



# Chipping Norton School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 123231  
**Local Authority** Oxfordshire  
**Inspection number** 292618  
**Inspection dates** 21–22 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Peter McGregor

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Burford Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Chipping Norton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		OX7 5DY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01608 642007
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1176	<b>Fax number</b>	01608 644530
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	227		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr V Murphy
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Duffy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Chipping Norton is an average sized school. About two-thirds of the students are bussed in from surrounding villages. The vast majority of students are of White British heritage. English is not the first language of a very small number of the students. The school has a higher than average number of students from traveller backgrounds. The proportions of students eligible for free school meals and with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are lower than national averages. The school has Investors in People status, was designated a Training School in 2000 and gained specialist performing arts status in 2004. The headteacher has been in post since 2006.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for all its students, as their own self-evaluation indicates; some aspects are outstanding, including students' enjoyment, opportunities outside of lessons and procedures to help students settle in. Students achieve well. Standards in Year 9 and at GCSE were above national averages in 2005 and results for 2006 indicate a similar positive picture. Pupils' progress is very good in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 to 11. Students greatly enjoy school life, involving themselves wholeheartedly in the many activities available. They feel safe and remark how easy it is to speak to their peers and staff, knowing that their views are heard. Relationships between students are excellent. Students appreciate that healthy living is a priority for the school. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school council provides good opportunities for students to take part in school life. Students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, with its service section, exemplify the way in which the school is involved in the wider local community. Students have a good understanding of the world of work and most have strong skills in literacy and numeracy. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills, although satisfactory, are not as strong.

Teaching is good overall. Teachers know their subjects very well and plan lessons that motivate students. Effective, constructive discussion between students and teachers helps learning. Sometimes, however, mistakes in work go uncorrected. The pace of work is often good but occasionally slow with insufficient challenge. Most students behave very well in class and around the school. A small minority, often boys, do not. The school is in the midst of a thorough curriculum review. This has identified the need for significant changes which are being implemented, in order that the curriculum meets the needs of all students. Extra-curricular opportunities are excellent. Good school systems ensure that students receive the pastoral care they need, which is appreciated by parents. Particularly effective induction procedures and links with feeder schools enable students to settle in quickly. Academic guidance is satisfactory with appropriate systems for tracking pupils' progress against their targets. Inconsistencies exist, however, in how targets are set and how information is used to bring about progress.

The new headteacher, supported by his senior team, the staff and governors, is providing a clear and dynamic direction, focused on improving achievement whilst maintaining high staff and student morale. Leadership and management are good overall. Monitoring and self-review are strong aspects of management although inconsistencies in teaching and target setting have still to be ironed out. The school has good capacity to improve further, seen in the improving trend in results and the positive views of students, parents and staff on the changes taking place.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a well-established, successful sixth form where the number of students has increased over recent years. Completion rates for courses are good. Results in A-level subjects were above the national average in 2005 and similar in 2006. Students make good progress in their studies. Progress in A-level courses, taken by most of the students, was much better than that made by the small number who took advanced vocational courses.

Students are positive about their sixth form experience. They feel supported, actively involved in school life, and that their views are considered and taken seriously. Their comments on access to IT facilities have led to substantial improvement from which they are benefiting. They work well independently and cooperatively in lessons and study time, and enjoy the well-structured and extensive personal and enrichment programmes. All students take on responsibilities and leadership roles throughout the school.

Tracking of students' progress is not consistently carried out. The current range of academic courses, although wide, does not meet the needs of all students. The school has identified this in its curriculum review. The relatively new sixth form management team have clear, effective plans through which they are dealing with these issues.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve teaching by ensuring a more consistent approach to managing behaviour and providing pace and challenge.
- Improve the quality of the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 and in the sixth form, so that it meets the needs of all learners.
- Ensure consistency in implementation of the tracking system so that all students are helped to reach their potential.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Achievement is good overall and standards are above average. Results at the end of Year 9 exceed the national averages in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of students reaching very high standards in mathematics is exceptional. GCSE results are above the national average. In 2006, they moved a significant way towards meeting the school's aspirational targets. Results are very good in mathematics and English compared with the national picture.

Over the three years to 2006, standards on entry were broadly average and progress from Year 7 to Year 9 was outstanding. Over the same three-year period, pupils' achievement across Years 10 and 11 was satisfactory, maintaining above average standards. The current good achievement in Years 10 and 11 reflects the gradual

improvements in teaching. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress in most lessons.

