

Claydon High School

Church Lane, Claydon, Ipswich, IP6 0EG

Inspection dates 18–19 June 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher is an effective leader who has brought about rapid improvements in both teaching and achievement since the last Ofsted inspection. Senior leaders, including governors, share the headteacher's ambition and drive.
- Achievement is rising across all year groups. Students make good progress in most subjects, including English and mathematics. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- The gap between the achievement of pupil premium students and other students is decreasing rapidly.
- Students benefit from good teaching in most subjects.
- Students are proud of their school and behave with respect and consideration towards each other. Relationships between students and staff are positive.
- Behaviour is good and students feel safe in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students make good rather than exceptional progress. Some students of high ability do not yet achieve enough higher grades in their GCSE examinations.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Teachers do not redesign planned activities quickly enough when students find the work too hard or too easy. When there is a choice of activities, they do not always direct students to engage with the tasks most suited to their ability.
- Teachers do not always check students' understanding of their learning sufficiently.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of higher ability students and do not always use questioning effectively to challenge them to do even better.
- Students' enthusiasm for learning is not taken full advantage of by all teachers in all subject areas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of teaching in 32 lessons some of which were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- A range of documents was analysed by inspectors, including those relating to safeguarding, student progress, attendance, exclusions, the school’s self-evaluation and development plan and its policies for managing teacher’s performance and improving teaching and learning.
- Students’ books and coursework, especially in English, mathematics and science, were looked at closely.
- Inspectors took account of 90 responses to the online Parent View survey and 61 responses to the staff survey.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other senior and subject leaders, several groups of students, a representative from the local authority and the Chair and members of the Governing Body.

Inspection team

Lesley Daniel, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Tim Bristow

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Terence Cook

Additional Inspector

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Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Claydon High School is a smaller than average sized secondary school.
- Most students come from White British backgrounds and speak English as their first language.
- The number of students requiring extra help at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average, although the number at school action is below average.
- 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 below the national average. A small proportion of Year 7 students are eligible for 'catch up' funding.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend part-time alternative provision (education provided by other schools or colleges) at Otley College, as well as at Suffolk New College, through the 'Avenues' project, and also through the Ipswich Town Football Club Academy.
- The school has not used early GCSE entry for any students this year.
- In 2013 the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has received support from a National Leader of Education from The Parkside Federation in Cambridge.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding and that more students make exceptional progress by:
 - providing training and professional development for teachers that concentrate on developing the skills and qualities teachers need for their teaching to become outstanding
 - ensuring that all teachers enthuse students of all abilities with a thirst for knowledge to increase their engagement in their learning and the pace at which they make progress
 - making sure that teachers quickly adapt planned activities when students are finding the work too hard or too easy and, when this happens, ensuring that students are directed towards the most suitable of these new tasks and insisting they engage with it without delay
 - enabling all teachers to use effective questioning not only to check the progress of students but also to increase the challenge for more-able students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress in most subjects and standards are rising to average or above average levels. The proportion of students in English who make more than the expected progress compares favourably with national averages. In mathematics, strengthened teaching has increased this proportion considerably and most students make good progress. While progress is below average in Year 11, because of weaker teaching when these students were in Key Stage 3, in all the other years it is good.
- Gaps between the performance of different groups of students are shrinking. This is due to early identification of students who need help or who are underachieving and the effectiveness of targeted support. Support for disabled students and others who entered the school with special educational needs is good. Some of these students have progressed to the point where they no longer need to be included in the school's register as a result of the school's effective strategies to meet their needs.
- In 2013, the percentage of students achieving 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was broadly in line with national figures. Since then steps have been taken to address differences in performance between different groups and ensure that more students achieve well in both mathematics and English. Inspectors' evaluations of students' work and progress confirm that achievement in both areas is now good and that the school's predictions of higher proportions of students gaining a grade C or above this summer are realistic.
- The school is making far better use of data to check the performance of students than at the time of the last inspection and this is leading to accelerated progress. Teachers are able to quickly spot any underachievement and take action to support any individual students at risk of slipping behind.
- Students attending alternative provision receive good support and progress well. They are able to access a wide range of work-related qualifications to help prepare them for the next stage of their education or training. In 2013, the school had no students who did not go on to further education or training, clearly showing the impact of alternative courses on this small group of students.
- The progress of the students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding has accelerated considerably and standards are rising. For example, at the time of the last inspection in 2012 in English these students were one GCSE grade behind the others, and in mathematics they were two grades behind. Now in English they achieve the same grades as the other students in school, and in mathematics they are only half a grade behind. The school receives Year 7 catch-up funding for a small number of students and uses it wisely to give them additional support. Consequently, these students are making rapid progress.
- The school's approach to teaching literacy and numeracy is carefully planned and co-ordinated very effectively across the school, and is contributing significantly to the school's rising standards.
- Achievement is not outstanding because the proportion of students achieving the highest grades at GCSE is only average in most subjects. The school rightly recognises that teachers' expectations of this group of more-able students should be higher so that more achieve the

