

Claydon High School

Church Lane, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0EG

Inspection dates 14–15 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement in English and mathematics is too variable. Teaching in mathematics is weaker than in other subjects.
- Standards in GCSE physical education, drama and music are consistently below average.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development requires improvement. Very few students take an examination course in religious education.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Too many books are not marked regularly or in enough detail, and not enough use is made of technology to support learning. Students do not have enough opportunity to discuss their own ideas in lessons.
- In lessons where they are not given enough to do or where teaching is weaker, there is sometimes too much social chatter.
- Alternative education arrangements do not make enough difference to improving the achievement and attendance of the most vulnerable students.
- The school's development plans, and the way in which leaders manage teachers' performance and observe lessons, are not sharp enough.
- Over the past three years, the main focus of the headteacher and governing body has been on reducing the budget deficit and closing the sixth form. Not enough attention has been given to improving teaching and students' achievement, or to how the additional funding for potentially disadvantaged students is used.
- The governing body does not challenge the school with enough rigour.

The school has the following strengths

- Overall, the number of exclusions has fallen and attendance has improved. Students are well mannered and the school is a safe place for them to work and socialise in.
- Around a third of all students study biology, chemistry and physics as three separate science subjects at GCSE, and progress in science is good.
- Teaching and examination results in history and geography are good and large numbers take these subjects. A good proportion of students also study a modern foreign language at GCSE. Students achieve well in all these subjects because of good teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspector visited 43 lessons. Eleven of these were joint observations with the headteacher and senior staff.
- Meetings were held with senior staff, the Chair of the Governing Body, groups of students and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of 109 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and two letters received from parents and carers.
- The inspection team observed the school's work, scrutinised the school's data about students' achievement, looked at records about behaviour and attendance, and examined the way that the governing body and school leaders monitor and evaluate the school's work.

Inspection team

Mark Phillips, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ian Starling

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

Lyn Lowery

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Claydon High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for students known to be eligible for free school meals, is much lower than that found nationally. This is also the case for the proportion of students who are from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students requiring extra help at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school and local authority are currently reviewing the way in which students' special educational needs are identified.
- The school does not make extended use of early entry for GCSE examinations.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend vocational courses through Suffolk New College, the AVENUE programme (in partnerships with Otley College and Suffolk One) and at other work-based locations.
- The school's 2011 GCSE results met the government's floor standard, which is the minimum level expected for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make teaching more challenging and more interesting by:
 - using local authority support to ensure that, by July 2013, all teaching of mathematics is good
 - making sure that checks on pupils' progress during lessons do not interrupt the flow of their learning
 - ensuring that marking and written feedback are consistently good in all subjects, so that students know better what they have to do to improve the quality and the presentation of their work
 - making better use of information and communication technology for teaching, including through better online homework resources on the school website.
- Improve achievement by:
 - increasing the Summer 2013 GCSE mathematics average grade score, and the progress made by students in mathematics, so that both are above the national average
 - improving the quality of students' learning in GCSE music, drama and physical education so that by, by Summer 2013, standards are at least in line with national averages
 - ensuring that all students who attend college or work placements achieve better examination results and show better attendance.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - rewriting the school development plan by 1 January 2013, so that it focuses on raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching, with all staff clear about what is to be achieved by when and who is to be held responsible
 - reviewing the way in which the headteacher and senior managers monitor the quality of teaching, including through an updated lesson observation form and better use of data targets to set expectations for teachers' performance.

- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The number of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE was just below the national average in 2011 and 2012. This is less than might be expected, given students' standards when they joined the school in Year 7. The progress made by students in lessons, through homework and between subjects is too variable.
- Achievement in English has improved considerably due to a well-planned and effective programme of support for teachers, including from the local authority. Students are now making the progress they should in reading and writing.
- Above-average numbers take separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics. Almost all other students take the double science option. Overall, good numbers gain two or more good science GCSEs. This is because teaching in science is good.
- Students do not achieve as well in mathematics as they do in English or science because of weaknesses in teaching.
- Students achieve well in history, geography, and modern foreign languages. In these subjects, good progress is the result of teaching that has a strong focus on developing subject skills and knowledge. However, standards in drama and physical education have been below the national average for the past two years; music results have been well below average for three years.
- In 2011, disabled students and those who have special education needs made poor progress. The 2012 examination results were markedly better. Nevertheless, achievement for these students still requires improvement. This is because of weaknesses remain in their mathematical progress.
- Students who study courses at college or on work placements do not achieve as many examination passes as those who study full-time in school. In the 2012 examinations, almost all of these students achieved poorer grades than should have been expected, given their test results at primary school.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding to make sure that eligible students are included in projects for improving literacy and numeracy skills, but there is not a clear strategy that specifically targets their better grades and other outcomes. In 2011, these students achieved, on average, two grades lower at GCSE than students who were not eligible for the pupil premium.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Mathematics teaching is not good enough. A significant number of teachers are inexperienced or have limited subject knowledge. This is because of recent staff changes, where the school has found it difficult to find high-quality replacement teachers. Some classes are taught by two different teachers. Where this is the case, the teachers do not always check carefully enough with each other what they are doing and students' learning suffers as a result. A support programme for the mathematics department has been agreed with the local authority.
- Where teaching is good, lessons are well organised to offer a varied range of activities that engage and motivate students. For example, in a good French lesson, an opening activity involved all students in an immensely enjoyable and challenging experience that immediately

required them to converse in French. Throughout the lesson, students were required to play their part in speaking, listening and written tasks in the French language. This good teaching was underpinned by good marking that set high expectations for both the quality of French work and for the standard of presentation.

