

Claremont High School Academy Trust

Claremont Avenue, Kenton, Harrow, HA3 0UH

Inspection dates 13–14 May 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The great majority of students achieve exceptionally well at Claremont. The proportion who attain five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is consistently above the national average.
- Leaders have ensured consistently high quality teaching. Consequently, all groups of students make rapid progress in a wide range of subjects. This includes disadvantaged students, who are supported increasingly well through the prudent use of additional funding.
- Teachers routinely plan work which motivates and engages students effectively. Work is very well pitched to match the needs and interests of students of all abilities. Homework makes a very strong contribution to students' development of a wide range of skills, including in literacy and numeracy.
- The relationships between students and staff are excellent. Students appreciate the efforts made by teachers and other adults to provide enjoyable and challenging learning activities. In most cases, teachers' marking is highly effective and gives students clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Students conduct themselves around the large school site with maturity and respect for others. They have excellent attitudes to learning. This underpins students' typically responsible and courteous behaviour in lessons.
- Students report that they feel very safe in all parts of the school. They are highly knowledgeable about a wide range of safety-related matters. This helps them to stay safe outside of school as well as when on site.
- Students in the sixth form achieve well in a range of subjects, often from below average starting points. Examination results at AS level were particularly impressive in 2014.
- The sixth form makes a very strong contribution to the school as a whole. Students provide excellent role models for younger students. They also act as effective ambassadors for the school in the wider community. The majority go on to higher education after leaving Claremont.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership to the school. He, alongside other senior and middle leaders, has created a culture where academic success is expected from all students, regardless of ability. The school has maintained consistently impressive levels of achievement over time.
- Leaders put a very high emphasis both on students achieving well in their courses and on how well students develop as well-rounded young people.
- The effective governing body holds the school to account robustly for its performance.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well promoted. Consequently, all groups of students are prepared exceedingly well for the next stage of their education.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, 45 part-lessons were observed, including visits to assemblies and tutorial time. Meetings were held with: the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the governing body, and four groups of students. In addition, the lead inspector met with a senior local authority officer, responsible for school improvement.
- Inspectors looked at: planning and school self-evaluation documentation; information on students' progress; examples of students' work; and a range of policy documents.
- Inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors took account of the 106 responses to a questionnaire for members of staff.

Inspection team

Ken Bush, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Niall Gallagher	Additional Inspector
Sam Hailey	Additional Inspector
Ivyrina Hoolas	Additional Inspector
Adam Mirams	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Claremont High School is much larger than most secondary schools. It converted to become an academy school in April 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted in 2010, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs in the school is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is similar to the national average. This is additional government funding for those students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- Students come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. About one-third of the students on roll speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its students.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers check more consistently that students have acted upon the advice given when work is marked.
- Improve sixth form students' attainment at A2 level so that it at least equals that currently being achieved at AS level.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders and governors have ensured that high standards have been maintained since the school converted to become an academy. Leading strongly by example, the highly effective and experienced headteacher communicates a clear expectation that all students can be successful at Claremont. This has contributed to the creation of a school where students receive an excellent education.
 - Leaders ensure that teaching is of as high a standard as possible and is continually improving. Extremely effective systems are in place to ensure that checks on teaching quality are regular and result in improvements.
 - Leaders are highly adept at monitoring the effectiveness of the provision offered and swift to intervene in the event of relative underperformance. For example, those few subjects where achievement was less strong in 2014, such as design technology, were subject to a 'rapid improvement plan'. All such subjects are securely on track to secure much stronger performance in the 2015 results because the necessary changes were made in a timely and effective way.
 - Professional development closely with individual teachers' needs. All staff know that they are expected to be accountable for how well students achieve; this is tightly linked to their performance targets and pay progression. The school has formed highly productive partnerships with other schools, which have proved of mutual benefit in developing high quality practice. The headteacher uses his national leader of education status effectively to help raise standards in other schools in the vicinity and also for the benefit of Claremont students.
 - Middle leaders, including heads of subjects and year groups, play an important part in the school's continuing success. They are fully involved in monitoring the quality of work in their areas of responsibility and improving the quality of teaching. Senior leaders are highly effective in training and mentoring new middle leaders. This enables them to begin in their roles with confidence and a clear understanding of what is required of them.
 - Excellent leadership has ensured that all groups of students achieve to a similarly high standard, including disadvantaged students supported by additional funding. The programme put in place to support this group is well tailored to match their different needs. Students' progress and attendance are regularly checked and followed up where needed.
 - The school provides an excellent curriculum which enables all groups of students to flourish both academically and socially. The core subjects ensure that all students receive a strong grounding in basic skills, while options in Years 9 to 11 enable students to follow courses which suit their interests as well as their abilities. There is a very wide range of extra-curricular activities, involving sport, the arts and other academic options not available on the main timetable.
 - Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely well promoted through assemblies, and other activities. This supports students in gaining a very well developed sense of what it is to be a citizen in modern British society and the values which underpin it. Students have a very clear understanding of, and respect for, the importance of tolerance, diversity and the rule of law.
 - Students receive high quality advice and guidance about course choices at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. This enables them to settle quickly and achieve consistently high standards. They also get useful and extensive information from both school staff and external experts about the range of careers options available to them.
 - All safeguarding arrangements meet current statutory requirements; this ensures that students feel safe and are safe. All staff have received the relevant level of high quality, up-to-date training in child protection matters. Risk assessments for in-school and off-site activities are comprehensive and fit-for-purpose. All policies are regularly reviewed and updated, including by governors. These arrangements ensure that safety is given paramount importance in the school's work.
 - The school engages with parents effectively, including those who find it more difficult to engage so readily. The school website is highly informative about the life of the school. Responses to Parent View indicate that the great majority value the school's work greatly; most would recommend it to others.
 - The local authority rightly regards the school very highly and values greatly the excellent contribution it makes to raising standards in other local schools. As Claremont is an academy, the local authority does not supply any formal support.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors hold the school to account well. They have put a high priority on ensuring that there is sufficient technical expertise on the governing body in a wide range of areas of the school's work. This

