

Inspection of a good school: Cirencester Deer Park School

Stroud Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1XB

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

Cirencester Deer Park School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The values of 'trust, kindness and determination' pervade this school. Pupils welcome leaders' high expectations of their behaviour and conduct. They know that if they do not uphold the school's values, they will be challenged by staff. When pupils experience derogatory language or bullying, leaders take swift and effective action.

Parents and carers speak highly of the school. They value the communication they have with leaders and the quality of education their children receive. Comments such as 'I couldn't ask for a better school for my child' were typical in Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Pupils enjoy their learning and feel well prepared for the future. The annual careers convention, for instance, helps pupils learn about an extensive range of next steps for their education and employment. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to have a voice through the school council and leadership positions as presidents or vice-presidents.

Pupils relish the opportunities to develop their talents and interests. The expressive arts, for example, are at the heart of the school. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about events, such as the school production and young musician competition. The biannual talent show is a popular occasion. Pupils enjoy celebrating the talents of their peers and of staff.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have re-established their high expectations of pupils' behaviour since the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils behave well in lessons and benefit from learning without low-level disruption from others.

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the quality of education that pupils receive. This vision extends to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who are disadvantaged. Leaders keep the curriculum under review and use feedback to help them improve it where they need to.

When designing the curriculum, leaders have carefully considered the important knowledge and skills pupils should learn. This includes important knowledge from each subject and how best to teach it. For instance, in history, pupils learn about important historical concepts and how to use information from historical sources. Across the curriculum, teaching is ambitious about the subject-specific vocabulary that pupils should learn and use.

In each subject curriculum, leaders have sequenced knowledge to prepare pupils for future learning. Improvements to the languages curriculum in key stage 3 provide a stronger foundation for more pupils to study the English Baccalaureate in key stage 4.

Teachers have the subject expertise they need. For example, in mathematics, teachers clearly explain to pupils the mathematical methods and approaches required to problem-solve. Pupils are then able to use these proficiently. Teaching typically uses assessment well to check pupils' understanding and identify gaps in their learning.

The curriculum is adapted well for most pupils with SEND. However, for some pupils, their needs are not identified precisely enough. This means that the curriculum is not always successfully adapted for them. Similarly, the curriculum for some pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read is not as effective as it could be.

Leaders have a clear vision for pupils' personal development. Since the pandemic, this has included a strong focus on ensuring positive mental health. Pupils learn about the importance of tolerance and citizenship.

Pupils receive useful careers information, advice and guidance. They undertake meaningful work experience and have good encounters with a wide range of employers.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders in respect of workload, well-being and managing pupils' behaviour. Leaders are reflective and self-critical. They regularly seek ways to improve or enhance the school's effectiveness. Staff value the professional development they receive.

Trustees and local governors are experienced and ask challenging questions to hold leaders to account. They ensure that resources are well managed and that the school fulfils its statutory duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Appropriate checks are made on adults working in the school. Staff understand the priority that should be given to safeguarding. They receive effective training and report concerns about pupils or adults appropriately.

When pupils are at risk, leaders make timely referrals to safeguarding partners. They engage external agencies to support and educate pupils. Leaders are not afraid to challenge partners to secure the support that children need.

Pupils learn about online safety. They feel confident to talk to staff if they are worried about anything. The school has appropriate practice to manage sexualised language or abuse that arises in or out of school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils with SEND are not supported well enough. In these cases, pupils' needs are either not accurately identified or the curriculum is not adapted appropriately. Leaders should ensure that pupils' needs are identified and met so that all pupils are supported to achieve well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136527
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256737
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1013
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin McLeman
Headteacher	Richard Clutterbuck
Website	www.deerparkschool.net
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Corinium Education Trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, members of the local governing body, a member of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with

teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and examined the school's safeguarding records. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

James Oldham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nic Blunsum

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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