

Inspection of a good school: Chulmleigh Community College

Beacon Road, Chulmleigh, Devon EX18 7AA

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 October 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Michael Johnson. This school is part of Chulmleigh Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michael Johnson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Baber.

What is it like to attend this school?

Chulmleigh Community College has very high expectations of pupils. The school's motto, 'Nihil Quam Optime' (nothing but our best), permeates the school. Staff, parents and pupils share this ethos; this collective belief is a strength of the school. This is underpinned by the school's values of compassion, ambition and teamwork.

Staff know pupils as individuals. Pupils are proud to be part of this extremely ambitious school. They rise to the school's high expectations with pride. Pupils thrive at this school and are eager to attend. Attendance is high.

Pupils treat others with respect and are courteous to staff and to each other. They recognise the importance of excellent behaviour. Pupils are happy and safe. They have a trusted adult who they can go to with any concerns. On the very rare occasion that there is a bullying incident, the school takes effective action.

Pupils enjoy an excellent range of clubs and activities, such as lego robotics, badminton and a skittles club that supports the school's LGBTQI+ community. The school ensures those who would benefit the most take part in activities. Pupils enjoy wider opportunities. For example, they act as mentors, join the school senate, set up clubs and walk the school dog. Year 11 pupils are proud to act as role models for younger pupils.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school cultivates the aspirations of all pupils through a rich and demanding curriculum. Pupils rise to the challenge exceedingly well. The school has ensured that subject curriculums are extremely ambitious and carefully thought out. Leaders have successfully increased the number of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate.

Teachers are subject experts. They present new learning clearly. Teachers help pupils to build links between different pieces of knowledge. They help pupils to become independent and resilient learners. As a result, pupils have the confidence to attempt work that significantly challenges them. For example, pupils use their knowledge of Edwardian attitudes towards capitalism and socialism to analyse the inspector in *An Inspector Calls*.

The school makes sure pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), have deep knowledge on which to build their future learning. Teachers use assessment to check pupils' understanding. They adapt learning to address any misconceptions. Teachers ensure pupils' knowledge is secure before learning new content. Across all subjects, this approach is consistent. Staff ensure that pupils know how to improve their work. As a result, pupils' written and verbal responses are of an extremely high quality, reflecting the depth of their learning.

The school identifies pupils with SEND swiftly. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. They learn exceptionally well because staff know their individual needs. Staff use appropriate strategies to support them effectively.

Reading is a high priority. Pupils are enthusiastic about the books they read. The school ensures that all pupils can read fluently and confidently. Those who need more help to read are identified quickly and given the specific support they need. This ensures that pupils gain the knowledge and skills to catch up and access the wider curriculum.

Pupils value their learning and focus well in lessons. Disruption to pupils' learning is rare. Pupils' commitment to their education is reflected in their high levels of attendance and punctuality. Pupils are rewarded comprehensively for their positive behaviour.

The school values pupils' personal development highly. Personal development experiences are carefully planned and woven into the curriculum. Pupils learn how to be safe and keep safe, including online. A great number of pupils learn to be active citizens by participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Effective careers education supports and encourages pupils to pursue aspirational career choices.

The board of directors and the school provide exceptional leadership and are committed to continuous school improvement. They are relentless in their desire to provide the absolute best education for all pupils and to serve the local community. This is evident in the qualifications pupils achieve and the exciting next steps they move on to after leaving the school. There is an unwavering focus on pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Staff are proud to work at Chulmleigh College.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 137024 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10297988 |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 760 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Stephen Baber |
| CEO of the trust | Michael Johnson |
| Headteacher | Michael Johnson |
| Website | www.chulmleigh.devon.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 21 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Chulmleigh Academy Trust.
- The executive headteacher of the school, Michael Johnson, is also the CEO of the Chumleigh Academy Trust.
- The Chulmleigh Academy Trust refers to trustees as directors.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, and members of the board of trustees.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Frances Bywater, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Simons

Ofsted Inspector

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