includes personnel issues and finance, as well as education. As a result, resources are used prudently and efficiently. Governor training also has a high priority, including in safeguarding matters. A high proportion of the governing body have undertaken safer recruitment training. This ensures that all new appointments to the school staff have been appropriately vetted.

- The governing body has acquired a secure knowledge of the overall quality of teaching. It understands how well Claremont students are achieving compared with others nationally, including with regard to different groups of students. It has monitored the additional spend to support disadvantaged students rigorously; this has contributed to the rapidly increased progress of this group.
- Governors understand the importance of ensuring that teachers must demonstrate the impact of their work on maintaining or raising standards if they are to receive salary increases. They ensure that arrangements to check how well teachers have met their targets are robust. In the very few cases where it has been appropriate in the past, underperformance has been tackled assertively.
- Governors are rightly proud that their school is such a welcoming and tolerant community. They ensure that the principles of equal opportunities are upheld and that any discrimination, were it to occur, would be tackled with vigour. Governors have also ensured that there is sufficient awareness among staff and leaders of the potential hazards where students might be exposed to extremism outside of school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students demonstrate and affirm great pride in their school, including through how well the rules for school uniform are observed. All groups of students are remarkably positive about their learning in the full range of subjects.
- Students who spoke to inspectors were almost unanimous in their view that all staff expect them to do extremely well at school. This builds students' self-confidence and desire to be successful. The level of engagement with learning that inspectors witnessed in lessons was typically very high.
- Relationships between staff and students are extremely purposeful and make a marked contribution to students' high levels of achievement. Students behave extremely well in class in the great majority of cases. Students understand the school's rewards and sanctions policy very clearly and acknowledge that it is fair.
- No disruption of any kind was seen by inspectors throughout the two days of the inspection. Students were keen to confirm that this excellent conduct in lessons and sensible behaviour around the school site is typical. School records indicate that instances of exclusion from school have reduced very sharply for all groups of students over time.
- Well-trained and highly supportive teaching and non-teaching staff care for those students who join the school with particular behavioural needs with skill and commitment. Most parents who responded to Parent View and almost all staff regard students' positive behaviour as a key strength of the school.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students confirm that they feel safe in all parts of the school.
- Bullying seldom occurs and almost all students are confident that any incidents that occur will be dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff. Students have a well-developed awareness of the many different forms that bullying can take, including that relating to mobile phone technology and the internet.
- Students are knowledgeable about bullying in the form of discrimination against different groups, such as those of different ethnic heritage, religious background or sexual orientation. Those that spoke to inspectors were keen to stress that in a school with such a diverse social and cultural mix as Claremont, any form of discriminatory behaviour would not be tolerated by the student community.
- Parents and staff endorse inspectors' views that the school keeps students extremely safe.
- Attendance has improved rapidly in the recent past for all groups of students and is now above average.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teachers make effective use of their excellent subject knowledge and expertise in planning and delivering lessons. In almost all cases, there is a good level of challenge for all groups of students, including the most able, reflecting teachers' high expectations. Consequently, students make rapid progress in a range of subjects.
- During the inspection, many Year 11 students were receiving their final pre-examination lessons. A notable characteristic of the teaching observed by inspectors was the way in which well-planned revision work consolidated students' existing knowledge and understanding, but also made students think more deeply about the topics being studied.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are exceptionally proficient in using questioning to elicit what students already know before setting them further challenges. This makes very effective use of time so that all groups of students make equally rapid gains in their learning.
- The teaching in English is consistently strong. The value of reading is strongly promoted across the school as well as in English lessons, enabling most students to be fluent and accurate readers. The strong focus on the development of speaking and listening skills through discussions and debates across the curriculum enables students to become articulate and confident communicators.
- Mathematics teaching at Claremont is extremely accomplished. Teachers make excellent use of their assessment information to ensure that key mathematical principles are securely understood, including through checking students' misconceptions. This helps to ensure that there are no major gaps in students' learning.
- Teachers provide high quality and extensive feedback to students. Much of the marking seen during the inspection was exemplary, including in languages. In most cases, marking gives students very clear pointers as to how their work can be improved. In a few instances, teachers do not always insist that students have acted upon the advice given, which slows progress.
- Homework is a key priority in the school's approach to encouraging high expectations of all. It helps to enable students to develop a wide range of skills, including in literacy and numeracy.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The school has a strong track record of success in enabling students to achieve extremely well. Typically, students join Claremont having gained average to slightly above average results at primary school. By the time that students complete their courses in Year 11, attainment is well above the national average in most measures.
- Achievement in English and, especially, in mathematics is consistently strong. This is because excellent teaching enables students to progress at a rapid rate in both subjects. Literacy and, increasingly, mathematical skills are extremely well developed across the whole range of subjects. This helps students to be highly successful in a range of areas. The mathematics department is rightly proud when it claims that, 'numeracy is no longer the sole responsibility of the mathematics department!'
- With only minor variations, all groups of students of differing abilities and ethnic backgrounds progress at a similarly rapid rate, both in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. This includes disabled students and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language. These groups receive very well targeted and effective support which meets their individual needs. This enables them to achieve as well as their peers in most subjects.
- The most able students achieve extremely well as a result of teaching which challenges them effectively. In 2014, attainment at GCSE grades A* and A was well above the national average in business studies, mathematics, music, religious education and in most of the science courses.
- In the 2014 examinations, the attainment of disadvantaged Year 11 students supported through additional funding was close to that of other students. In English, the gap with other students nationally was the equivalent of half a GCSE grade; in mathematics the gap was only one third of a grade. These gaps are much narrower than those typically found. Compared with other students in the school (who attained well above the national average), the gaps represented half a grade in English and two thirds of a grade in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students benefit strongly from the high quality additional support they receive. This enables them to make progress at a rate which is close to that of other students nationally from their different starting points. Inspection evidence shows that the progress of this group of students in Key Stage 3 is accelerating especially quickly and, in some cases, more rapidly than other students. Consequently, gaps are closing substantially.