highest grades and in a greater number of subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Teaching is having a strong impact on progress and effective teaching was seen across a range of subjects and different ability groups.
- There is a positive climate for learning within the school and good relationships exist between students and teachers. Most teachers have high expectations and encourage good work habits. There is little disruption to learning and most students take a pride in their work. Teaching assistants are used effectively so that their impact is maximised.
- The great majority of teachers have a good understanding of how well students are doing and use this to help them plan lessons and prepare resources that move students' learning on. In a Year 7 science lesson, for example, the teacher carefully planned the different tasks set for students in order to meet their individual needs. Similarly, during a history lesson, students were carefully grouped according to their levels of understanding and given different support materials that matched their needs.
- Teachers mark work regularly and students appreciate the helpful nature of most written feedback. They commented on how marking has improved since the last inspection and felt that it now has a positive impact on their progress.
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted well in most lessons. Students are expected to use subject-specific language at all times. For example, Year 8 students were able to use and explain the meaning of 'vanishing point', 'gradients' and 'blending' in art. In a science lesson, students applied mathematical skills accurately to produce a table of results.
- Students are very positive about the impact of homework on their progress. It is set regularly and is closely linked to classwork, often requiring students to do additional work to help them prepare for their learning in the next lesson.
- Students are taught how to work together very effectively and say they enjoy this way of learning. In a Year 10 English lesson students had to become experts on how writers used techniques, such as pathetic fallacy and antonyms, and then teach these to the other members of their group. In a Year 9 history lesson, students relied on each other's observation skills to build up a complete picture of a cartoon about Hitler, resulting in them developing good questioning skills.
- Teaching in mathematics and science has improved and is now more consistently good and in line with the good quality of teaching seen consistently in English.
- There is still some variation in the quality of teaching across subjects, although this is being steadily reduced. Where teaching is not as strong as it could be, teachers do not always insist that students, who find the work easy, complete more challenging tasks to a high standard. In some classes, teachers fail to adapt planned activities quickly enough when students are finding the work too hard or too easy. Where teachers do adapt tasks to reflect students' known progress and abilities, they do not always direct students towards the one that is more suitable.
- Teachers do not always make enough use of opportunities to extend the learning of higher-ability students by asking them searching questions that extend their understanding. Students

are not consistently required to address some of the more complex ideas and problems that are a key element of the subjects and topics they are studying.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is good. Most students comply with the school's high expectations and behave well in lessons, at break times and when moving around the site. Clearly understood sanctions are in place to deal with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Year 11 students commented on how behaviour has improved during their time at the school. Just occasionally, however, off-task behaviour is not picked up quickly enough and so learning is interrupted.
- The school manages students whose behaviour is challenging well, rarely needing to move them to be educated elsewhere. The number of exclusions remains low.
- Students are proud of their school and there is a strong sense of community and trust between staff and students. Students are punctual to lessons and look smart in their uniform. Around the site there is little litter, showing that they are respectful of their school environment.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The school tackles any issues of discrimination quickly and effectively and students say they feel well supported and safe. School staff visit the providers of all alternative provision regularly and are confident that students are well looked after while attending these courses.
- Students are well informed about the issues of bullying, including homophobic and cyber-bullying. School records show that incidents of bullying are rare and students support this view and are confident that, if it did occur, it would be properly dealt with.
- The school has worked hard with students and parents to improve attendance and the current picture shows that attendance is now just above national average. Persistent absence is also above average, in part reflecting the serious medical conditions of a few students, but is being reduced. The school continues to work with families to reduce persistent absence.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has driven forward improvements in behaviour, the quality of teaching and achievement since the last inspection. She has built a skilled team of senior leaders who have developed and sustained a sharp focus on raising standards and strengthening teaching. Most subject leaders in the school have successfully taken responsibility for leading learning and improving teaching in their departments.
- The school has clear arrangements to review the performance of teachers, to tackle under-performance and to reward those who teach effectively. Teaching has improved due to the introduction of more effective monitoring of standards, and leaders quickly challenge teachers who do not teach well enough. The school offers plenty of training opportunities to help teachers develop their practice.
- The school has good systems for checking its own effectiveness. It has a clear and realistic picture of the progress it has made since the last inspection and what still needs to be done to continue this journey. Evaluations by inspectors were closely in line with those of senior leaders.
- The school provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its students.

Students follow a programme of lessons on topics as varied as political elections, equality and relationships. Awareness of how to be good citizens is also developed through student leadership roles and in tutor time activities. Students were confident when talking to inspectors and are clearly used to expressing their own opinions and developing their own views.

- The additional government funding provided through the pupil premium has been used successfully by the school to improve the experiences and the achievement of eligible students. Some has provided additional staff to support intervention and mentoring and to finance programmes such as 'Achievement for All.' Money has also gone to make sure that students have the opportunity to go on trips and enjoy the wider aspects of school life.
 - The current courses and subjects on offer suits the needs of the students in this community. In addition, the school makes good use of alternative provision to make sure that all students have every opportunity to succeed. Students receive good quality advice as they make choices for their subjects and courses and then as they move on to the next stage of their lives. So much so that all students leave Year 11 with a place in further education. Students also have the chance to take part in a good range of extra-curricular activities after school.
 - The headteacher has used external support effectively. The local authority has been involved in improving mathematics teaching in particular and has reviewed the school's progress towards achieving a grade of good at regular intervals. A National Leader of Education has also given constructive support and has helped develop the school's leadership.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body fulfils its responsibilities to keep students safe at school and makes sure that all arrangements meet statutory requirements.
 - The governors are well informed about all aspects of school life, in particular the quality of teaching, how performance management is used to strengthen teaching and how the pupil premium is spent. For example, they have checked to make sure that only the teachers with good enough performance get financially rewarded and have made decisions to withhold pay rises when the improvement was not good enough. Governors have a good understanding of performance data, are aware of how well students are achieving and where this needs to improve, and use their knowledge to both support and challenge senior leaders as necessary.
 - The governing body has worked effectively with the headteacher to ensure that the school is now in a strong enough financial position to appoint a new business manager and data manager to support the continued improvement of the school.

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	442064

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	670
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Liz Stone
Headteacher	Sarah Skinner
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2012
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