

The Clarendon Academy

Frome Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 0DJ

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The Principal leads this academy extremely well. He is very well supported by his senior team, governors and the academy sponsors. All share his high expectations of staff and students.
- The strong focus on students' progress has created a climate where students want to succeed and achieve their best.
- Students' progress is tracked and monitored exceptionally well. Consequently, students of all abilities make good progress from their starting points across a range of subjects.
- Teaching is at least good and some is outstanding. Students say how much they value their teachers' support and encouragement to prepare them for their examinations.
- Behaviour in lessons is excellent. Students have a thirst for knowledge and greatly enjoy their learning.
- The atmosphere around the academy is very calm. Students are exceptionally polite and courteous. They have pride in their school, which is evident in the way they wear the uniform and in the absence of litter and graffiti.
- The strong focus on ensuring that students are safe and well cared for is a strength of the academy.
- The sixth form is good. Students are now making good progress because they are well prepared for their advanced studies. Teaching in the sixth form is also good and contributes well to raising achievement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While the progress of students eligible for the pupil premium is improving rapidly, these students do not make as much progress as their peers in English and mathematics.
- At times, teachers' questioning does not involve all students.
- Students' responses to their teachers' marking are sometimes brief or unrelated to the subject. Consequently, marking does not always help students to make the progress of which they are capable.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons, 13 of which were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of further short visits to lessons and scrutinised students' work in their books.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior leaders, members of staff, members of the governing body, representatives from the academy sponsor and groups of students.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including information on students' achievement, the Principal's reports to the academy sponsor and records relating to the monitoring of teaching and to behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online Parent View survey, seven letters received from parents, one email from a parent and 80 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Holroyd	Additional Inspector
Colin Money	Additional Inspector
Alistair Brien	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Clarendon Academy is an average-sized secondary school with sixth form. It converted to become an academy in December 2012. When its predecessor school, Clarendon College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Most students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A small number of students follow part-time work-related courses at Trowbridge College and Wiltshire College.
- The on-site Phoenix Centre, which is led, managed and staffed by the academy, provides additional support for those students at risk of exclusion.
- The academy is jointly governed by a local governing body, which is largely made up of parent governors, and by a team of governors who represent the academy sponsor, the Education Fellowship.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of students making rapid and sustained improvement by ensuring that:
 - students are taught how to use their teachers' marking and feedback to help them improve the quality and content of their work
 - teachers' questioning actively involves all students and helps them to deepen their understanding
 - students eligible for the pupil premium make similar progress to their peers by continuing to provide tailored support and checking frequently on the impact of this support.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students' achievement is good and rapidly improving. This is partly due to the senior leaders' work in strengthening systems for collecting and analysing data on students' progress.
- Students enter the academy with levels of attainment that are generally well below average.
- The progress students make in English and mathematics is good. Information provided by the academy shows that the proportion of students making and exceeding expected progress is likely to be very similar to national standards in 2014.
- All groups of students, including the most able, make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Work in students' books is well presented and shows that they take pride in their work. There is a strong focus on improving standards of students' literacy. This is evident in the improvements in students' ability to structure their writing, spell accurately and to use complex grammar to improve the quality of their writing.
- Students have high expectations of themselves and a thirst for knowledge. They were keen to tell inspectors how much they are encouraged and supported by their teachers to achieve well.
- In the past, those eligible for the pupil premium have not attained as well as their peers. Information provided by the academy shows this gap to be closing rapidly, although leaders recognise that there is further work to be done to make sure that eligible students achieve consistently well.
- The academy uses the Year 7 catch-up funding to staff and resource a summer school for eligible students joining the academy to help develop their literacy and numeracy skills. This ensures that these students are well prepared for the demands of the secondary curriculum.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive high-quality support both in and out of lessons. They make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects.
- The progress of students following alternative off-site courses is frequently checked and the academy ensures that these students also achieve well. The proportion of students who leave the academy not in education, employment or training is very low.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Students have historically joined the sixth form with below-average attainment as a consequence of their time spent in the predecessor school while it was in special measures. The academy has addressed this and, as a result, standards are rapidly rising, particularly in Year 12.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The majority of teaching is good, and some is outstanding. Samples of students' work and information provided by the academy demonstrate the good impact of teaching on students' progress over time.
- Relationships between staff and students are extremely positive. Students are well known by their teachers and are consequently well supported in lessons and in extra-curricular activities to make good progress and achieve well.
- Teachers use information about students' progress to inform their planning and to provide suitable learning activities for the range of students in their classes.
- Teachers use a range of questioning strategies to help students to recall what they have previously learnt and to apply their knowledge and understanding to new or different situations. However, teachers' questioning sometimes does not involve all students or help them to deepen their understanding, with the result that progress occasionally slows for a minority of students.
- Additional adults support students very effectively both in and outside the classroom. This enables them to make good progress, especially in reading and writing.
- Teachers' marking is regular, frequent and detailed. Students are provided with very good advice about how to improve their work and how to make progress. However, because students

