

Carterton Community College

Upavon Way, Carterton, Oxfordshire, OX18 1BU

Inspection dates 10–11 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The number of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics has improved over the last three years, and is now broadly in line with the national average. This is good achievement given the students' below-average starting points.
- Teaching is good, continues to improve and leads to students achieving well.
- The development of students' literacy and numeracy skills is good. Most students make at least good progress in these areas.
- Students behave well, enjoy school and feel safe. They say they feel valued and respected and appreciate the variety of activities that are available to them.
- The headteacher has high aspirations for this improving school and provides strong leadership. The senior leadership team share his drive and his commitment to improving teaching and student achievement.
- The governors know the school well. They are clear about its strengths and where it needs to improve. They hold staff to account for the quality of the school's performance and teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small number of lessons teachers do not always plan activities that hold students' attention, work is too easy and there is a tendency for the teacher to do too much and not allow students to get on with their learning.
- Although most marking is thorough and gives good advice to students about improving their work, this good practice is not evident in all subjects. In mathematics, in particular, marking is not as thorough as it should be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons. A number of the lessons were jointly observed with senior members of staff. Inspectors also observed tutor times for different groups of students.
- Discussions were held with four different groups of students, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, and a wide range of staff including the headteacher, senior staff and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of the 46 parents and carers who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire, and the 52 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school’s self-evaluation and development plan, information on students’ progress, and records and policies relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They scrutinised examples of students’ work.

Inspection team

Ann Behan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Bill Stoneham

Additional inspector

Heather Leatt

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Carterton Community College is smaller than the average secondary school and has a falling roll.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of students on the school action plus programme, or with a statement of special educational needs, is above average.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are well below national averages.
- A very small number of Key Stage 4 students receive part of their education off-site. These students are all following work-related courses.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' achievement further by ensuring that more teaching is outstanding and that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of what the students can do
 - teachers' planning does not concentrate simply on task completion but is designed to meet the needs of all groups of students
 - students have more scope to learn by working individually and collaboratively
 - marking and assessment are thorough in every subject and students are given clear written guidance on how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- This is a good and improving school. When students join the school in Year 7, their levels of attainment are below the national average. The school develops their skills in reading, writing and mathematics, and, as a result, they make good progress across a range of subjects and across all years.
- GCSE results are improving, notably in English and mathematics. The proportion of students gaining five GCSEs at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is close to the national average. This is good achievement given the students' below-average starting points.
- The school has concentrated on improving English and mathematics and there is now a major focus on improving the teaching of science. While students' progress is not as fast in science as it is in English and mathematics, it is accelerating at a good rate.
- Because the work set by teachers is not always demanding enough, the most-able students do not always do as well as they should in English and mathematics and the proportion gaining A* and A grades is below average.
- The school has an early-entry policy for GCSE mathematics and students complete this examination in Year 10 and early in Year 11. This has had a positive impact on results in mathematics and more students are achieving grade C by the end of the year. Some of the most-able students have gone on to achieve higher grades at the end of Year 11.
- The learning of all different groups of students is equally good. Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve in line with the other students because the school provides additional support for each student tailored to meet their particular needs.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium to provide intervention and extra staffing to help students who are eligible. These students have GCSE average points scores similar to those of their peers and their progress in English and mathematics is better than eligible students nationally.
- The Key Stage 4 students who study off-site make good progress because of the good-quality, well-tailored provision. Arrangements for monitoring their progress, attendance and punctuality are good.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the online inspection questionnaire believe that their children make at least good progress. Inspection evidence supports this.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved over time and is now good with examples of outstanding practice. Evidence from lesson observations and from looking at the quality of students' work shows that good teaching has helped all groups of students to achieve well.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers plan and set work that is challenging and provides a variety of activities. Students may work in pairs or in groups and are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. This was evident in a Year 10 history lesson where students made excellent progress in understanding the effects of the Industrial Revolution. Students had to research effects, work in pairs and groups, and self- and peer-assess the work covered. Learning was rapid and enjoyable and their progress was outstanding.
- In a small number of lessons, teachers do not always plan activities that capture and maintain students' attention, work is too easy, particularly for the more able, and there is a tendency for the teacher to miss opportunities to promote collaborative or independent learning. This restricts the scope for students to make good progress.
- Regular and thorough marking in most subjects provides helpful guidance to students on how to improve their work. However, this is not uniform across all subjects. In mathematics, in

particular, written feedback is often vague and does not contain enough detail on how to improve work to the next level.

