduced still further. School records indicate that this figure is set to reduce even further this year. This is the main reason why behaviour is not outstanding.

- The school has taken effective steps to ensure that students attend regularly and punctually. As a result, attendance is just above the national average. The percentage of persistent absentees is the lowest it has ever been.
- Students have many opportunities to take on posts of responsibility. This helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. For example, they have made links with Oxford and Cambridge colleges and a leading local independent school. This enables them to develop their self-confidence in meeting different people and to broaden their career aspirations.
- The behaviour and attendance of students attending the off-site provision are good. They are checked closely to ensure that students enjoy their learning, achieve well and cultivate good attendance habits which prepare them well for employment.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Students feel safe and secure in school. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including the cyber and homophobic kinds. Those who spoke to inspectors reported that bullying in the school is rare, and if it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly. This is because they feel confident in approaching the anti-bullying committee (ABC) if they have a concern. The ABC is made up of representatives from all year groups, who are trained to listen to students' concerns and are able to refer them to members of staff as necessary.
- The school takes effective steps to ensure that adults and students are safe on the school site. Staff are vigilant in helping to ensure that students are well safeguarded in school. Staff work with appropriate agencies well to ensure the correct support is given, particularly when students have additional needs.
- Students are confident that they have the skills to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Through assemblies and personal development lessons, they are aware of the dangers associated with using the internet. Students known as 'cyber monitors' give helpful advice to students to help them feel safe online. The school's website has a special link where students, staff and parents can raise any concerns and trigger alerts.
- Leaders make checks to ensure that students using the off-site provision are kept safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Over time, teaching is good with increasing aspects that are outstanding. This has been as a result of a concerted and successful effort by leaders to improve the quality of teaching and raise students' achievement.
- Relationships between students and teachers are positive and this sets a firm foundation for learning to take place. Teachers have high expectations of both students' achievement and their attitudes to learning.
- In some lessons, students receive high-quality and continuous feedback on the quality of their work, with clear information about where improvements need to be made. When this occurs, learning is most effective. It results in purposeful discussion that deepens students' understanding and extends their thinking. However, this excellent practice is not consistent within and across all subjects, and does not always challenge the most able to achieve the higher grades at GCSE.
- The school's work to promote students' skills in reading, literacy and numeracy is good. There is a strong focus on helping specific groups, such as disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs. Individual support and opportunities to practise their skills in literacy and numeracy are helping increasing numbers to speed up their rates of progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it to plan activities that motivate students well. Teachers are becoming more confident in using the wealth of information about students' achievement to plan activities that are set at the right level to meet their needs. However, although teachers plan activities to interest and challenge the most able, in practice, these students do not always make rapid enough progress in some subjects.
- Staff understand the needs of students well. They use praise to reward good behaviour, which results in a positive learning atmosphere both in and out of classrooms.
- In a number of subjects seen during the inspection, students responded well to teachers' questioning and then held fruitful discussions along with their classmates to solve problems. As a result, they made rapid progress in their learning.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In 2014, just over two thirds of Year 11 students gained five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics. This is above the national average and represents an overall upward trend of improvement.
- Over time, students make good progress from average starting points. Overall, girls have made slightly faster progress than boys in English but not in mathematics. However, the school's information indicates that boys are now making similar levels of progress to the girls in English. This is as a result of a recent focus on raising boys' achievement.
- There were few significant differences in the results attained by different ethnic groups or those who speak English as an additional language. However, Pakistani students achieve particularly well.
- In 2014, disabled students and those with special educational needs made faster progress than their peers. The school's information indicates that, following the reorganisation of the leadership of the special educational needs area, current progress for this group of students is speeding up. Teachers are now being held to account for their performance so that students' needs are met. Inspection evidence confirmed this and that staff are now planning activities that meet the particular needs of this group.
- The most-able students do well in the subjects in which there is a large entry for GCSE, English Language, mathematics and core science. They do especially well in physical education, with just under half of all students entered achieving A* or A grades. This reflects well on the school's specialist sports college designation. However, the percentage of A* and A grades was below average in history, music, resistant materials and art, among other subjects. This was because, in these subjects, the most-able students had not always been sufficiently challenged to fulfil their potential.
- The school uses the Year 7 catch-up funding well to improve the attainment of students who entered the school with below-average skills in literacy and numeracy. This additional government funding is used to boost performance in these areas, particularly for students who speak English as an additional language. As a result of specialist help with reading, weekly booster lessons, and support to use information and communication technology at home, the progress of this group of students is speeding up.
- Over the past four years, gaps in performance between disadvantaged students and other students in the school have steadily narrowed in comparison with the national picture. However, over time, some disadvantaged students from their different starting points have made less progress than others in the school. At the end of Year 11 in 2014, disadvantaged students were one GCSE grade below the others in school in English, and were half a grade behind other students nationally. In mathematics, disadvantaged students were one-and-a-half grades behind others in school and just over a grade behind when compared to others nationally. However, the school's current progress information for this group of students indicates that the gap in performance has narrowed further, and at a faster rate.
- Students are not entered early for GCSE examinations.
- Students make good progress and achieve well in their work-related courses. They study a variety of subjects including business, information and communication technology, performing arts, sport and science. As a result of good teaching, they are well motivated and achieve high standards.
- The few students who attend off-site provision make good progress and achieve well. Leaders ensure that students' achievement, attendance, safety and behaviour are well monitored at all these different places.
- Almost all students go on to training or further education after leaving the school.
- Achievement is not outstanding because not all of the most able achieve the highest grades at GCSE and some disadvantaged students do not achieve as well as the others.

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	125314
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	449408

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,498
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Barter
Headteacher	Zoe Johnson-Walker
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 May 2011
Telephone number	01483 476861
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