

# Clevedon School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	132006
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	381434
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19-20 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Smith HMI

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,234
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	186
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Blakeman
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Wells
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Valley Road Clevedon North Somerset BS21 6AH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 53 lessons, taught by 53 teachers and held meetings with staff, students and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's assessment records, the minutes of the meetings of the governing body, aspects of community work and safeguarding procedures, the minutes of meetings with the School Improvement Partner, faculty evaluations and school action plans and evaluations. They also scrutinised 171 parent and carer questionnaires, 66 staff questionnaires and 151 student questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which the school's specialist language status has helped raise standards and contributed to its work within the community.
- The impact of the school's common approach to lesson planning in ensuring high quality learning.
- How effectively lessons meet the needs of students and provide opportunities for independent learning.
- How well students understand their place in multicultural United Kingdom.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than the average. It has specialist status as a language college. The vast majority of students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is very small. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average but the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs is low.

The school was recognised as one of the most improved schools by the Schools and Academy Trust in 2010 and it had a science subject inspection in February 2011.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Clevedon is an outstanding school which provides excellent opportunities for students to thrive and develop highly effective skills and aptitudes. The school's focus on raising standards has brought about exceptional improvement over the last few years. Standards in English have been high with GCSE results being well above average. In mathematics the strong focus on improvement has meant that these standards have risen significantly and are now above average. Hence attainment is above average and students make good, and often outstanding, progress. The school's excellent, accurate analysis shows that this momentum is due to continue. Results at A level show that students in the sixth form are well prepared for their next phase of education, including university, or for work.

A major strength of the school is the excellent support for students whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. The school takes responsibility for a number of students who have had considerable disruption to their education, often because they have been excluded from a number of schools. The support for these students so that they achieve well and all progress to either further education, training or work, demonstrates the school's excellent commitment to inclusion and to ensuring equality of opportunity. The belief that all can, and will, succeed is central to the clear ambition from the highly effective senior leadership team which is understood and acted upon by all staff.

The quality of students' learning is good and often outstanding because of a combination of a highly motivating curriculum which meets the individual needs of students very well and excellent guidance and support. The house system is used exceptionally well to motivate and enthuse students, along with engaging teaching. Lessons meet the needs of students very closely as work is matched to their abilities. The very strong emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning has meant that these have improved markedly and are now good. The school has set clear expectations from staff for all lessons; a major success has been the great increase in opportunities for students to work independently, an area which was identified for improvement in the previous inspection report. The school has rightly identified that to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently at least good and more often outstanding, it needs to ensure greater consistency by reducing incidents when teachers talk for too long before students get down to work, and also to make better use of assessment so that students have a good understanding of the next steps in order for them to meet their challenging targets.

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The school has made excellent improvements to its specialist area of modern foreign languages. It has worked very well with its partner primary schools and supported them in teaching French to pupils of all ages. Students now arrive at the school far better prepared to study languages. All students take at least one appropriate language qualification at the end of Year 9. The provision for languages at Key Stage 4 has increased with students being able to study French, German, Spanish, Italian and Mandarin Chinese. This is one example of the excellent work the school does within the local community. Students have an excellent understanding of their area and also of many areas within the world, especially through the school's links through its specialist status. However, students have a less well-developed understanding of life in multicultural United Kingdom.

Staff know students very well and offer excellent care. As a result, students enjoy school and their behaviour is good. Safeguarding procedures are of a very high standard and consequently students say they feel very safe. This judgement is also supported by the returns from the parent and carer questionnaires. Risk assessments in science have been fully integrated into schemes of work in line with the recommendation from the science inspection. The school has been highly successful in making exceptional improvements in many elements of its provision, so that now it offers an outstanding curriculum and students' achievement is good. Staff share the ambition for continuous improvement and are not complacent, leadership is highly effective and overall there is an outstanding capacity to improve.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Extend opportunities for students to systematically learn about life in a modern multicultural United Kingdom, including first-hand experiences.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Students start at the school with broadly average levels of attainment. Examination results for 2011 show that students subsequently make good progress; levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 are above average and achievement is good. Observations of lessons and the school's accurate analysis show that the significant improvements from the previous year are likely to continue. The school is particularly successful with students who have arrived part-way through their schooling. Some of these who have previously been excluded from other establishments go on to successfully complete their education. Given their previous poor academic and behaviour record, this is outstanding achievement. These students are also often identified as needing additional support. Other students, who are identified as having special education needs and/or disabilities, although small in number, are well supported and make excellent progress. The proportion of these students who achieve five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* – C, including English and mathematics, is close to that for the whole year. This is also true for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals.

