

# Inspection of Clayton Hall Academy

Clayton Lane, Clayton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire ST5 3DN

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Catherine Reid. This school is part of The Windsor 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, Dawn Haywood, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Middleton.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Thanks to improvements made at Clayton Hall, pupils benefit from a curriculum that is more consistent in its ambition and delivery. This means pupils generally learn well and, as a result, their outcomes have improved overall.

Pupils, especially younger pupils, benefit from the wider opportunities that the school offers. The sports clubs are especially appreciated, as are the variety of trips, which include a visit to London and a food technology trip.

Pupils enjoy the effective personal development offer that enables them to discuss matters of importance to them in a mature way. Pupils are also well informed about future destinations and employment opportunities by well-timed and broad careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG). Pupils speak highly of the work they undertake on different cultures and religions, which prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour is generally calm and well ordered, as the school has worked to ensure expectations are met. Pupils report that they are happy and feel safe at the school. In general, they know that if they have concerns, they can report them to leaders and they will be acted on.

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

The school has an ambitious curriculum, with the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) at its heart. The number of pupils studying a qualification in languages has increased, and therefore more pupils have access to the EBacc.

In most subjects, the curriculum identifies the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which this needs to be taught. However, in modern foreign languages (MFL), there is less clarity about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and when. Pupils learn the curriculum well when teachers select appropriate learning activities and check pupils' understanding effectively. For example, in science, pupils used key knowledge to embark on a 'silent solo' task relating to evolution, which helped deepen their understanding. Pupils' learning is less secure when learning activities do not build as effectively on previous learning, or if teachers do not check pupils' understanding precisely. On these occasions, gaps in pupils' knowledge remain, or pupils are not moved on to new learning in a timely way.

The school has a programme to support weaker readers and to embed a culture of reading. This has shown some impact, with some older pupils being trained to support the reading of younger peers, for example. The school has yet to launch a phonics programme to further their support for their weakest readers.

The school has managed changes in the leadership for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. These pupils have their needs accurately identified, and teachers are provided with useful information to adapt their learning activities, which is well used to adapt the learning. This means that pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school has achieved a consistent approach to behaviour management. Pupils to make increasingly positive choices about their behaviour. At social times, the atmosphere is typically calm and orderly. This has had a positive impact on reducing the number of suspensions. Younger pupils are particularly positive about their experiences and the opportunities at the school, although some older pupils have not yet fully adjusted to expectations outside of lessons. Attendance is improving thanks to the school's considered approach.

The personal development curriculum is well designed and sequenced, and it ensures that pupils have the time to discuss important topics, including mental health, protected characteristics and healthy relationships. There is a range of extra-curricular opportunities, and the school is working to maximise attendance at these, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. The CEIAG that pupils receive is timely and enables them to make truly informed decisions about future destinations.

The school is considerate of workload and staff well-being. Professional development opportunities are appreciated, especially those provided by the trust. Trust leaders are clear in their ambition for the school. Those responsible for governance discharge their responsibilities appropriately and have an appropriate evaluation of the school. The school is working to continue to engage the parent body to ensure that parents are informed about developments and improvements in the school's provision.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school has not ensured that all teachers consistently check pupils know what they need to before moving on to new learning. This makes it harder for pupils to build on their learning successfully. The school should ensure teachers check effectively what pupils know and remember to identify any gaps in knowledge and skills that need to be remedied.
- The school has not yet precisely set out or embedded the detail and sequence of knowledge that pupils need to learn in the MFL curriculum. This means that teachers are sometimes not clear on the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember and when it is taught. The school should ensure that the

curriculum for MFL precisely sets out the knowledge that pupils need to learn, and when they need to learn it.

- Occasionally, inappropriate behaviour goes unchallenged at social times. As a result, some older pupils do not meet the school's high expectations of behaviour. The school should ensure that all staff are clear about their role in securing good behaviour from pupils at unstructured times.

## 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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142278
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290626
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	832
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Andrew Middleton
<b>CEO</b>	Dawn Haywood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine Reid
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.claytonhallacademy.org/">http://www.claytonhallacademy.org/</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 September 2021

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Windsor Academy Trust on 1 January 2024.
- The school makes use of four alternative providers, three of which are registered.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- As a part of this inspection, inspectors met with the trust CEO, trust representatives, a trustee, governors, senior leaders, subject leaders, teaching staff, as well as other employees in the school. They also scrutinised trustee and governor minutes.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science, history, MFL and English. They also looked at examples of pupils' work in other subjects. 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. Inspectors also visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and the careers and personal development programmes with leaders and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a staff survey, a pupil survey and Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered internal parent surveys the school had undertaken.

## **Inspection team**

Andrew Madden, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Hermitt

Ofsted Inspector

Michael Scott

Ofsted Inspector

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