

Clifton Hill School

Chaldon Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5PH

Inspection dates 8–9 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders have built on previous good performance to improve teaching, achievement and the accommodation since the previous inspection. The school continues to improve.
- Effective training for all staff and regular checks on the quality of teaching ensure that students make outstanding progress in mathematics and good progress in English and science.
- Students in Year 11 all achieve some formal accreditation and qualifications before they leave to join the sixth form. As a result, students are well prepared for their futures
- Governors have high-quality skills which they use to challenge leaders about students' achievements. They know how the school works and regularly visit the school. They use additional government funding effectively.
- Parents are pleased with their children's education.
- A wide range of exciting activities contributes well to students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, students in Years 12 to 14 were taking part in their Duke of Edinburgh expedition during the inspection.
- Subjects and topics meet students' needs and abilities well. Additional therapies and specialist rooms support individual needs effectively. Good opportunities for work experience help to prepare students well for life after school.
- Students' behaviour is good. They enjoy school and get on well together.
- The schools' work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students say that they feel very safe at school.
- Attendance is high. Almost all students attend well and most come to school every day. They value the house points that they receive for their good behaviour and attendance.
- Teaching is good. Marking is helpful, ensuring that students know how to improve their work. All students are given good support from teaching assistants.
- Staff are positive about the way leaders and managers are improving the school.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Leaders ensure that students achieve exceptionally well on their accredited courses.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Students' progress in speaking, listening and reading is not as good as their progress in mathematics.
- Not all students who could benefit from the use of communication aids have opportunities to do so.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed students' learning in 15 lessons, some jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors also listened to some students read.
- Inspectors talked to several different groups of students about their school and about their progress.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, some staff, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at several documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' books.
- The inspection team took account of 11 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and spoke to a few parents at the school. Questionnaire responses from 30 staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Melanie Hall

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school caters for secondary-aged students from across East Surrey.
- All students at Clifton Hill have a statement of educational needs for their severe learning difficulties or their profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- About a quarter of students also have a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder.
- Most students are of White British heritage and a very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The school also receives additional Year 7 catch-up funding.
- Students in Key Stage 4 and those in the sixth form have opportunities to attend accredited vocational courses at North East Surrey College (Nescot). Vocational opportunities are available to students in Key stage 4 and the sixth form.
- Students do not take GCSE examinations early.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend achievement in speaking, listening and reading by:
 - ensuring that students read or are read to every day
 - broadening the range of communication devices, including technology, to enable students to ask and answer questions and provide opinions for themselves.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Strong leadership has ensured a successful focus on improving teaching and students' achievements since the previous inspection. This has resulted in students making outstanding progress in mathematics and outstanding progress in the sixth form. The headteacher is well supported by other leaders, staff and governors.
- Governors regularly challenge leaders and support the work of the school well. This ensures that students' progress is good in English and science and outstanding in mathematics, and has been so for the past two years.
- Leaders have built on previous good provision to enrich the curriculum through a wide range of subjects and topics that students enjoy. This has a positive impact on students' improving achievement. Effective therapies support students' learning and/or behaviour needs, so that progress improves.
- Middle leaders check outcomes in their subjects regularly. They have a clear overview of what is working well and what still needs improvement. They check outcomes with other similar schools to ensure they are accurate and are fully aware that achievement is better in mathematics than in English.
- Leaders fully recognise that there is more to do to improve progress in English. They are aware that they need to ensure daily reading for all students and make better use of communication devices for those students who would benefit from them.
- Leaders check that teachers provide challenging tasks for all students by setting targets for them that are linked to pupils' achievements. Teachers understand that increases in their salaries are provided if they meet their targets.
- Leaders provide a wide range of visits and activities that students enjoy, for example, residential visits to activity centres, the Surrey ski trip, and joint sports days with the local Caterham School.
- Students show that they enjoy school by their high attendance and by the way that they join in the activities offered with enthusiasm.
- Students learn about British values through voting for their own student council, voting for the school's own citizenship awards, organising their own sporting events with a paired school and through their Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. All of these help them to learn about democracy.
- Leaders ensure that there is equality of opportunity for students through their rich and exciting curriculum. The very small proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and the few who speak English as an additional language are very well supported so that they make similar progress to that of their classmates. Students learn about the different cultures and faiths that make up modern Britain. As a result, there is no discrimination at the school and students' have positive attitudes. Links within the community and charity fund raising activities support the promotion of students' spiritual, moral, and cultural development.
- Older students learn about staying safe, the prevention of sexual exploitation, extremism and radicalisation in their personal education sessions. Students are safe and secure in their alternative provision.
- Leaders are developing a new assessment system to accurately measure and monitor the assessment of students' skills. Assessments are checked regularly with other similar schools to ensure that they are accurate.
- The local authority provides good guidance to leaders offering regular support and progress checks. It recognises the good improvements that the school has made in achievement in mathematics and in the sixth form and so provides light touch support.
- Parents who were spoken to during the inspection and those who responded to the online questionnaire are overwhelmingly pleased with the school.
- Older students benefit from opportunities to undertake local work experience, helping to run a cafe in the community and developing the school gardens. Students receive good quality careers guidance to prepare them for their futures.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged students to provide extra support and resources, such as additional therapies and technology. As a result, these students make similar or better progress than their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is well used to ensure students in Year 7 have additional support and resources so that they can improve at a faster rate.
- Leaders provide a wide range of sports activities through their own budget, or through charity fund raising... Students benefit from games and sports with local schools. They have many opportunities to

