

Chipping Sodbury School

Bowling Road, Chipping Sodbury, Bristol BS37 6EW

Inspection dates

8–9 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Achievement of pupils, including those in the sixth form, requires improvement.
- Boys are not making enough progress over time and there are little signs of improvement.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school has declined and improvement has been too slow since the last inspection.
- Leaders have not had sufficient impact on the improvement of achievement or the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governors' understanding of achievement is not sharp enough.
- Teaching does not provide sufficiently high levels of challenge for all pupils which limits the progress they are able to make.
- Teaching does not provide the deeper thinking skills necessary to prepare pupils for study in the sixth form.
- Leaders' views of the quality of teaching and learning are too positive and they are not adopting a rigorous enough approach to improving them; too little attention is paid to the impact of teaching upon pupil progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' behaviour and conduct around the school is good.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for; they enjoy positive relationships with staff.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported. They are known as individuals and receive intensive and varied intervention from the school to meet their needs.
- The school has a welcoming, inclusive feel and pupils report that they feel happy coming to school.
- The positive behaviour and work to support pupils' welfare and personal development identified in the last inspection have been maintained.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of all pupils, including boys and those in the sixth form, by ensuring that:
 - teaching is more challenging and deepens pupils' thinking skills
 - all teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can do so that more pupils make better than expected progress
 - pupils respond more consistently to teachers' feedback across subjects to speed up the progress they make.
- Improve leadership and management to have greater impact upon the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - the evaluation of pupils' achievement is rigorous and accurate
 - leaders effectively use the information gathered to understand and measure the quality of teaching and learning to promote improvement
 - governors rigorously hold leaders to account for pupil outcomes.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders rightly recognise that further improvements are required and some of their actions have improved aspects of pupil welfare and behaviour. However, views of the quality of teaching and levels of achievement are too positive. In these respects, improvements have not been rapid enough.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, so that there is insufficient challenge to push them to achieve more. Pupils are capable of making faster progress and few do because too much teaching does not expect more from them. The slow pace of learning and the absence of challenge in some lessons, supported by work seen in exercise books, highlights the need for greater expectations of pupils.
- Since the last inspection, improvements have been inconsistent across subjects and for groups of pupils. Leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the differences in achievement between different groups of pupils, such as boys.
- The local authority has not been effective in challenging leaders to improve the quality of teaching for specific groups of pupils, such as boys, and so their progress has remained significantly below average since the time of the last inspection.
- The leadership of teaching requires improvement, including in the sixth form. Overall, there is too little rigour in ensuring that improvements are followed up quickly and precisely. There is not a clear enough link between teachers' appraisal targets and the specific improvements needed to strengthen teaching. Action to tackle weak teaching does not always resolve the concerns identified quickly or robustly enough.
- A wealth of training and professional development opportunities are provided for staff, including through coaching and support. However, the impact of this support on improvements to teaching varies considerably. This is because leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching are sometimes too generous, or do not pick up sharply enough on the impact of teaching on learning, particularly for different groups of pupils. While much effort is given over to measuring the quality of teaching and to identifying broader areas of weakness, too little impact is evident from actions taken to target where teaching needs most to improve.
- There have been some improvements in English since the time of the last inspection; the improved quality of teaching has enabled more pupils to make expected progress. The emphasis upon planning and using time effectively together with success in cultivating good discipline and respectful behaviour across the subject have been factors in this improvement.
- Leaders have had a positive impact upon the standard of pupil behaviour, expecting high standards. This is reflected in the way uniform is worn, movement around the school and the respectful way in which pupils treat each other. Illustrations of such behaviour include the orderly way in which pupils queue up for their lunch and the quiet and considerate way that they enter into assembly, readily following the directions of staff.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum. A range of options, some of which are vocational, are provided when pupils move on to study GCSE courses. As such, the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils who attend the school. The curriculum is further enhanced by a subject called 'Life Learning', studied by all pupils, which provides them with information and guidance about how to lead safe, healthy lives and make appropriate lifestyle choices.
- There is also a comprehensive and diverse range of extra-curricular activities on offer for pupils which enhance pupils' experience of school. However, the arrangement of the curriculum in the sixth form means that some learners are not able to access all the enrichment activities on offer.
- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent on a range of different strategies. However, leaders are unclear about which strategies are most successful, which limits impact and leads to gaps not closing fast enough between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. The headteacher has rightly identified this as an area to improve further.
- Parents value the good communication that exists between them and the school. They report that school staff are approachable and open, and that any concerns they may have are dealt with speedily and effectively.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are loyal to the school and offer support to senior leaders. They are well informed about

some aspects of the school's work. However, they do not have an accurate view of achievement in the school, believing that progress and attainment are on upward trends and failing to identify that there has been a pattern of boys' underachievement over time. This is because governors do not sufficiently challenge senior leaders in respect of pupil outcomes.