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good and, in some respects, outstanding. The overwhelming majority say they enjoy school. Relationships are very good: warmth and respect between students and teachers is very apparent. Attendance is good and exclusions, both permanent and fixed-term, are low. Students say they feel safe and that bullying is rare, with any incidents effectively managed. Students value the 'peer mentoring' provided by sixth form students. It helps them to settle in and feel secure. Many aspects of school life enrich the moral, social and cultural understanding of students. Their spiritual development is less well promoted and is satisfactory. Students show very good tolerance and understanding of people from different backgrounds. Students from the local traveller community are particularly well integrated. A number of parents expressed concern about students' behaviour. Inspectors found that, in lessons and around the school, behaviour generally is good, although policies and strategies for managing behaviour are not always consistently applied.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are good overall. Positive relationships between teachers and students enable learning to take place in an atmosphere of respect and trust. Lessons are well-structured, with a good range of activities, so that students enjoy learning and are enthusiastic. In a Year 9 geography lesson, resources and a variety of short tasks captured students' interest in Japanese weather. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Expectations are often appropriate, particularly in Years 7 to 9, but are not always as high in GCSE and sixth form classes, where the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow. Occasionally, teachers do not manage students' behaviour well allowing a small minority of students, usually boys, to interrupt the learning of others. Teachers are learning to use the good ICT facilities available to make lessons more interesting. They use questioning effectively to assess students' understanding. Variation in the quality of marking, however, means that students do not always have the feedback they need to improve their work. Whilst students with learning difficulties and disabilities are usually taught well, occasionally teachers are not fully aware of their particular needs.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. The school has recognised, in its full review over the past year, that changes need to be made and these are in the process of implementation. The curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 meets statutory requirements. The school is working towards broadening provision to meet fully the needs of all students, and to respond to national guidance on making learning more relevant. A large number of GCSE courses, often as many as eleven, are studied in Years 10 and 11. This is not appropriate for all students, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities. A good new model of option choices has been introduced for current Year 9 students. It offers more flexibility and a wider range of courses and builds upon the existing good provision in work-related learning. A similar vision for extending the choice of sixth-form courses is an appropriate response to recent underachievement by the comparatively small number of students taking advanced vocational examinations. The school is part of an extended schools partnership. Through this it offers an exceptional range of enrichment activities both at lunch time and after school. These respond very well to students' academic and social needs. Students confirm that activities are very popular, worthwhile and extremely enjoyable.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Care, guidance and support throughout the school are good. The school has in place robust procedures for child protection and safeguarding students, which meet statutory requirements in full. Students are encouraged to take part in regular physical exercise, eat healthily, and they talk frankly and positively about how much these issues matter. The school places great emphasis on ensuring that all students, irrespective of their ability or background, feel valued and well supported. Arrangements for breakfast each morning, and late buses to take students home following after-school clubs, are excellent. Students are well informed about future options and career pathways as they move up the school. The school works very well with parents and other agencies so that students are encouraged to make effective progress. It identifies early any vulnerable students and gives them appropriate support. There is insufficient consistency and rigour, however, in the more general monitoring of students' academic progress, as departments and tutors differ in the way they set and use targets for individual pupils. The picture is similar for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, as information on their progress is not always dealt with efficiently.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The school evaluates its own performance well. The headteacher has introduced a clear focus on raising standards, whilst maintaining a caring and supportive ethos. However, as yet, there are still inconsistencies in the implementation of actions necessary to bring about improvement. The governors have been fully involved in recent developments and provide a good level of challenge and support. Students feel genuinely involved in the school, as reflected in their involvement in governors' meetings.

As a Training School and an Investor in People, Chipping Norton has actively encouraged staff development and this has contributed to improved standards. The school has made good use of its specialist performing arts status to broaden students' experiences. This was demonstrated by 'Historical Dance' days enjoyed by Year 8 students during the inspection. A valuable contribution is made to the wider community, as well as to students, through the school's membership of an extended school partnership. Equality of opportunity is actively promoted, as demonstrated by changes in the curriculum. Discrimination is not tolerated and all students are expected to behave as good citizens. The school's finances are well managed and this has made possible considerable investment in facilities and accommodation in the last two years, an example of the good progress made since the last inspection.



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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with you.

Your school is providing you with a good education, with some outstanding areas, particularly your high levels of enjoyment, the opportunities you have outside of lessons and the way you are helped to settle in. You are very successful in English, maths and science tests at the end of Year 9, and attain above average GCSE and A-level results. In your first three years at Chipping Norton you make very good progress in your work. Your progress in later years is good. Usually you behave well, but occasionally a few, mainly boys, misbehave. This is not helping others to learn and so we have asked your teachers to be more consistent in using the school's behaviour policy.

Most of you say how much you really enjoy school life, particularly the exceptional range of clubs, activities and visits. You get on extremely well together and feel safe and well cared for. Lots of opportunities are provided for you to take responsibilities in the school, which you are happy to do. You are well taught and you appreciate that your teachers try to help you learn. Sometimes the pace and demand in lessons are not high enough and so we are asking your teachers to expect more of you in some lessons. The target-setting system is helpful but it isn't yet used consistently enough.

The school is changing the number and range of GCSE subjects you are taught and we agree with your headteacher that this is a good idea. What you are taught in Years 7 to 9 and the sixth form is being reviewed and we think here too changes will benefit you, so courses match more closely what each of you needs.

Your school is well led and managed. The headteacher and his staff, well supported by governors, are making important changes, carefully thought out, which are helping you to be even more successful.

Best wishes,

Peter McGregor

Lead Inspector