

Claverham Community College

North Trade Road, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0HT

Inspection dates

31 October–1 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal, senior leaders, and governors work well together to instil high expectations across the school.
- Pupils' progress dipped in 2017. Leaders are increasingly effective in addressing the weaknesses that led to this. Provisional GCSE results for 2018 show an improving picture.
- Current pupils' progress is increasingly strong across year groups. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to set challenging activities for pupils. As a result, most pupils concentrate hard. However, in a small number of lessons pupils do not concentrate as well as they should because teachers' planning does not meet their needs.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are respectful towards each other and staff.
- Governors are committed to school improvement. They have a wide range of expertise and support leaders well.
- Older pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education because of an appropriate careers curriculum. However, pupils in key stage 3 do not benefit as much from careers guidance.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils have opportunities to study for a wide range of academic qualifications.
- A small number of teachers do not follow the school's assessment policy well enough. Consequently, some pupils do not fully understand how to improve their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
 - ensuring that teachers' planning consistently meets the needs of pupils
 - making certain that teachers consistently apply the school's assessment policy so that feedback helps pupils to strengthen their knowledge, skills and understanding
- Improve careers provision in key stage 3 so that pupils have access to high-quality information about career paths.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- After a decrease in standards in 2017, the principal and senior team have taken effective action. This has resulted in improved standards. Consequently, provisional examination results for 2018 show an upward trend.
- Leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work with governors to develop plans for school improvement that focus on identified weaknesses. Staff have a shared ownership of these plans for improvement. Consequently, all staff work towards making improvements where they are needed.
- The principal makes sure that leadership is distributed among the staff. For example, leaders have modified the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment so that teachers use increasingly effective strategies to enthuse pupils. Senior leaders and subject leaders play an active part in the 'teaching and learning group', where strategies to improve teaching are evaluated and promoted to staff.
- Teachers and support staff feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. Several staff members are members of a workload committee, where these issues are discussed, and solutions suggested. Consequently, staff feel well motivated and supported by leaders.
- Leaders provide useful training for staff. Staff deliver good-quality training that addresses the main areas of the plans for school improvement. If more bespoke training is required, leaders use external agencies to provide this. Staff value training and believe that it helps them improve in their roles.
- Leaders thoughtfully consider the appropriateness of the curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils are offered a wide range of mostly academic subjects at key stage 4. For example, pupils can choose from four languages (German, French, Latin and Spanish). A review of the subjects that are offered in key stage 4 is currently taking place because leaders recognise that pupils with low prior attainment would benefit further from a wider choice of vocational subjects.
- The school's information on parental views, as well as Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, shows that parents believe the school is well led. The vast majority of parents appreciate the information provided to them on their children's progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded throughout the curriculum. This forms a large part of the personal, social, health and economic education which pupils receive as part of their timetabled lessons. Topics are delivered sensitively and in age-appropriate ways. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a strength of the school. Governors know the school very well. They provide well-informed support to leaders during their school visits and are adept at checking the effectiveness of leaders' actions.
- Across the governing body, there is a wide range of experience. Governors use this

experience to provide high levels of challenge to leaders by asking searching questions and working closely with leaders on the plans for school improvement.

- Through close monitoring of pupil premium spending, governors ensure that extra funding for disadvantaged pupils has a positive effect on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and development.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks on the suitability of staff are thorough and appropriate. Safeguarding policies are regularly reviewed so that they can be adapted to include up-to-date safeguarding guidance.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training on all aspects of safeguarding, including radicalisation and extremism. Consequently, staff are knowledgeable about how to recognise signs that pupils may be at risk of harm, neglect or radicalisation.
- Governors carry out checks on safeguarding procedures. They visit leaders to monitor how checks on the suitability of staff are carried out. This adds an extra level of support for leaders.
- Leaders ensure that thorough risk assessments are carried out when they are needed for certain activities. This helps staff reduce the risks in activities and supports pupils in acting safely.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers share leaders' high expectations. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils ensure that pupils confidently improve their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils make strong progress.
- In most lessons, teachers' well-thought-through planning means that challenging tasks interest and enthuse pupils. However, in a small proportion of lessons, teachers' planning does not meet the needs of all pupils. Consequently, some pupils do not concentrate as well as they should.
- Teachers regularly use insightful questioning to stimulate thought-provoking discussions and debates. Because of this, pupils deepen their understanding of complicated issues. For example, Year 10 pupils enjoyed discussing the different phases of Queen Elizabeth I's life, in terms of how much of a threat there was to her position.
- Pupils benefit from teachers' strong subject knowledge. Teachers address pupils' misconceptions in lessons. This ensures that pupils develop a thorough understanding of topics before they move on to the next area of study.
- Most teachers provide useful feedback to pupils. Pupils value this because it helps them to improve their work further. However, in a small number of subjects teachers do not follow the school's assessment policy. As a result, some pupils are not supported well enough in improving their work.
- Pupils' books show increasingly high standards of work across subjects and year groups. Pupils work hard and think carefully about the topics and subjects they study.

