Inspection dates



Clacton Coastal Academy

Pathfields Road, , Clacton on Sea, CO15 3JL

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

18-19 November 2014

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The Principal and her senior leadership team have
 Disabled students and those with special skilfully steered the academy's development with ambition and drive so that teaching and achievement have improved rapidly and are good. Governors provide effective support and challenge to senior leadership.
- Students enter the academy with low prior attainment. By the end of Key Stage 4 in 2014, more students made good progress in English and mathematics. Consequently, GCSE standards have risen at a faster rate than national standards and are now close to average.
- Relationships between students and teachers are positive, behaviour and safety are good and students are very proud of their academy.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although GCSE results are rising rapidly, they are not yet at least average overall.
- Numeracy skills are not applied as well as English skills in other subjects.
- Some students do not show an eagerness for learning to enable them to make even more progress and so raise their achievement.

- educational needs make good progress.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged students and other students at the academy is closing quickly.
- Students benefit from good teaching across a range of subjects.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Students studying vocational subjects do better than other students nationally and an increasing number of sixth form students choose to go on to study at university.
- There is not yet enough teaching that is outstanding. A few teachers do not always give students clear advice on how to improve their work or encourage them to develop the quality of their spoken English.
- Occasionally, teaching assistants do not fully understand how best to support the learning of students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 45 lessons, some conducted jointly with senior leaders. A tour of classes was also conducted with a senior leader examining the behaviour of students in lessons.
- A range of documents was analysed by inspectors, including: those relating to safeguarding, students' progress, attendance, the academy's self-evaluation and development plan, its policies for managing teachers' performance and pay, and for improving teaching and learning.
- Inspectors looked closely at students' books and coursework, especially in English and mathematics. Inspectors took account of 72 responses to the online survey, Parent View, seven written comments from parents and 128 responses to the staff survey.
- Discussions were held with the Principal, other senior and subject leaders, several groups of students, a representative from the local authority, the regional director of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) and the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors.

Inspection team

Lesley Daniel, Lead inspector	Seconded Inspector
Zahid Aziz	Additional Inspector
John Mason	Additional Inspector
Neil Stanley	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector

Lesley Daniel is appointed as an Additional Inspector, under the powers relating to additional inspectors, in paragraph 11 of Part 2 of Schedule 12 to the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Full report

Information about this school

- Clacton Coastal Academy is a larger than average-sized secondary academy.
- The academy is sponsored by the Academies Enterprise Trust.
- The academy has specialisms in media and in English.
- Most students are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The academy is in an area of high deprivation and mobility with one in four students starting after Year 7.
- More than half of the students at the academy are supported by pupil premium funding. Pupil premium is extra funding provided by the government for some groups of students including those known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority. This is well above the national average.
- Almost a quarter of students are disabled or have special educational needs. This is well-above average.
- A very small number of KS4 students go off site to study vocational subjects at Colchester Institute, Rally Sport Engineering Academy, Skillforce, Butterfly Lodge and Willow Farm.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding to raise the achievement of all students by:
 - encouraging all teachers to enthuse students of all abilities with an eagerness for learning so that they
 reach their full potential
 - ensuring that all teachers give students opportunities to talk through their ideas fully and encourage them to use standard English when it is appropriate
 - making sure that all subjects provide opportunities for students to practise mathematical skills in subjects other than mathematics so that numeracy develops as rapidly as literacy
 - ensuring that all teachers give precise and clear advice to students on how to improve and expect students to respond to this
 - ensuring that all teaching assistants have the skills to support students effectively so that their progress is accelerated.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal has provided inspirational leadership that has raised both aspirations and achievement at the academy. The drive and commitment of the Principal and her senior leadership team have united the staff and created a 'can do' ethos that has given students a belief in their own abilities. The academy has an inclusive and supportive culture for both students and staff which promotes equality of opportunity for all and encourages every teacher and student to be the best they can be. Responses to staff questionnaires during the inspection showed that staff are fully supportive of the Principal and her team.
- The academy has very effective systems for monitoring and managing the behaviour of students. Students are well supervised at breaks and lunchtimes and any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly. The behaviour and progress of the few Key Stage 4 students who attend part-time courses elsewhere are well monitored by senior leaders.
- Senior leaders have maintained a sharp focus on raising standards and strengthening teaching. This is supported by a robust system that rewards good teaching and tackles underperformance. Judgements of teachers' effectiveness take full account of the progress students make in their lessons and are clearly linked to the national requirements of teachers.
- Subject leaders are held to account for progress in their areas and they track carefully how well students are doing in all classes. Varied and well-targeted support is put in place for teachers who still need to improve or develop their teaching. Training for all teachers on topics such as using questioning more effectively is ongoing and continues to improve the quality of teaching overall.
- Senior and middle leaders constantly track the progress of all groups of students. This information is used promptly to pick up any underachievement so that support can be put in place. A student might be provided with a mentor to boost their confidence or given small-group teaching to help them catch up with literacy or numeracy skills. Students' needs are met very much on an individual basis and this has had a clear impact on the progress of all groups of students at the academy.
- Support for disadvantaged students is very effective. Pupil premium funding has been used imaginatively to provide a variety of support. For example, the provision of individual coaches to boost progress in English and mathematics, and residential events to build confidence and self-belief.
- The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education at the academy has a huge impact on increasing students' awareness and knowledge of the world and in preparing them for life in modern Britain. Students take a lead on deciding what topics are most relevant for them. They work in teams to provide resources for teachers on subjects such as sexual health, awareness of disability and body image, and spiritual values. For example, last year Key Stage 4 students made a video as part of an awareness campaign on homophobia. This year, a group of students is visiting Auschwitz to research, plan and resource a series of assemblies and lessons on the Holocaust.
- The curriculum provides well for the needs of students. Consequently, more students are choosing to take academic subjects, such as: history, French, German and science. The academy also provides a good range of vocational subjects, for example, hospitality and catering. This is similar in the sixth form where most students are given the opportunity to study a mixture of academic and vocational subjects.
- The academy's arrangements for keeping students safe are robust and meet all statutory requirements. Staff are kept up to date with regular training which raises their awareness of issues, such as sexual exploitation.
- The Academies Enterprise Trust provides expertise in all areas of school leadership that can be used by the academy as needed. The Trust also provides opportunities for academy leaders to work in partnership with other schools and draw on their expertise.
- The local authority has provided good support to the academy this term on developing more effective

