

# Clacton Coastal Academy

Pathfields Road, Clacton on Sea, Essex CO15 3JL

## Inspection dates

20–21 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, the trust and governors have not made sure that the overall effectiveness of the school has remained good.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are not good across a wide range of subjects because the quality of teaching is inconsistent.
- Although attendance is improving, pupils do not attend regularly enough, which limits their progress. Too many pupils are persistently absent, and the number of exclusions is above average.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Not all teachers use questioning effectively. Teachers do not match work to pupils' needs and abilities as well as they should.
- Teachers do not use the school's assessment procedures consistently well, so pupils do not always know how to improve their work.
- In the sixth form, students' progress, teaching and leadership are too variable.
- Pupils' reading and writing skills are underdeveloped and teachers do not reinforce them sufficiently well in all subjects.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils take sufficient pride in their work. Too many pupils leave work incomplete.
- Procedures to manage behaviour are applied inconsistently by teachers. A small minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others.
- Leaders do not use pupil premium funding effectively enough to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Improvement plans are unclear about how leaders will improve teaching and outcomes for pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- There are good procedures to care for pupils' emotional well-being and future aspirations.
- Middle leaders have a clear focus on improving pupils' progress in their subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe.
- Most parents and carers are positive about the school and value the support their child receives.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement in all year groups, including in the sixth form, by:
  - improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good
  - ensuring that teachers' expectations of pupils are constantly high and they plan work that challenges pupils of all abilities
  - ensuring that teachers use questioning skilfully to check pupils' learning and deepen their understanding
  - improving the teaching of literacy and giving pupils more opportunities to develop their reading and writing skills across a wide range of subjects
  - ensuring that all teachers apply the school's agreed assessment procedures.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management, including governance, by making sure that:
  - plans for improvement state clearly how leaders' actions will develop and improve the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes over time
  - leaders make better use of the pupil premium so disadvantaged pupils make at least good progress
  - the leadership of the sixth form improves
  - all staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and well
  - the trust demonstrates clearly the impact it is having on improving the overall effectiveness of the school.
- Raise attendance by:
  - taking immediate action when individual pupils' attendance begins to slip
  - adding further rigour to the monitoring of disadvantaged pupils' attendance
  - implementing more effective procedures to tackle persistent absence.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the impact of leaders' and governors' actions on improving pupils' achievement has been limited. The new principal has faced some significant challenges, and changes in governance and staffing have presented further difficulties. The principal is working closely with the trust to make improvements.
- Leaders evaluate the school to be good. Inspectors do not agree. Leaders have not sufficiently improved the quality of teaching. Teaching remains too inconsistent and pupils' progress requires improvement across a range of subjects. Low-level disruption in lessons has not been eradicated. Although improving, persistent absence rates remain high.
- Leaders' actions to develop the curriculum at key stage 4 have not been successful. As a result, in 2017, pupils were not sufficiently equipped with the skills they needed to do well in examinations, especially in GCSE English.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Some funding provides the 'Hub', a learning space for pupils who struggle to learn in larger classes, but leaders are not ensuring that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities make sufficient progress.
- Leaders have not used additional funding well enough to support disadvantaged pupils. In lessons, teachers' support for disadvantaged pupils is not sufficiently focused on pupils' needs to improve their progress and attainment.
- Leadership of the sixth form has not been successful in improving outcomes since the previous inspection.
- The curriculum provides a sufficient range of subjects for pupils to follow in both key stages. Cultural studies in Year 7 provides pupils with additional enrichment activities.
- Recently, trust leaders have challenged school leaders to refocus their priorities and work more strategically. The trust's subject advisers are working effectively with subject leaders to improve curriculum planning and increase the accuracy of assessment. As a result, leaders in English, mathematics and science are beginning to raise standards in their subjects.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a strong focus on work-related learning and gaining access to employment. This is successfully raising pupils' career aspirations.
- Staff receive good support from school leaders. Newly qualified teachers value the training they receive to help them improve their planning and teaching.
- Most parents and carers who commented via the free-text service during the inspection, or responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, praised the work of the school. The majority would recommend the school to others.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is strong. Leaders provide a range of opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity, for example through weeks celebrating different nationalities and welcoming visiting speakers.