- Although governors know how much funding is available to support pupils in receipt of pupil premium, and can describe some of the ways in which the money is spent, they are unclear about which strategies to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils are most effective.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks to ensure the suitability of staff have been carried out correctly, and records are comprehensive, robust and accurate. Staff have been effectively trained so that they understand the correct procedures to follow and know which senior staff they need to speak to should they have concerns relating to the safety and well-being of pupils. Pupils report that they feel able to speak to staff should they have concerns. All parents who responded to the Parent View survey indicated that they felt their child was safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school is variable across subjects because some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. As a result, there is insufficient challenge for pupils to deepen their thinking and reflect on their learning.
- Questioning does not sufficiently probe pupils' understanding or stimulate their interest to encourage curiosity and a passion for learning. Where questioning did develop thinking, for example in a Year 13 media studies lesson, it was effective. In this lesson, thoughtful questions around the portrayal of violent men in the advertising industry fully engaged the interest of all pupils in the class. This, in turn, created an atmosphere of studious concentration because pupils were keen to gain a greater understanding of the implications of these questions. Overall, there is too little of this high-quality work.
- In response to an area for improvement in the last inspection, the school has introduced a new policy for teachers to provide feedback to pupils. Not all pupils respond to the feedback they receive, as the policy is applied inconsistently across the curriculum and this hinders the progress of some pupils.
- There are strong relationships between teachers and pupils. As a result, there is little low-level disruption in lessons, pupils willingly cooperate with staff and follow instructions. Teachers are therefore able to use time constructively so that little is wasted.
- Where teaching is not enabling pupils to extend their thinking, it lacks the interest that will engage them, particularly boys. Effective teaching prepared pupils well for examinations and combined these requirements with activities and approaches that deepened thinking.
- Pupils receive regular homework in most subjects which supports their learning. Parents are also able to monitor the tasks set and their completion using an online tool. Parents spoken to reported that this was an effective, useful tool. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online Parent View survey reported that they felt their child received appropriate homework.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school rightly prides itself on being a caring institution that supports all pupils, regardless of background or ability. The Access Centre is a strong example of how pupils with autism are given specialist support to build their confidence, skills and achievement. Furthermore, leaders integrate these pupils into the mainstream school to benefit from the curricular opportunities available and to share in the whole-school community spirit. One parent said to an inspector, about her child, 'staff give him time to be who he is'.
- Bullying is rare in the school and pupils report that, for the most part, when it does occur it is dealt with swiftly. Most parents also reported that the school dealt effectively with bullying.
- Pupils are respectful of each other and their differences. Pupils understand that homophobic attitudes are unacceptable. Positive work that reinforces this can be seen in the curriculum, for instance a Year 10 religious education lesson considered different religious views of homosexuality that enabled pupils to explore this issue in a thoughtful and mature way.

- The curriculum provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their understanding of issues such as health, economic well-being and politics. This happens in the Life Learning lesson that all pupils receive, but also in other areas of the curriculum, such as science and food, where pupils' understanding of health is reinforced. In the upper years, pupils receive more information and guidance about financial and economic matters.
- Pupils experience many opportunities to develop their understanding of British values. Assemblies and tutor time provide opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect upon topical issues and events, such as the Paris bombings and the Syrian refugee crisis. In an assembly observed by an inspector, the pupils were able to reflect upon how Storm Desmond had encouraged people to come together to help one another.
- The school site is clean and tidy, generally free of litter and respected by pupils. Classrooms and corridors around the school showcase displays that celebrate pupils' work, and which lend vibrancy and colour to these areas.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around the school site and act in a responsible way so that good behaviour is self-regulated and not dependent on staff supervision. At breaktimes, inspectors observed pupils standing or sitting in orderly groups, talking quietly and sensibly.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. On various occasions, inspectors were cheerfully greeted and pupils frequently held doors open and allowed 'right of way'.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and uniform is worn well, reflecting their loyalty to the school. This also extends to the presentation of work in exercise books, which is also of a good standard.
- The behaviour of pupils in lessons is positive to the extent that they work conscientiously, follow instructions and stay on task. However, where relationships are particularly relaxed, the level of challenge is insufficient to enable pupils to achieve more.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and has changed little in recent years. Although absence rates of pupils who have special needs have recently been higher, this is attributable to the opening of the Access Centre and the school is taking effective steps to reduce these figures. Exclusions are low.
- A very small number of pupils receive alternative provision at the local college. These pupils are closely monitored by staff, who have regular, established meetings with teachers at the college, to ensure that they are well looked after and make progress.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- There has been too little improvement in achievement over time despite being an area for improvement in the last inspection.
- The achievement of boys was raised as an issue for improvement at the last inspection. Since that time, boys' progress has remained significantly below average and there are no signs that this pattern is reversing. Although the achievement of boys is an aspect of the school development plan, this issue has not had a high enough profile and the actions of school leaders have not had the impact needed. Activities to monitor teaching have not sufficiently focused on the needs of boys and have, therefore, not systematically driven improvements to meet those needs.
- There has been improvement in English since the last inspection, so that the number of pupils making expected progress in English has increased to match that made in mathematics.
- Not enough pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, are making more than expected progress in English or mathematics when compared with the national average. This is because some teaching does not sufficiently challenge and deepen pupils' thinking to secure this.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils has declined over the last three years. Although disadvantaged pupils made expected progress comparable with their peers in 2015, progress and attainment gaps are not closing between these pupils and their peers.
- Although the school has monitoring systems to track the performance of pupils, the analysis of this information is not sharp enough to promote effective intervention where it is most necessary, the progress of boys being an example.
- Achievement of learners in the sixth form has not improved since the time of the last inspection. This is