provision in the sixth form.

- The quality of advice and guidance given to students as they make decisions about the next steps in their education is a strength of the curriculum. A variety of information and support is provided, for example, careers lessons and options conferences in Year 9, mock interviews for Year 11 students and visits to universities for Year 13. These ensure that students are well aware of the options open to them. At all points the academy also offers advice and support to parents. Underpinning all of this is a determination to raise the aspirations of all students at the school.
- The academy has positive working relationships with its local primary schools. Teachers from the academy visit primary schools to deliver physical education and drama lessons and run joint projects to raise literacy levels. The academy runs a summer school which last year raised the literacy levels of 93% of the Year 6 students who attended. Year 5 and 6 students are also invited to experience taster days at the academy.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body provides robust governance for the academy. Governors have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching. They hold the Principal to account for the quality of teaching, rewarding good teachers and challenging underperformance.
- Governors are aware of the academy's performance compared to that of other schools nationally through regular reviews. They confidently question senior leaders about how well different groups of students within the academy are doing and know what impact pupil premium spending has had.
- The governing body carries out its statutory obligations to keep students safe and ensure equality for all.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour

The behaviour of students is good. The vast majority of students meet the academy's high expectations. They conduct themselves well around the academy showing respect for each other, adults and their environment. Students are very proud of their academy and older students, in particular, appreciate the improvements in behaviour since they started at the academy.

are good

- The academy manages more challenging students well. Staff work with them to identify what the barriers to learning are and then help them to develop the skills necessary to control their own behaviour. The academy does not exclude students from the academy. It uses internal exclusion if it is necessary to temporarily remove students from lessons. Academy data show that the incidents where this is necessary has almost halved in a year.
- The academy supports students with previously low-attendance rates very successfully and attendance is now in line with national figures for secondary schools.
- Behaviour in lessons is good. Students show a willingness to learn and lose concentration only occasionally where tasks do not engage and challenge all. Relationships between students and staff are very positive.

Students respond positively to opportunities for leadership, such as shaping what they are taught and taking on duties to support staff at after-school events, breaks and lunchtimes. Year 10 and 11 prefects take their responsibilities very seriously. Other students respond respectfully to them and they are positive role models for younger members of the academy. Students that attend alternative provision behave well and their attendance is good.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Inspectors agree with the assertions of students who report that there is very little bullying in the academy and, when it does happen, it is dealt with effectively by staff. Students are confident that they will be listened to and supported. Students are well informed about bullying of all kinds and their responsibilities towards others.
- The topics chosen by students as part of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural programme often go beyond the more obvious safety issues and cover topics such the potential long-lasting negative effects of early sexual activity. Students also told inspectors that they feel very safe when they are at the academy. They also know how to keep themselves safe outside the academy. They talk confidently about risks they might face online and on the streets and what they can do to minimise these