## Governance of the school

- The trust recently sought to strengthen governance by restructuring the school's local governing body. This governing body now includes a small number of trustees to ensure that it is better equipped to act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.
- New governors bring a range of knowledge and experience to the school, but do not provide enough challenge for senior leaders to secure long-term sustainable improvements.
- Regular visits to the school enable governors to get to know staff, and review policies and procedures. Governors have not amended leaders' overgenerous assessment of the school's effectiveness. Governors do not sufficiently challenge the information given to them by leaders to ensure that they gain an accurate overview of the school.
- Trust leaders work effectively with school leaders. They value the work of the principal. The chair of governors is ensuring that the trust offers increased support to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- A governor responsible for monitoring safeguarding makes termly visits to check that policies and procedures are working effectively.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All necessary checks are carried out when recruiting adults to work with children. Staff and governors undertake regular safeguarding training, including that relating to the government's 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders' work has a positive impact on the welfare of pupils, particularly that of the most vulnerable pupils. Leaders responsible for safeguarding have a good level of expertise. They work closely with families and external agencies and offer good support, including during holiday periods, to vulnerable pupils through a dedicated helpline service.
- The school communicates effectively with other agencies to make sure that pupils in alternative, off-site provision are safe and attend regularly.
- Pupils say that they feel safe when they are in school. They report that the rare incidents of bullying that do occur are resolved rapidly.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Requires improvement**

- Teaching is too variable across the curriculum. This results in pupils making inconsistent progress. Strategies to improve pupils' handwriting and extended writing skills are underdeveloped. Too much of pupils' work is untidy and shows a lack of pride in how they present it. This often goes unchallenged.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of attaining are sometimes too low. Tasks are often the same for all pupils, regardless of their abilities. Consequently, some pupils misbehave because they are not sufficiently challenged while others lose interest because the work is too difficult.

- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of how pupils should behave. Teachers do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well. Some pupils take advantage of this and misbehave, disrupting the learning of others.
- Teachers do not consistently identify and address pupils' barriers to learning so that their needs are fully met. The progress of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is slower than that of other pupils with similar starting points.
- Teachers do not consistently provide pupils with feedback in line with the school's policy. Where this is not done effectively, pupils do not know how to improve their work or what they need to do to meet their targets.
- A very small minority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, or sent texts or emails during the inspection, would like more homework to be set. Some pupils explained that they do not do homework.
- Some teachers use their strong subject knowledge to challenge and encourage pupils to think and reason. In English, for example, teachers expect pupils to respond using correct terminology so that they can attain the highest levels. Where practice is strongest, teachers ensure that pupils understand and value the importance of reading.
- Most teachers have good relationships with their pupils. Where teachers' expectations are high and routines are well established, pupils behave well. For example, in music lessons, positive relationships between pupils allowed them to challenge themselves to improve their group performance.
- Key stage 3 and 4 pupils who met with inspectors described English and mathematics as among their most effective subjects. In these subjects, teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' progress and identify gaps in their knowledge and understanding. When teachers share good practice and when they consistently apply the school's feedback and marking procedures, pupils make better progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have established a strong sense of community. A minority of pupils join the school at different points of the year. Pupils say that 'we would come together to help a new person joining the school'. Pupils also contribute to the wider community by raising money for charity and other worthy causes.
- The school operates on a split site. A dedicated team of supervisory staff monitor pupils' safety as they transfer from building to building. Pupils say they 'couldn't feel any safer' as they cross the public road.
- The majority of parents and carers who sent texts during the inspection, or responded to Parent View, think their children are well looked after. One parent said, 'The school is a positive influence on my child's life.'
- Support provided by pastoral leaders is good. Clear procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are treated fairly and consistently.
- Assemblies, form time and personal, social and health education lessons provide good

opportunities to learn about issues such as fundamental British values, staying healthy and keeping safe when using social media. Careers guidance prepares pupils well for the next steps in their education or career.

- Pupils feel that there is always someone to talk to if they have concerns. Relationships between pupils and adults are usually respectful and positive. Most pupils are polite and friendly to visitors.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Inspectors noted some pupils' poor attitudes towards learning. Where teaching fails to capture and retain pupils' interest, a minority of them lose concentration, and some misbehave. When this happens, not all teachers apply the school's agreed procedures to manage behaviour consistently. Exclusion rates remain high.
- Persistent absence, especially for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities, remains too high. Leaders have introduced a range of strategies to raise attendance. These include working more closely with families and providing a bus to collect pupils from their homes to bring them to school. This is leading to some improvement in attendance, but it remains low.
- Pupils and their parents report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and resolved swiftly, with recognised consequences. Leaders have established a culture of respect and tolerance. Pupils say that 'you make good friends here and if there is bullying, staff sort it out'.
- Leaders have made some improvements to pupils' behaviour by establishing clear procedures of 'Choice, Chance, Consequence' for pupils to follow. These procedures focus on rewards, sanctions and celebrating success. Pupils think that this approach is clearer and easier to follow.
- Behaviour in assembly is calm and purposeful. Routines for entry and expectations are well established. At breaktimes, pupils are happy and socialise well with each other.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Most pupils join the school with skills in reading, writing and mathematics that are lower than those found nationally. Pupils do not make sufficient progress, across a range of subjects, during their time in school because the quality of teaching is too variable. Their books show that their writing is often of a basic standard.
- The overall achievement of pupils by the end of key stage 4 was low in 2017. In English and mathematics, pupils did not make sufficient progress. The proportion of pupils attaining at least a grade 4 in both subjects was low. In English, progress was significantly below average.
- In 2017, in mathematics, pupils did not achieve as well as in the previous year. They made less progress than their peers did nationally, and their attainment was below average.
- Leaders of mathematics made the decision to enter a higher percentage of Year 11 pupils for the foundation tier examination than was the case in previous years. This led