- Not enough teaching is of this standard. While lessons are, typically, led confidently by teachers with good subject knowledge, students too often spend extended periods listening to the teacher without the opportunity to ask questions or engage in dialogue or activity. Too often, checks on students' progress interrupt learning, rather than supporting it. For example, in an English lesson, students were stopped in their analysis of a poem to complete a worksheet to record how well they thought they were doing and to give themselves a mark out of ten for their 'learning confidence'. Rather than improving their understanding of the poem, this exercise interrupted their learning of literature.
- In too many instances, marking is too brief and does not explain to students how they have made their mistakes or what they need to do to improve. Poor presentation is not challenged enough and, although spelling errors are pointed out, students are not shown how to spell words correctly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' behaviour is orderly in and around the school site. They are well mannered and good humoured. While they always do as they are asked to in lessons, they do not always show great enthusiasm for learning. Teaching does not always provide them with opportunities to take the lead and contribute to discussion and debate. Where lessons are less active or dominated by teacher talk, social chatter sometimes starts. This is one reason why behaviour requires improvement.
- Students say that, on the rare occasions when bullying happens, it is dealt with promptly. They feel safe in school and say that they are well cared for. Their parents agree that the school is a safe place to be in. The number of exclusions for poor behaviour is lower than average.
- Different groups of students socialise well and enjoy each other's company. Students say that there is little tolerance of discrimination and that there are few incidents of racist or homophobic abuse. The school's records show that when these do occur they are dealt with swiftly and firmly. Older students say that they feel comfortable when expressing their own differences and opinions.
- Most students' attendance has improved. However, the attendance of the small number that receives part of their education away from the school is variable and, for some, their attendance has worsened. This is another reason why behaviour and safety are judged to require improvement.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Inspectors do not agree with the school's self-evaluation that overall effectiveness is good.
- When the headteacher was appointed in 2009, the school had a large budget deficit. Coupled with the closure of the sixth form, this has required staff redundancies and other organisational changes. There is no doubt about the commitment, energy and determination shown by the headteacher and her senior team in addressing these issues successfully. Nevertheless, these matters have distracted the school's leadership from its core purpose of promoting good

teaching and achievement.

- The 2012 results were below expectations. The school's explanation for this was that the grade boundaries in mathematics changed unexpectedly. However, inspectors found that weaknesses in teaching and variations in standards between different subjects are the main reasons why achievement is not good.
- Information and communication technology for teaching and administration is not good. The school's new website is incomplete and provides only a minimum of information for parents and carers. In addition, it is not used by all subjects to set online work for students to complete at home. The school's library loan software has not worked for some months and does not allow the school to analyse and check on students' reading habits.
- Performance management is undertaken regularly but not enough lesson observations are undertaken by senior management. Not enough use is made of performance management to raise standards. This is because, while action is taken if teachers' classes do poorly in tests, targets set for the future are not linked to ambitious expectations for students' good examination results.
- The prompt sheet used for lesson observations requires updating. Too much emphasis is placed on teachers' compliance with set strategies, such as sharing lesson objectives at the start of lessons, and not enough consideration is given to wider aspects of teaching such as marking.
- Provision for students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development requires improvement. While there are strengths in students' moral behaviour, and geography and history provide good cultural experiences, drama and particularly music do not contribute enough to students' cultural development. Very few students take examination courses in religious studies and there is no examined citizenship course in Key Stage 4.
- The governance of the school:
 - The governing body has worked hard with the headteacher to eradicate the deficit budget and put the school on a much more stable financial footing. However, much less attention has been given to way that the pupil premium is spent and the governing body has not been involved in planning strategies to improve outcomes for these students. Furthermore, the governing body has not questioned the school's performance as it should. For example, minutes of meetings suggest that there was not rigorous enough challenge and dialogue about the poor English results in 2011, and there has been no discussion yet by the full governing body about this year's disappointing mathematics results, even though these were published three months ago. While governors have received training about how to read and interpret examination data, they have not realised the significance of the decline in the school's performance since the last inspection. Detailed reports from the headteacher and senior staff, including about teachers' performance, have been received and accepted without sufficient challenge. Consequently, the governing body does not have an accurate understanding of how the school's performance relates to other schools nationally, and governors have not ensured that there is clear link between pay and staff performance.

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	124846
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	395616

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	671
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Eustace
Headteacher	Sarah Skinner
Date of previous school inspection	21 October 2008
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