enjoy camping and walking trips such as those undertaken during the inspection towards students' bronze awards for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

- Responses to the staff inspection questionnaires show that the vast majority of staff are very supportive of leaders and proud to work at the school.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements. Regular training for all staff ensures that they know how to identify any pupil at risk of harm. High-quality procedures ensure that students are safe. Risk assessments are very thorough.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors are totally committed to improvement. They are knowledgeable and have a wide range of skills. They use their expertise well to challenge leaders and hold them to account for students' achievements. Governors are well aware of the strengths of teaching and of the areas for improvement. Leaders provide governors with good quality information about the school's performance including that of staff. Governors are fully aware of procedures for setting targets for teachers and they use these to make sure the best teachers are rewarded and that others receive support and training to improve their practice. Governors manage the school's finances well. They ensure that additional funding benefits those students who are eligible for it. This ensures that these students make similar progress to that of their classmates. Governors use the Year 7 funding wisely to help these students catch up and build successfully on their previous learning. Governors ensure that all current safeguarding regulations are fully met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. They behave well and most of them enjoy all aspects of their school lives. Their attitudes to learning are good and this promotes their achievement. Behaviour by students is well managed by staff so that overall behaviour has improved in the past two years. This is because of high-quality training in behaviour management for all staff.
- The schools' policies are effective because these inform staff and parents about how students should be supported. This ensures that students with autism spectrum disorders, for example, are very well supported to help them manage their behaviour.
- There have been no permanent or short-term exclusions in the past few years. Leaders check behaviour regularly but not all staff are diligent in entering behaviour incidents into school records. This impacts on leaders' ability to track any recurring incidents.
- Students have positive relationships with each other and with staff. Most students know and understand the school rules and adhere to them, enjoying the rewards that they receive. Students' behaviour on trips, visits and when attending off-site provision is good.
- Off-site activities help to keep students focused on their learning and enable them to have fun and build on their skills. For example, some students go riding, others go swimming while the most physically able take part in challenging award schemes. These all promote their positive attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
- Students learn about democracy through voting for their school council and making decisions about changes they want to make in their activities.
- The school prepares students well for their futures through their good achievement, through their work experience and their improved behaviour.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Thorough school policies ensuring the safety of students are fully in place. These are very well known and understood by all staff.
- Leaders regularly check students' behaviour, safety and attendance at their alternative provision to ensure that these are at least good.
- Students are fully aware of different forms of bullying. They say that there is little bullying at the school, it does not happen often and staff are always there to deal with it quickly. They say that they feel really safe at school and on their trips and visits because they have learned about meeting strangers and they have practised crossing roads safely.
- Students fully understand the importance of staying safe on the internet and know about e-safety procedures. They understand the impact of risks, which helps them to feel safe.
- Risk assessments are very thorough and are always completed for all off-site activities. Leaders check safety procedures regularly.

- Parents, students and staff are very satisfied that procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of students are very well organised and secure.