to underachievement as it prevented some pupils from achieving higher grades. Leaders have acted to ensure that this year, all pupils enter the right examination linked to their expected targets.

- Pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 4 in humanities and languages was also below average in 2017. Currently, it remains too variable. Progress in science was also low. In some foundation subjects, pupils performed better, and progress was above the national average.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils over the past two years has been very low. Their overall attainment has also been below average. Leaders have not had a clear understanding of the needs of these pupils and have not ensured that suitable support was in place for them. This year, leaders have acted to improve this. As a result, the current progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving, particularly in foundation subjects.
- Leaders' monitoring shows that, currently, pupils in Year 11 are making better progress. Leaders judge that the assessment and moderation resources provided by the trust are helping to improve pupils' progress.
- Leaders of English and mathematics have acted to boost the learning of pupils in Year 11, including creating a class of boys in English and smaller groups for pupils who need additional support in mathematics. Work seen in English books shows that most Year 11 pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders have taken effective action to motivate the most able pupils through the school's 'Graduate Way' scheme, which operates in Years 7 to 10. These pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations and aim to achieve the very highest grades.
- At the end of Year 11, approximately half the pupils join the school's sixth form, most others are supported to go on to study elsewhere or are guided into local apprenticeships.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

**Requires improvement**

- Students enter the sixth form with below average prior attainment.
- Results in academic and vocational subjects in recent years have been too low. In 2017, a significant proportion of students did not make sufficient progress. This is because the quality of teaching is too inconsistent.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is variable. Not all students display good attitudes or show enough respect to staff.
- Students' attendance is improving but remains below average. This has a direct impact on the achievement of those students who choose not to attend regularly.
- Leaders have worked successfully to broaden the learning opportunities on offer to students. Through effective partnerships with other schools and the University of Essex, students can study a wider range of academic and vocational courses off-site, while remaining as a student at Clacton Coastal Academy.
- Students joining Year 12 without a grade 4 in either GCSE English or mathematics receive the support they need to attain these essential qualifications. Most improve their grades by the time they leave the sixth form and success rates are above the

national average.

- Leaders have made sure that disadvantaged students receive good support. In 2017, these students made better progress, in both academic and vocational subjects, than their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Students receive effective support and guidance about the most appropriate courses for them to study. This contributes to good retention rates between Years 12 and 13.
- Careers advice and guidance for students once they are in the sixth form are effective. Students appreciate the support they receive. All of them have opportunities to develop work-related skills and carry out work experience.
- Inspectors noted strong relationships between staff and some students and established routines in lessons. Increasing numbers of students are gaining places on university courses or apprenticeship schemes in employment.
- Arrangements to safeguard students are effective.

## School details

Unique reference number	135957
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10046083

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 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,385
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John King
Principal	Stephanie Neill
Telephone number	01255 428131
Website	<a href="http://www.clactoncoastalacademy.org">www.clactoncoastalacademy.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:contactus@clactoncoastalacademy.org">contactus@clactoncoastalacademy.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	18–19 November 2014

## Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum requirement for pupils' attainment and progress at key stage 4.

- The school is a member of the Academies Enterprise Trust. The principal works closely with leaders from another school in the trust, Maltings Academy.
- The school participates in a 16 to 19 partnership, the VI Project, with the University of Essex.
- Alternative provision is provided for pupils at TLG, Tendring.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 59 lessons. Eleven of these lessons were observed jointly with school leaders. Inspectors visited an assembly and heard pupils read aloud. Inspectors also observed pupils participating in club activities on the second day of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, a representative from the local authority, and the chair of the local governing body who was also the trust representative. An informal discussion took place between an inspector and a parent.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record, recruitment checks, the safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, self-evaluation documents and school improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, records of behaviour and attendance, and other information provided by senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and students of all ages, individually and in groups.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons. Inspectors also considered 64 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 51 free-text responses sent by parents and carers. The inspection team also considered 47 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.

## Inspection team

Kathryn Herlock, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Vivien Corrie-Wing	Ofsted Inspector
John Wilson	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Copping	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector

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