For example, in science pupils record the experiments they conduct and write their own inferences and conclusions.

- Literacy across the curriculum is well developed. Pupils improve their reading in most subjects and they read regularly in tutor-group sessions and library lessons. There are opportunities outside of lessons to improve pupils' literacy. For example, some pupils attend voluntary sessions that focus on improving spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe and are well supported by staff. Pupils know who to go to if they need help and they appreciate the high-quality care that is available to them.
- Pupils respect their school environment and keep it litter free. They are proud of their school.
- Pupils readily participate in the wide range of leadership opportunities available. For example, as peer mentors, some Year 10 pupils help younger pupils with their reading. Other pupils are enthusiastic about joining the school council. This enables them to develop their self-confidence.
- Lessons and assemblies on e-safety help pupils understand appropriate ways to ensure that they are safe online. For example, pupils described to inspectors the reasons why they should think carefully before putting personal information onto social media sites.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education. In key stage 4, pupils receive appropriate careers advice that helps them decide how to fulfil their ambitions when they leave school. However, careers advice is less well developed in key stage 3. As a result, pupils in key stage 3 do not have access to high-quality information about career paths.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe and are well cared for in school. One parent told inspectors that the 'continued support' of staff has led to her child developing 'both academically and emotionally'.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are supported effectively by well-trained staff. Leaders monitor the attendance and personal development of these pupils so that the leaders can work with the alternative provider in supporting pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well. During social times, pupils socialise harmoniously. They treat each other with respect. Bullying is rare. If bullying does happen it is dealt with well so that the issue is quickly resolved.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. Almost all pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions

and concentrate well on their work. A small proportion of pupils do not concentrate well, however, and this means that they do not get the most out of their lessons.

- In 2017, the proportion of pupils excluded for a fixed term was above the national average for secondary schools. Leaders have taken effective steps to reduce fixed-term exclusions so that the number decreased in 2018 and continues to decline.
- Leaders' actions have been successful in improving attendance over the past three years. In 2018, attendance was broadly average. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils was slightly below the national average for secondary schools. This is improving, however, because of leaders' increasingly sophisticated strategies.
- Pupils arrive on time for lessons and bring the correct equipment. They are supported in doing this by daily equipment checks in their morning tutor sessions. Pupils start their work in lessons quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils' progress overall was below average. Leaders took decisive action after this dip in results. In 2018, pupils made better progress in a wide range of subjects, particularly in mathematics.
- Leaders analyse pupils' progress information so that they have a thorough understanding of where pupils are doing well and where action is needed due to relatively weaker progress. Consequently, leaders intervene quickly when pupils fall behind.
- Current pupils make increasingly strong progress across a range of subjects. Improvements in teaching, learning and assessment have led to a rise in attainment and progress across all subject areas, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from a range of support. Improvements in teaching, a clearer whole-school focus on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and the carefully planned allocation of extra funding has resulted in better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, by the end of key stage 4, disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress across a range of subjects from their starting points. These pupils are well supported by committed staff. Sharply focused tuition in Years 7 and 8 ensures that pupils who need extra support catch up quickly.
- Pupils are increasingly ambitious in the courses they choose when they leave school. By the end of key stage 4, they are well prepared for their next steps because they make good progress across a range of subjects.
- The small number of pupils attending off-site alternative provision benefit from a curriculum that meets their needs. Leaders ensure that close contact is maintained with alternative providers and some teachers visit in order to teach lessons in their subject areas. As a result, pupils who attend alternative provision make good progress from their starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	114584
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10045418

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 comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,132
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs M Whitehead
Principal	Mr P Swatton
Telephone number	01424 772155
Website	www.claverham.e-sussex.sch.uk
Email address	info@claverham.org
Date of previous inspection	20–21 June 2013

Information about this school

- Claverham Community College is an above-average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British background. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average for secondary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average for secondary schools.
- A very small number of pupils attend an alternative provider, Battle Teaching and Learning Centre.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 55 lessons. In several observations, senior leaders joined inspectors.
- Inspectors visited five tutor-group sessions and two assemblies.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, senior leaders, a local authority representative and governors.
- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4. Inspectors also spoke to pupils during social times and lessons.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 220 parents who responded to Ofsted's online parental questionnaire, Parent View.
- Documentation scrutinised by inspectors included the school's plans for improvement, the self-evaluation, reports on attendance and behaviour, records relating to pupils' safety, minutes of governors' meetings, and information on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection team

Harry Ingham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ann Fearon	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Storey	Ofsted Inspector
Victoria Webster	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Swan	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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