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During the inspection, inspectors observed students making good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in lessons. Observations showed that learning was best when students worked collaboratively or independently and when teachers identified how best to engage students and gave short sharp expositions before students got down quickly to concentrate on their work. Students enjoy coming to school and respect each other and their teachers. They commented that they enjoy the house system and the opportunities it provides especially the wide range of inter-house competitions. They have very good social and interpersonal skills.

Students have a well-developed understanding of moral issues and they demonstrate a good spiritual awareness in their consideration of emotions and beliefs. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is mainly very good although at times some students do not take full responsibility for their own behaviour. Incidents of bullying are very rare and students have a good understanding of the different types of bullying. They are also aware of the implications. A few parents and carers commented that their child had been the victim of bullying and they had not always been pleased with the response. Students said that any rare incident was quickly and effectively dealt with. Students make an excellent contribution to the local community and to the school through the highly effective house councils. Above average attendance, along with good work-related skills and attitudes, ensures that the school prepares students well for the future. The proportion of students who are not in education, employment or training after they have left school is consistently very low.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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## How effective is the provision?

Teachers know their students well and relationships are very good. All lessons have a clear, planned structure which has been implemented by the senior leadership team. In the best lessons teachers give minimum input and there is an emphasis on developing students' independence. Students are encouraged to find out an answer for themselves when they are unsure by looking back in their books or asking another student. In an outstanding lesson, students worked in groups working through an examination paper. Each student became the lead for questions for which they were confident and they explained the answer to others in the group.

Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of all students through pen portraits of members of the class. This is a major factor in the excellent progress made by vulnerable students. For the few satisfactory lessons, it is sometimes because there is too much teacher talk or work does not stretch the most-able. The use of assessment data to support learning is good. Marking has improved significantly and in many books students and teachers enter into a learning dialogue which identifies how students are to improve and then follows up on these actions. Students commented that this is valuable in helping them to know how to improve. Homework is consistently set often using the school portal.

The school has been very successful in ensuring that the curriculum responds exceptionally well to the needs of individual students. While the majority of the courses at Key Stage 4 are based on GCSE entry there are appropriate vocational options available as well as joint work with a local college of further education. The school is seen as a centre of curriculum innovation and excellence, and consequently has many visitors from other schools. The work it does with the pastoral care through the highly effective house system adds a great deal to students' enjoyment at school. The house programme is outstanding in extending students' learning experiences and is greatly valued. Houses are also key to the exemplary care for students and the tailored support for individual needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Child-protection procedures are very clear and highly effective. Support to improve attendance has been very effective in reducing the proportion of students who have a large amount of time off school. The school uses and coordinates outside agencies very effectively to provide good specialised support. Students say that the school supports them well prior to arriving in Year 7, when they make choices at the end of Year 9 and before leaving or going on to the sixth form.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where</b>	<b>1</b>

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<b>relevant, through partnerships</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Since the previous inspection, the headteacher, very well supported by senior leaders, has overcome considerable obstacles to make significant changes. Performance management, including highly challenging subject reviews, has been extremely effective in holding staff to account and bringing about exceptional improvement. Leaders' outstanding vision, drive and ambition have been shared by all staff. Responses to the staff questionnaire show that virtually all staff who answered said they were proud to be a member of staff and that their work was valued. All said the school was well led. These responses are testament to how effective leaders have been in motivating and supporting staff. The school has very successfully implemented many initiatives to raise the quality of teaching and learning, including focus groups, which are led by teachers and non-teachers who take the lead on developing different aspects of pedagogy. The sixth form teaching focus group, including sixth form students, is able to influence the way in which they are taught. The school works very well with other schools within the locality. For example, it was not prepared to work towards being identified as a healthy school by itself but saw the need to work in collaboration with other schools within the locality so it could have a bigger impact. It is also identified as an area of excellent practice for its work on the curriculum and the all-age tutor groups and the house system.