- The school does not enter any students for examinations until they have completed their courses towards the end of Year 11.

The sixth form provision**is outstanding**

- The sixth form is led extremely well. Leaders ensure that all students are given clear and relevant guidance about course choices before they commence their studies. This aspect of provision has improved significantly in the last two years, resulting in a much higher proportion of students staying on into Year 13 after their first year in the sixth form.
- Students achieve consistently well over time in a range of subjects from starting points which are overall below the national average. In 2014, the results achieved in a wide range of different subjects at AS level represented exceptional progress. This includes mathematics, sciences, sociology and English literature.
- Students achieve increasingly well at A2 level, but the school's track record is not consistently as strong in that qualification as it is at AS level. The relatively small proportion of students who re-take GCSE examinations in English and/or in mathematics makes at least good progress in achieving at least a C grade.
- Teaching is consistently outstanding. As in the main school, teachers' in-depth subject knowledge is used extremely well to motivate and inspire students to do as well as they can. The quality of marking is excellent. Teachers and tutors provide students with high quality and extensive support. Updates on progress are regular; leaders follow-up promptly if students' progress falls below expectations.
- Students' attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are extremely enthusiastic about both their studies and the opportunities afforded them to engage in extra-curricular activities and volunteering work in the local community. Students regularly support learning in the main school, including through listening to younger students reading.
- As with students in the main school, students in the sixth form are very safety-aware, including in those areas which are relevant to young people entering adulthood. They typically behave with considerable maturity and a high level of social responsibility, thereby acting as excellent role models for younger students.
- Students leave the sixth form extremely well prepared for the next steps in their education or careers with a high proportion progressing to higher education. The Future University Success Coordinator provides excellent guidance throughout the school year. Those intending to apply to higher education are given well-focused individual mentoring by tutors.

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	136656
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	453341

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1536
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Brunswick
Headteacher	Terry Molloy
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	08448500093
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