- Disabled students, those who have special educational needs and students who have difficulty in English and mathematics benefit from literacy and numeracy help, both in class and in separate groups, and they are provided with good support by teaching assistants. Students eligible for the pupil premium have access to specialist support such as an academic mentor and one-to-one teaching. This has given them the same chances to learn and make similar progress to their classmates.
- An overwhelming majority of parents and carers responding to the online inspection questionnaire said that teaching is good. However, a small minority expressed concerns about the amount of homework that is set. Inspectors judged the amount of homework to be appropriate.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. Students are polite and courteous, and show respect towards adults and towards one another. They cooperate with staff and each other, and work well in teams and in groups. Evidence indicates that students attending off-site provision behave equally well.
- Students respond well to good-quality teaching and show positive attitudes to learning. They say that they enjoy school, that they feel safe and that staff care for them and teach them well. They value the variety of opportunities and activities provided by the school.
- Attendance is in line with the national average and is improving swiftly. The school has been active in raising attendance and reducing persistent absence.
- In tutor time and in lessons, teachers give students a good understanding of how to stay safe. They cover a variety of themes about the importance of healthy lifestyles and the dangers and adverse effects of drugs and substance abuse.
- Students are aware of different kinds of bullying including racist behaviour and homophobia. They told inspectors that bullying rarely happens and, on the very few occasions that it does, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.
- Students are encouraged to use modern technology safely. They are well informed about the dangers of cyber-bullying.
- Parents and carers agree that the school manages behaviour well and keeps their children safe. All said that their children enjoy coming to school.
- Students expressed great pride in the school. They commented that it is a happy, safe and harmonious place to be.

The leadership and management are good

- The school is impressively well led and managed by the headteacher and the senior leadership team. They have worked hard and effectively to raise achievement and improve teaching, and are very well supported by the main body of staff who are keen for the school to improve further.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Senior staff and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching are well established and, as a result, the majority of students are making at least good progress.
- Senior staff meet regularly with teachers and middle leaders to discuss progress towards reaching their annual objectives. Training is closely linked to ways to support staff to improve, and their effectiveness, particularly in teaching. Any underperformance is dealt with quickly. No members of staff are given salary increases unless their performance over time justifies them.
- Staff morale is high. Almost all responses to the staff questionnaire were positive. One member

of staff commented, 'I am really happy to be part of this school.'

- The curriculum has been adapted well to suit the range of student needs and to accommodate falling student numbers. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to utilise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Additional support is given to students who need more help with literacy and numeracy to improve their progress. There are combined lessons for Year 10 and Year 11 students to preserve a wider choice of subjects at GCSE, and off-site provision for work-related courses.
- The school is effective at ensuring an equality of opportunity for all students, in fostering good relationships within and beyond the school community and in tackling any form of discrimination robustly.
- The range of experiences available to students contributes positively to their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. This is evident in lessons, and through a wide range of cultural visits and activities which range from links with a school in South Africa to trips taken to places as diverse as Scotland and the Himalayas.
- The school receives light-touch support from the local authority.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough, including the risk assessment for when some students are off-site.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is performing and the quality of teaching and learning. They hold the school to account well for its performance and rightly judge that the school offers a good education. They analyse outcomes, including examination performance; they are aware of the strengths that exist in teaching and are involved fully in ensuring that there is a close link between salary progression and the effectiveness of teaching. Through the training they have received, they are aware of how performance management works. They monitor expenditure closely, including the way the pupil premium is spent.

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	123236
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	402147

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	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	555
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sara Wilkins
Headteacher	Niall McWilliams
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 December 2009
Telephone number	0199 3841611
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