

# Clyst Vale Community College

Station Road, Broadclyst, Devon, EX5 3AJ

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
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

- While the numbers of students achieving GCSE A\* to C grades are consistently above average, students are only making expected progress in English, Spanish and the sixth form.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium have previously fallen behind in English and mathematics. The gap between their performance and that of other students has narrowed significantly this year, but more needs to be done particularly in English.
- Teaching requires improvement because not enough is supporting students to make good progress. Many teachers are developing new and better ways to help students make rapid progress, but not all are sufficiently skilled to plan well for the differing needs of students.
- Some teachers do not mark work thoroughly or insist that it is followed up with corrections or responses. Consequently, students do not always know what to do to improve or learn from their errors.
- Not all leaders have checked regularly enough that initiatives to improve teaching are being carried out. For example, the school's marking policy is not consistently used by all teachers.
- The sixth form requires improvement because achievement is not yet good. However, it is improving rapidly because of better teaching and good leadership.
- Leaders and managers are working hard to improve the school. Many new systems have been introduced to improve teaching and raise achievement. Some are showing real impact, but many are still too new to have had a full positive effect.
- Governance requires improvement as governors do not use data rigorously enough to challenge the school.

### The school has the following strengths

- This is a highly inclusive school. Students are very respectful. Their positive behaviour contributes significantly to their learning.
- Students' progress in some key areas, such as mathematics and science, is good.
- A broad curriculum and many extracurricular opportunities help build students' confidence and self-esteem.
- Pastoral care is good and, as a result, students feel very safe and well cared for.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 43 lessons, of which 21 were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, they made a number of shorter visits to year assemblies, lessons and tutorial sessions.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the school leadership and management and groups of staff.
- Members of the inspection team held meetings with three groups of students representing all age groups in the school. Discussions also took place with students informally.
- Meetings were held with governors.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and scrutinised documents including the school's own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school improvement plan and statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- There were 96 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 48 responses to the staff questionnaires. The school's own analysis of answers given by over 200 parents to a similar questionnaire was also considered. Additional comments were received from families of students currently attending the school.

## Inspection team

Rob Ridout, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hazlewood

Additional Inspector

Richard Butler

Additional Inspector

Gary Kirkley

Additional Inspector

Janet Harvey

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Clyst Vale Community School converted to become a stand-alone academy in April 2011. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school has specialisms in science, mathematics and computing. It holds awards for Artsmark Gold, Investors in People Gold and Healthy Schools. It also holds an award from Exeter University as a Thinking School in acknowledgement of the good practice it does supporting cognitive work.
- It has strong links with all local primary partners.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average. The government provides additional funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, in the care of the local authority or from service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average and the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Provision for students on alternative programmes is arranged in conjunction with Exeter College and with Devon Integrated Support Services who provide for lifeskills and other educational inputs.
- The school exceeds 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?

- Improve teaching to the standard of the best so that it is consistently good or better by making sure that teachers:
  - use assessment information when planning their lessons so that activities meet the needs of each student and are appropriately challenging
  - ensure work is closely matched to the different ability levels of students and includes a range of learning activities that allow every student to make good progress
  - regularly and thoroughly mark students' day-to-day work, giving clear guidance on what students need to do to improve it.
- Continue to raise achievement, particularly in English and those students supported by pupil premium, so that standards remain above the national averages and students make good progress to be reflected in the summer 2014 examination results.
- Support middle leaders and managers so that they become more effective in improving teaching and driving up achievement by:
  - ensuring that leaders concentrate on improving all students' progress, particularly in English and the sixth form
  - regularly monitoring the impact of whole-school initiatives on students' learning and progress and making the changes necessary to accelerate students' progress
  - making sure that whole-school policies, particularly relating to marking and teaching and learning, are consistently applied by all teachers
  - providing wider opportunities for teachers to learn from the examples of outstanding teaching

that currently exists in the school to address boys' underachievement.