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching is good and still improving. Effective teaching was seen throughout the academy across different ability groups and subjects. In English and mathematics in particular, the impact of this is seen in the rapid rates of progress for all groups of students across year groups.
- Teachers have high expectations of students. The vast majority manage students' behaviour well, creating a positive climate for learning. When students were suitably challenged by tasks they became absorbed in their learning which led to them making increased progress. For example, in Year 10 mathematics, a variety of well organised, lively activities were planned. These allowed all students to engage with the learning and make good progress in understanding the concepts of whether figures were congruent, similar or neither. However, not enough teaching yet encourages this level of enthusiasm for learning.
- A common focus on improving literacy skills was seen across many subjects. Teachers insist that students use the correct subject-specific language in lessons and incorrect spellings are routinely corrected. In students' books, inspectors saw how this had a positive impact on improving the accuracy of written work over time. Literacy activities are also a routine part of tutor time. However, not all teachers use opportunities in lessons to reinforce numeracy skills and so numeracy is not improving as rapidly as literacy.
- In some lessons, especially in English, students are encouraged to discuss their ideas before writing them down. Doing this helped students to develop their ideas and so improved the quality of what they then wrote. In two Year 10 English lessons, both high- and middle-ability students discussed their opinions on the age of criminal responsibility in preparation for GCSE coursework. Effective questioning from the teachers encouraged them to develop their thinking and build on the ideas of others. These opportunities for students to develop the way they communicate are not yet seen across all subjects and students are not routinely encouraged to use standard English.
- Students' books are usually well presented and are marked regularly by teachers. However, not all advice to students about how they can improve is clear. Even when it is, not all students respond to it. A new system of online learning is developing rapidly at the academy. This allows teachers to comment on what students are writing as they work in the classroom or give them feedback while they are actually working at home. Students speak of the positive effect this is having on their learning as they get advice on how to improve more quickly.
- Teachers use homework effectively to support and reinforce learning. Students' books show that homework is regularly set and commented on by teachers. Students can also use their numeracy books at home to work on specific numeracy skills.
- Reading levels at Key Stages 3 and 4 are improving rapidly because of effective intervention strategies. For example, in three months some Year 10 students have raised their reading ages by more than three years because of good teaching.

Occasionally, teaching assistants do not provide effective support for students in lessons because they do not fully understand how best to help them. This means that students do not always make the progress they should.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment is rising strongly. In 2014 more students than ever gained GCSE passes at A* to C grades in English and in mathematics, with just over half attaining five A* to C grades including English and mathematics. Attainment at GCSE and vocational equivalents has improved consistently over the past three years and, while it is still below national figures, it is improving at a faster rate than at other schools nationally.
- Most students make very good progress in English. These students made better progress in English than students nationally. Many more students made good progress in 2014 than in 2013. More than a third of students from Year 11 in 2014 entered the academy not having made the progress they should at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 4 most had caught up and made expected progress. A favourable proportion made more-than-expected progress.
- From low starting points, progress in mathematics is also rapid with students making progress in line with other students nationally by the end of Key Stage 4. The proportion of students making more-than-expected progress in mathematics is also rising strongly.
- Disadvantaged students make good progress. The attainment gap in English and mathematics between them and other students at the academy has closed to half a grade from one full grade in 2013. Disadvantaged students are making better progress than students nationally. The gap in attainment with all students nationally in 2013 in English and also in mathematics was about half a grade. Figures are not yet available for 2014.
- From low starting points, disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress. In 2014 at the end of Key Stage 4, nearly three quarters of these students made expected progress. Overall, disabled students and those with special educational needs make progress in line with other students at the academy.
- This year, the academy used early entry successfully to boost the proportions of students achieving an A* to C grade in English by 11% and in mathematics by 6%.
- The achievement of students in GCSE subjects other than English and mathematics is also rising. In science, 10% more students gained an A* to C grade in 2014 than in 2013.
- Most able students at the academy make good progress with all making at least expected progress and the vast majority making more than expected progress. More students achieved A* grades in more GCSE subjects in 2014.
- In the sixth form, progress in vocational subjects is improving rapidly and is well above national averages. Attainment is strengthening with increasing numbers of students achieving merits and distinctions. Progress in A levels is also improving but more slowly. However, achievement at A level is now in line with the national average.

The sixth form provision

is good

- Strong leadership in the sixth form has driven improvements in teaching and raised the aspirations of students. This has led to impressive achievement in vocational subjects and rising achievement in academic ones. All groups, including disadvantaged students and disabled students and those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good across both academic and vocational subjects. Teachers' subject

knowledge is particularly strong. There is mutual respect and trust between teachers and students which creates a very positive climate for learning. This enables students to develop confidence which helps them to make more rapid progress. For example, in one Year 13 performing arts lesson, students had developed the skills to offer effective critical advice on each other's performances. Their perceptive feedback led to immediate improvements in the quality of their work.

- Senior leaders use data to carefully track and monitor the progress of all groups of students. Teachers know how well their students are doing and have a very clear understanding of their individual needs and capabilities.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is good and students are positive role models for younger members of the academy. Sixth formers are involved in the development of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum, raise money for charity and take on roles as learning Ambassadors to support other students.
- The quality of the guidance and support available to students is a strength of the sixth form. Students leave with the qualifications and well-developed personal, social and employability skills that prepare them well for the next steps in their education or the world of work. In 2014, more than half of students took up a place at university; many of these were the first from their families to do so. The overwhelming majority of others went straight into employment or on to apprenticeships.

9 of 11

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	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.
		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.

School details

Unique reference number	135957
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	452842

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1545
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ben Wright
Principal	Tracey Hemming
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2013
Telephone number	01255 428131
Fax number	01255 428163
Email address	schaplin@clactoncoastalacademy.org

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