sometimes do not understand how to use their teachers' advice, their responses can be superficial and unrelated to the subject. As a consequence, marking does not always help to accelerate progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students consistently demonstrate a thirst for knowledge and a desire to achieve good qualifications. They have high expectations of themselves, which is demonstrated by the high numbers attending additional support for learning outside the classroom and out of school hours.
- Students were instrumental in the design of the new uniform, which they wear with pride, and which they attribute to the improving reputation of the school within the local community.
- Students are highly cooperative and are keen to work together to secure further improvements for the academy. The recent introduction of the 'house system' and the move to mixed-age tutor groups has helped to foster exceptionally strong relationships across and between the year groups.
- Older students told inspectors how much behaviour has improved since they started at the academy and that it is now extremely unusual for lessons to be disrupted. Lessons are now rarely disrupted. Teachers manage behaviour exceptionally well.
- Exclusions have fallen sharply due to a range of strategies to manage, very effectively, any negative behaviour. The Phoenix Centre provides very good support for students at risk of exclusion. Consequently, these students remain engaged in learning and make good progress.
- Behaviour around the academy is very calm. Litter is rare and there is a complete absence of graffiti. Inspectors were impressed with the way in which students look after their environment; this includes students checking on the use and upkeep of toilet facilities.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. All students say that they feel safe. This view is endorsed by that of parents and carers. During the inspection, a pre-planned inspection of e-safety was conducted by a representative of the sponsor academy. The findings confirmed the effectiveness of the very thorough work of the academy to keep students safe when using the internet.
- Incidents of bullying are very rare and all students know where they can go if they are unhappy. Students are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively and quickly by school staff. Incidents of racist behaviour or homophobia are exceptionally rare.
- Students enjoy contributing to the academy community, taking responsible roles and developing leadership skills. For example, students have the chance to act as representatives of the Clarendon Forum to question and challenge senior leaders, governors and the chief executive of the academy sponsor about decisions made about resourcing and staffing.
- Attendance has improved dramatically over the last year and is now in line with the national average. Students attend off-site provision regularly and behave very well.
- The behaviour of sixth form students is also outstanding and their attendance rates are high. They contribute well to academy life, for example, through the prefect system.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Principal demonstrates exceptionally strong leadership of the academy. He holds all staff accountable for the progress and well-being of students. He is very well supported by his senior team, by the local governing body and by the academy sponsors, all of whom share the same vision for students to make excellent progress.
- The arrangements for monitoring and managing teachers' performance are exceptionally strong and support is rapidly provided when teaching is not good enough. If necessary, procedures are implemented to address underperformance.
- The Principal submits quarterly reports to the academy sponsors. These include detailed and

thorough information about the progress and achievement of students and about the quality of teaching. The academy's strengths are therefore well known and progress towards the identified priorities for development, such as continuing to close the gap between the achievement of those students eligible for the pupil premium and their peers, are rigorously tracked and monitored.

- Leaders' drive to improve and sustain high-quality teaching is relentless. Departmental reviews and checks on the impact of teaching on students' progress are extremely thorough. Newly qualified teachers told inspectors how well they are supported and how this support helps them to improve their practice.
- Subject and pastoral leaders are very clear about their responsibilities for raising standards of achievement and for holding their teams to account for the progress made by students. The Education Fellowship has provided expertise and links with local business to enhance leadership at this level. Consequently, middle leaders are a very effective force for further improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and includes opportunities for students to follow courses which meet their needs. The recently introduced Key Stage 3 'integrated curriculum' is having a very positive impact on raising standards of students' literacy and numeracy. It also provides opportunities for younger students to integrate quickly into academy life through opportunities to celebrate their success.
- Opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are integrated into all aspects of the academy's work. Consequently, there is genuine equality of opportunity, typified by the seriousness with which academy leaders consider and respond to the views of students.
- Leadership in the sixth form is good. Leaders track progress and the quality of teaching closely. They are able to spot underachievement early and put in appropriate support.
- The vast majority of parents and carers responding to the online questionnaire, Parent View, believe the academy to be well led and managed, and would recommend the academy to other parents and carers.
- The academy sponsors have taken a full and active role in providing support for the academy and its leaders. This includes the recruitment of highly qualified teachers to embed further the drive for raising the quality of teaching and through the opportunity to share good practice with other academies in the Education Fellowship.

■ The governance of the school:

- Members of the local governing body, which has a high proportion of parent governors and representatives of the Education Fellowship, are united in their work to ensure that this academy is well led and managed. Together, they hold the Principal and senior leaders closely to account for improving standards of achievement and for the quality of teaching. Governors are very well informed through the Principal's quarterly reports and have a clear awareness of the academy's performance in comparison to other schools. They use their wide range of skills and expertise to challenge and support the academy; this includes a strong focus on safeguarding, which is exemplary. The governing body is well led and organised so that every aspect of the academy's work is scrutinised. Governors have maintained links with the local authority in order to undertake additional training and further develop their effectiveness. Several representatives of the Education Fellowship have first-hand knowledge about the quality of teaching and have therefore ensured that the effective management of teachers' performance leads appropriately to salary progression. They are rigorous in ensuring that the pupil funding is beginning to have an impact on rapidly closing the gap between the achievement of eligible students and their peers.

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	138885
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	440130

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,010
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Best; Johnson Kane
Principal	Mark Stenton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01225 762686
Fax number	01225 751034
Email address	general@clarendonacademy.com

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