- Ensure governors are confident in their understanding of pupil achievement information so that they can rigorously challenge the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Overall results in 2012 conceal the fact that some groups of students performed significantly less well than they should. This was particularly noticeable for those students eligible for the pupil premium. This year, the school has used funding flexibly and, in some cases, in a highly personal way to help improve the progress of these students eligible for pupil premium. The result is that in mathematics there is no gap between the performance of this group and that of their peers in the school or nationally and the gap in English is one grade which is an improvement on previous results.
- The school has seen a slight rise in standards at Key Stage 4, in line with the increases seen nationally. Results in both mathematics and English were in line with the national figures in 2012, but overall standards were broadly average partly because the school does not use GCSE equivalent qualifications to boost average point scores.
- Students who attend alternative provision, including those who attend Exeter College, make similar progress to their peers. The school monitors their progress and the effectiveness of the provision.
- Despite improvement, the school fell short of its own aspirational target for the proportion of students achieving at least five good GCSEs (including English and mathematics). Given their starting points, GCSE results in 2012 show that students made expected rather than good progress overall, despite good achievement in mathematics, science and humanities subjects.
- The school recognises that disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve less well than their peers without support. Suitable steps have been taken to address this issue and the impact on students' learning and progress is good. In mathematics, there has been an impressive acceleration in the progress of these groups and improvements have been seen more recently in English, especially in Years 7 and 8 with the catch-up programme and the Read to Learn initiative.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement, but results already secured by students following level 3 courses suggest better outcomes as a result of the positive impact of an improved curriculum and the better guidance and support students now receive. The quality of learning was good in almost all of the sixth form lessons observed during the inspection and outstanding in a significant minority.
- Early entry for examinations previously has had a mixed effect on students' progress. In mathematics it has had a positive impact, raising the confidence and self-esteem of students, and this is reflected in the progress students make. In English, the school has elected to enter students for the examined element of English language in Year 10 and are awaiting the outcome of the examination in 2013. The results already known for 2013 and the school's own records show that there will be a significant improvement this year. A high proportion of students has made good progress in mathematics and science. Evidence suggests that outcomes in English are improving and more students have already secured expected progress than in previous years. Inspectors were able to see evidence in lessons of better progress and the school is able to track the progress of all students and provide extra and appropriate support if they fall behind.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Almost three-quarters of the teaching seen by inspectors was good or better. Strong and outstanding lessons were observed, with teaching in the sixth form generally being better than in other parts of the school. Overall, however, teaching requires improvement because it is still too variable and not all students are making good progress. No lessons observed by inspectors were inadequate.
- In the weaker lessons students often have too little time to get on with their work and think

things out for themselves because teachers talk for too long. Planning is sometimes too rigid and opportunities to use the students' ideas and interests to generate excitement and enthusiasm are missed. Where teachers try to use some of the newer and more innovative and effective techniques they have encountered, they sometimes do not work as well as they might because of a lack of skill or practice.