because teaching does not provide them with the challenge, skills and resourcefulness necessary for further study beyond school.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are being well supported to make better progress, not only academically but also in terms of attendance and personal development. These pupils are well known as individuals and there is a range of provision, in terms of resources and staffing, helping them to improve. However, progress monitoring information showed that targets for these pupils were lower than for other pupils; expectations of what these pupils are able to achieve could be higher.
- Pupils in the school are given regular opportunities to read and those spoken to by inspectors reported that they like to read; their enthusiasm was evident. Literacy is well supported in subjects where marking and feedback are strengths, but less so where this is not the case. A scheme to accelerate the reading of those pupils who are lagging behind is used effectively. The library is a bright and inviting space, enhanced by art work and displaying a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Actions taken to address the weaknesses in the sixth form identified at the previous inspection have had too little impact.
- In 2015, the overall progress made by learners following academic courses was well below nationally expected levels. The small number of learners on vocational courses made broadly expected progress from their starting points. Inspection evidence confirms that there remain important weaknesses in the quality of teaching and outcomes for learners in the sixth form.
- Leaders in the sixth form are unable to have full confidence in the accuracy of assessment information. For example, weaknesses in assessment in mathematics mean leaders are not able to accurately identify underachievement in this subject. As a result, half of those learners following AS level mathematics in 2015 failed or did not complete this course; almost two thirds of those learners who had started mathematics in Year 12 have not continued the subject in Year 13.
- Leaders have a broad understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in outcomes in the sixth form. They have accurately identified that results in some subjects, such as English language, biology and design technology, and in the extended project course, are in need of rapid improvement.
- Despite this, leaders have an over-optimistic view of the quality of teaching. They have not made a secure link between the quality of teaching in the sixth form and its impact in bringing about improvements in learners' outcomes.
- Too much teaching is not consistently effective in developing learners' thinking, reasoning, analysis and deeper understanding – important skills that learners need to be successful in their post-16 studies. Learners do not receive good-quality feedback in all their subjects that helps them to improve their work.
- There is a good range of support provided for learners through enrichment sessions that take place each Wednesday. Learners receive valuable advice about their future options and choices, and about ways in which to look after their physical and emotional well-being. They have a good understanding of particular dangers, such as drug and alcohol abuse or unsafe driving.
- Almost all learners move on to their choices in higher education, employment or training when they leave school. Currently, around one third of learners access high-quality work experience, and most do so by pursuing opportunities highlighted by staff in the sixth form. Other learners are helped to develop skills for work and life through sessions taking place in enrichment time.
- The curriculum provides a very broad range of courses and programmes. However, the way in which the curriculum is organised means that a significant minority of learners are unable to access enrichment, or take part in some trips and visits. Important lessons, such as for learners resitting GCSE courses, or for some learners on academic courses, only take place on Wednesdays. This leads to inequity of opportunity and access for some learners to the enrichment provision.
- The overall retention of learners on their study programmes is broadly average, although is lower in some subjects, such as mathematics. Learners' attendance is also broadly average and any issues or punctuality and lateness are usually tackled promptly by staff.

School details

Unique reference number	109324
Local authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10002419

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	688
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	125
Appropriate authority	South Gloucestershire local authority
Chair	Dr Katie Mansfield
Headteacher	Gareth Millington
Telephone number	01454 862900
Website	www.chippingsodburyschool.com
Email address	enquiries@chippingsodburyschool.com
Date of previous inspection	5–6 December 2013

Information about this school

- Chipping Sodbury School is a smaller than average secondary school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The number of disadvantaged pupil entitled to support through the pupil premium funding is lower than average. (The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils who are entitled to free school meals or are in the care of the local authority.) The school is located in an area of low deprivation.
- A higher than average number of pupils have statements for special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school's sixth form is part of the Cotswold Edge partnership with local schools.
- The school operates the Access Centre, a facility for pupils with autism. This centre is accessed by pupils from across South Gloucestershire.
- A very small number of pupils receive off-site provision at Filton College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for attainment in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was a section 5 re-inspection for schools which require improvement.
- Inspectors observed 29 lessons. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, governors, groups of pupils, parents and the local school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information of pupils' outcomes, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of meetings, and records relating to teaching and learning, behaviour and safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaks, lunchtimes, in registration periods and assemblies.
- The work of pupils was scrutinised in lessons.
- Inspectors took account of 85 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and 94 responses to the online pupil survey.

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