The governing body is very supportive of the school and has well-defined and effective committees. Governors meticulously analyse data to challenge the school. This includes very comprehensive analysis of examination data to identify the risk of underachievement of any individuals or groups. This ensures excellent equality of opportunity. Safeguarding is a very high priority and the school does all it can to ensure the safety of the students. Community cohesion is good and students have a very good understanding of local and global issues but a less developed understanding of multicultural United Kingdom. The school has done extremely well to overturn a significant budget deficit of a few years ago and it now has a slight surplus, hence it provides outstanding value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Sixth form

The sixth form has a purposeful ethos. Students enjoy their studies and make good progress. Attendance is high and relationships between staff and students are excellent. Students develop very good social and learning skills and support younger students through their work as classroom assistants or by acting as 'text buddies'. They also offer excellent support to the local community. Students follow a range of courses predominately to A level. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers expect students to attain highly and they work hard to help them, using a variety of strategies including new technologies. Students are confident and appreciate the excellent help and advice they receive especially when applying for university.

Outstanding leaders and managers ensure that students achieve good and rapidly improving outcomes. Assessment information is used effectively to set challenging targets and to monitor students' progress. Any underachievement is quickly identified through rigorous and sympathetic monitoring, which is highly valued by students.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of responses to questionnaires was average. A high proportion agreed that their children enjoy school and that they felt safe, with a very large majority agreeing that they are happy with their children's experience at school. As one parent commented on their response, 'We are very pleased how the school has nurtured and supported our three very different children, treating them as individuals.' There were a number of similar responses. Less favourable areas included the way in which the school takes note of suggestions and concerns.

A few parents made individual comments. These included comments about variability

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in teaching, the way the school dealt with aspects of bullying and homework. These issues were investigated as part of the inspection. The findings are in the report.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clevedon School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 171 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,234 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	35	97	57	11	6	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	72	42	92	54	3	2	2	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	64	37	89	52	7	4	4	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	36	85	50	13	8	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	44	26	106	62	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	47	27	89	52	19	11	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	16	109	64	18	11	3	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	57	33	88	51	13	8	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	52	30	93	54	8	5	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	29	88	51	18	11	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	22	88	51	21	12	5	3
The school is led and managed effectively	86	50	74	43	4	2	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	79	46	79	46	7	4	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**

20 October 2011

Dear Students



### **Inspection of Clevedon School, Clevedon BS21 6AH**

Thank you for your time and cooperation when I visited your school recently with my colleagues. We met some of you at lunchtime and talked to others during lessons and at break. We were impressed with your good behaviour and manners and your outstanding contribution to the life of the school and the local community, although some of you need to take greater responsibility for your behaviour as this lets down the excellent behaviour of others. You told us that you really enjoy school and this is one reason why we judge your school to be outstanding.

You make good progress. Results in your GCSE examinations have improved a lot and are above average. We saw some very interesting lessons and judged that teaching is good. The school knows what it needs to do to make teaching even better and is very determined to bring about further improvements. You have very good relationships with staff and lessons are challenging. The excellent curriculum enables all of you to achieve well and almost all of you said in the questionnaire that the school prepares you well for the future. When we met you, you said that you could take part in lots of sport and that the school made sure you kept healthy. You also said you enjoyed being part of the new house system and that you were pleased with the many activities and house competitions. It is this enthusiasm which has meant that lots of other schools come to see how the house system works and then try to copy parts. You make an excellent contribution to the local community and also to different parts of the world, especially through your links with other schools. However, some of you said you wished you had a better understanding of life in multicultural United Kingdom, including the opportunity to meet with people for yourselves. We have asked your school to improve this area.

Staff support and care for you very well. They help you settle at the start of Year 7 and make sure you are able to go forward to the next stage of your education when you leave. The vast majority of you said you felt safe.

Your headteacher and other staff have made a very concerted effort to ensure all of you get the best possible education. We wish you well at this outstanding school of which you are justifiably proud.

Yours sincerely

Michael Smith  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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