- Sometimes planning does not take into account the needs of all the students. Information about students is not used consistently well enough to make sure that the work that teachers set matches students' different abilities. Sometimes all students are given the same work to do, which inevitably leads to some finding it too easy and others too hard. Because of this, while sometimes the majority are making progress, for others this progress is less than it should be.
- The best teaching is supported by the most effective marking because these teachers are clear about what students have done well, and precisely what they need to improve. However, this is not as common as the school would like. Generally, books are marked regularly, but this is often ineffective as too few teachers insist or check that students act on the advice given.
- In the best lessons, teachers set a demanding pace. They hold students' attention for periods of time through good questioning and lively discussion, but also give students the chance to refine their ideas by working on their own or in groups. This was clearly seen in an outstanding science lesson where the teacher engaged a group of Year 7 students through activity and a lively debate in which boys responded especially well with maturity and enthusiasm.
- In another outstanding Year 9 mathematics lesson, the teacher's excellent knowledge of the progress that students were making enabled them to assist students develop their understanding of difficult ideas. Through clear, targeted and deep questioning the teacher was able to support students in their explanations of complex algebraic equations and develop this through groups who tested each other's understanding further. The teacher's excellent questioning skills to check the understanding of students resulted in behaviour and motivation which were outstanding and all students making good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The very strong sense of purpose, commitment and the determination of students across all year groups to do well in class contributes significantly to the positive learning in classes. . They respond exceptionally well when given opportunities to work together or on their own. Students have high aspirations of what staff can help them to achieve and strive hard to meet their targets. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to make full use of these strengths.
- The school is persistent in securing good levels of attendance and punctuality. It pursues students with poor records of attendance at great length. As a result, attendance is above average and students are rarely late to school or to lessons.
- Students thrive on the praise they are given when they do well and are aware that misconduct will be picked up and dealt with quickly. The strong emphasis on encouraging students to take responsibility for their own and others' behaviour and the consistency with which all staff implement these procedures mean the school is very calm throughout the day.
- Students from a diverse range of backgrounds work and socialise with each other fully to create a very safe learning community. A strong anti-bullying culture has been created in which the students play their part by not putting up with any incidents they see. Their view that incidents are rare and are dealt with quickly is supported by school records and the responses of many parents and the majority of staff. Students are very clear that discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Students are extremely proud of their school and the part they play in its success. They have a strong voice in the school's development and play an active part in the shaping of its future.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- School leaders and the governing body have not yet secured the necessary improvements to

raise achievement and the quality of teaching so that they are consistently good. While there exist good practices in mathematics, science and humanities and there is evidence that teaching is improving in the sixth form, too few students are making the progress expected of them in English and Spanish.

- Systems have been introduced to set more challenging targets, improve teaching and raise achievement. These are too new to have had a sustained, positive effect to date. This means that, while there are early signs of success, leadership and management are not yet at the stage where they are good.
- Senior leaders and those in charge of subject areas carry out checks on the quality of teaching and students' work. However, some team leaders lack the skills, knowledge or understanding to carry out this aspect of their role and so this monitoring is not rigorous or focused enough to bring about the rapid improvements needed in some subjects.
- The school has well organised systems for managing staff performance. All teachers have targets and meet with their appraisers to review their progress against them. There have been inconsistencies in the grading of lessons by some middle leaders. New and revised procedures have been put in place this year to ensure that there is a greater consistency in the grading of lessons.
- The curriculum, which is broad and balanced, enables students to study a wide range of courses and gain qualifications at the end of Key Stage 4. The sixth form curriculum has recently been revised and has been better organised so that students' needs are better served and the students better understand the expectations of the course of study they are following. Achievement and retention rates have subsequently improved.
- Wider opportunities to participate in sport, visits and career development activities, such as trips to universities, are also offered.
- The school is fully inclusive and ensures that all students have equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through some lessons and the wider life of the school, including fundraising activities for Amnesty International and good causes in Afghanistan. Students enthusiastically engage in a wide range of clubs and activities at lunchtime, after-school hours and at the weekends. The school is well known for its productions of *Les Miserables* and *Sweeney Todd* and boasts the highest number of participants in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for a state school in the south-west region.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is ambitious and proud of the school's inclusivity. It is supportive of the school and has recently begun to provide greater challenge to school leaders as it has developed a better understanding of its own functions. There is evidence of governors asking more probing questions related to students' achievement, but they are still too dependent on information supplied by the headteacher. Their understanding of data and their ability to analyse the progress students make from their starting points is underdeveloped.. They are becoming an increasingly powerful driving force for improvement within the school. Governors take a keen interest in matters relating to finance, including the spending of the monies received through the pupil premium, and are checking that it is being used more effectively to accelerate the progress of these students. The governing body is involved to a greater extent than before in discussions relating to managing the performance of staff, including pay awards to individuals. Safeguarding arrangements are managed effectively and meet current regulatory requirements.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136638
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	412785

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1010
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Simon Sanger-Anderson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Bawn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 461407
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