The quality of teaching is good

- Students achieve well at this school because the impact of teaching over time is consistently good. This ensures that students' achievements in all groups, including those from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language, are improving. Students throughout the school achieve well in English and science and outstandingly well in mathematics.
- The teaching of art is also outstanding and is highly effective. This has resulted in a high number of students in Years 11 to 14 taking art GCSE this year. These are the first GCSE examinations taken at this school in the past eight years. The work presented in students' portfolios is of a very high quality.
- A very positive approach to the teaching of phonics, the sounds of letters and words, has resulted in students improving their reading skills recently. However, not all students read regularly enough to make even better progress and there are few examples of staff reading to those students who do not yet read.
- In mathematics, high-quality teaching ensures that many students achieve at a fast rate so that they make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Teachers plan tasks that match the very different needs and abilities of students. This ensures that each student can succeed and do well. Leaders monitor lessons effectively to make sure that students are making at least good progress.
- The most able students are very well challenged by the additional tasks set for them so that they progress at a fast rate.
- Students with autistic spectrum conditions are well supported in lessons. They benefit from high levels of individual support. Activities are well matched to their individual abilities. Adults use signs and symbols generally effectively to help students understand better and remove barriers to their learning. For example, timetables of activities described in pictures or symbols help these students to organise their day. These enable them to anticipate activities and avoid anxiety and to succeed in their tasks. As a result their progress is good.
- The use of literacy and numeracy across a range of subjects is effective. In geography in Years 10 and 11 for example, students showed that they could identify the countries of the British Isles on a map and used their literacy skills to write these down. The use of communication aids in this session was good, helping students to make choices and identify answers to questions.
- The use of communication resources, for example, switches to enable pre-prepared responses or devices to promote language skills across the school, is variable. There is some good practice evident but occasionally the lack of communication aids impacts on the abilities of a few students to communicate and answer questions.
- Students' work is marked well. Teachers use a variety of appropriate methods to help students understand what they did well and what still needs improving. Marking is particularly effective in English and mathematics.
- Teaching for students with additional needs and for disadvantaged students is good, enabling these groups to achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, others in the class.
- Writing for the most able students is well taught and students' books show good progress over time for these students. For some students, writing is not an option due to their severe or profound learning difficulties. However, staff usually find ways in which students can record their ideas, but sometimes the lack of use of communication devices, including technology, limits the progress these groups of students, particularly in English.
- Teaching assistants' support for students' learning is of a high quality. They regularly monitor and record their achievements.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the lack of use of communication devices impacts on some students' opportunities to make even better progress, particularly in English.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' attainment on entry to the school is always well below what is typical for their age. This is due to their learning difficulties. However, students achieve well at the school. They make at least good progress from their own individual starting points.
- The schools' progress information shows that while progress in English is good, students achieve more

highly in mathematics than in English. However the impact of the teaching of phonics is having a positive impact on reading and writing skills, which are improving.

- Students' progress in speaking and listening is good but not all students have regular access to communication aids to help them respond to questions, provide answers or indicate a personal need. This sometimes impacts on their ability to develop independence.
- Almost all students, including those with additional special needs, achieve well. Records show that achievement has improved over the past few years. By Year 11, students gain a range of Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualifications which provide a good foundation for their sixth form entry. Students achieve well in their alternative provision.
- Staff challenge the most able students very well to reach their potential. Those who read to inspectors showed very good skills in recognising new words through their use of phonics. Students are regularly challenged to think for themselves in their lessons.
- Older students in Years 12 to 14 all develop appropriate vocational skills through courses that will support them well in their futures. Some also attend courses at a local college to acquire additional ASDAN personal progress qualifications in which they make good progress.
- Students have lots of opportunities to improve their physical health and fitness though the wide range of expeditions and activities provided for them through the school's own funding and through charity fund raising. They had just returned from their Duke of Edinburgh hike and overnight stay during the inspection. They said they really enjoyed it and had lots of fun.
- Students who are disadvantaged, those who are eligible for additional funding and those with additional special educational needs achieve equally well. This is because of effective support by teaching assistants who provide guidance to help them succeed.
- Effective marking ensures that students know how they could improve their skills. This enables them to improve quickly.
- Students eligible for additional premium funding achieve as well as others in the school. There are no gaps in their achievement. However, their attainment remains below that found nationally due to students' special educational needs. Students make at least good progress from their starting points.

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- Students in the sixth form achieve outstandingly well on their courses and on their vocational opportunities.
- Students benefit from a very exciting curriculum, outstanding accommodation and high-quality support so that they are very well prepared for their futures.
- The five-year rolling programme of activities includes core skills as well as vocational opportunities. For example, students work in the ARC, a community theatre centre where they help to run a cafe.
- Students' wide range of vocational skills include construction, catering, woodwork, farm work, recycling and grounds maintenance. A mobile classroom is available for those students who cannot manage off-site provision. Students' skills are accredited through ASDAN qualifications.
- Students are given greater responsibility around the school and expectations of their behaviour are extremely high.
- Students' achievement is outstanding because of some very effective support and teaching. As a result, all groups of students, including those with additional special needs and the most able, achieve equally well.
- Study programmes match students' needs and abilities outstandingly well and prepare them very effectively for the next stage of their education.
- Links with the local college are very good and mean that students can extend their vocational qualifications and their personal development. Many also undertake vocational opportunities within the school grounds to extend their skills.
- The school provides effective, impartial careers advice and information about their options when they leave the school. This enables students and their parents to be well aware of the choices that will help them best in their futures.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. They show mature attitudes, are proud of their new accommodation and they fully understand potential risks to their health and well-being and how to manage these.
- Sixth form leaders are rigorous about maintaining high levels of achievement and the personal development of students. Leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding.

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	125470
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	449496

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
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	79
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	31
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Lopez
Headteacher	Andrea Ashton-Coulton
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 September 2011
Telephone number	01883 347740
Fax number	01883 349617
Email address	info@clifton-hill.surrey.sch.uk

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