

Claverham Community College

North Trade Road, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 0HT

Inspection dates 20–21 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Students' achievements are outstanding. Regardless of their starting points, all groups make exceptional progress to exceed the national average significantly by the end of Year 11.
- Teachers are thorough professionals who show great skill in challenging and supporting all students to do their best. They have very high expectations of their students and are keen to improve their own performance further by undertaking professional development.
- Teaching is outstanding but a few lessons require improvement.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Students take pride in the college. The extensive site is clean and tidy, and students enjoy and respect their social areas. Movement around the site is most orderly and excellent classroom behaviour helps to foster outstanding learning.
- Students are offered many opportunities to excel. The range of subjects meets needs exceptionally well, while a wealth of clubs, societies, educational visits and charitable efforts, at home and abroad, ensure that the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is impressively strong. Younger students would welcome more opportunities to offer their views on aspects of the college's development.
- Outstanding leadership, particularly from the Principal, and governance ensure that the college maintains its long-standing record of high performance. At all levels, leaders show impressive commitment to ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning continue to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons involving 46 different staff. In addition, three learning walks were undertaken, each with a specific focus of looking at how personal, social, health and social education (PSHE) is promoted across the college. Many lessons were jointly observed with senior staff members.
- Two meetings were held with members of the governing body, including with the Chair. Meetings were held with four different student groups, and with many different members of staff, including the Principal and senior and other leaders.
- Inspectors took account of 148 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The responses to 81 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at samples of students' past and present work and scrutinised various documents. These included the college's checks on how well it is doing and planning, and extensive information on students' academic progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- As the inspection was held after the completion of GCSE examinations, no Year 11 lessons could be observed.

Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Chris Dowsett	Additional Inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional Inspector
Helen Neal	Additional Inspector
Dee Wheatley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after by the local authority, or who have a parent in the armed services) is below average. At the time of the inspection, there were no students who had a parent currently serving in the armed forces and very few students were in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Most students are White British, with a well-below-average number from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion who speak English as an additional language is very low.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students are partly educated off-site at Plumpton College.
- The college meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes even further by ensuring that in the very small number of less-effective lessons students are given every possible opportunity to hone their skills in oral and written communication by:
 - offering opportunity for students to discuss their work and give oral presentations
 - writing regularly in an extended form and for different audiences.
- Offer students, especially in Years 7, 8 and 9, more opportunities to voice opinions on how the college is run and how it might be further improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students' achievements are outstanding regardless of their starting points. The three-year trend for the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades (including English and mathematics) has been strongly upward.
- The proportion of students making, or exceeding, expected levels of progress in English slipped a shade in 2012, but was still above average, and evidence shows it will improve this year. In mathematics, science and a range of other subjects, the proportions making, or exceeding, expected levels of progress was considerably higher than the national average.
- The college makes a judicious use of early GCSE entry in mathematics. About 25% of Year 11 students are entered early. The remainder sit their examination at the end of Year 11. Selective early entry has enhanced the achievement of students in mathematics.
- Attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 is considerably above average. From above-average starting points overall, students, including those disabled or with special educational needs and those supported through additional funding from the pupil premium, perform exceptionally well in almost every subject. However, senior staff are never complacent. Through detailed arrangements for target setting and monitoring progress, they are continually seeking further improvements.
- The achievement of students supported at school action and school action plus matches that of their peers. Published test data and internal monitoring show that from their below average starting points these students make excellent progress in their basic skills, particularly in reading, writing and numeracy.
- The college is successfully narrowing the gap between students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority, and all other groups. Their average GCSE points score in 2012 was well above the national average for similar students in mathematics and similar in English, and they were just over a grade lower than other students in school in both subjects. Funding is well targeted at identifying specific need and removing any barriers to learning.
- The college successfully helps Year 7 students who are behind to improve their skills in literacy and numeracy. Students who enter the college with particularly low skills in literacy and numeracy are placed in a nurture group where intensive teaching is provided to ensure that basic skills are improved. Many make rapid progress as a result of these arrangements.
- A very small number of students in Years 10 and 11 follow work-related courses at Plumpton College. They too make at least good progress and are expected to achieve the qualifications they need to progress to further education.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching and learning are outstanding because staff are ambitious for their students to do well. Expectations are high, and the vast majority of lessons are challenging and planned carefully to ensure that all opportunities for learning are exploited.
- Many lessons are exciting and engaging, and are thoroughly enjoyed by the students. Staff use their excellent subject knowledge to secure high-quality learning. This was especially apparent with a lower set Year 7 history lesson. Considerable learning took place because of the teacher's ability to give very clear details of aspects of Henry VIII's Reformation of the Monasteries, which the students could then apply to help them to analyse various outcomes. This led to impressive learning.
- Students hold their teachers in high esteem. In discussion, many praised the support and encouragement they receive. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agree that teaching is of a high quality and is helping their children to succeed.
- The progress students make in their learning, in lessons and over time, is helped by very good marking and assessment. Where teaching is particularly effective, students are given regular and

consistently helpful advice on what has been done well and where improvements might be made. Such feedback is not only helpful in improving outcomes, it is offered with care and sensitivity.

- Such high-quality assessment techniques enable teachers to gauge the extent of students' prior knowledge and understanding accurately so that the next steps in learning can be carefully planned. This ensures that the level of challenge is pitched at the right level to capture the students' interest and stretch their thinking. This successfully motivates the students as they rise to the demands being made, and spurs them on to work briskly and with obvious interest.
- Outstanding teaching was observed in many lessons as diverse as English and mathematics to science, history, Latin and German. Outstanding learning featured in a Year 7 science lesson on how an ice cube melts. Students applied previous knowledge and answered the teacher's probing questions in detail and with confidence. Outstanding learning also characterised a Year 10 Latin lesson on the use of accusative and infinitive constructions. Again, prior knowledge was successfully applied and students worked collaboratively on the set challenges to help and guide one another to the correct outcomes. Such high-quality collaboration was impressive to witness.
- In a small minority of cases where learning is less effective, teachers tend to do too much of the work. This deprives students of opportunities to discuss their work and to give oral presentations about what they have learnt. Where teachers dominate, pace can slow with fewer chances for students to develop their written work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students' outstanding behaviour underpins the calm, friendly and purposeful atmosphere that permeates the whole college. Students show respect for one another, for their staff and for visitors. They are polite and welcoming to visitors and the extremely large site is very clean and well cared for. This reflects well on the site team and is indicative of the values and ethos that the college so successfully sets out to establish.
- College records show that behaviour over time is outstanding. Attendance has improved to an above-average level, and incidents of bullying are rare and are always promptly addressed and checked. Students feel very safe and respected. Students told inspectors that they are proud of their college and that it is rare for lessons to be disrupted by unacceptable behaviour.
- Students confirmed that bullying incidents, especially those based on race or homophobia, are rare. The college's extensive personal, social, and health education programme successfully promotes safe and healthy lifestyles. Students are fully aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying and are offered extensive advice on how to stay safe and avoid dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, for example.
- Parents and carers agree with their offspring. They praise the quality of behaviour and believe that the college works extremely hard and effectively to secure high standards of behaviour and conduct.
- The college works most effectively in partnership with its parents and carers, and its local community. Parents and carers clearly value the care and support offered by staff.
- Students are provided with many opportunities to display leadership. Through sport, drama or other clubs and societies, or through the many charitable schemes supporting good causes at home or in places like India or Kenya, students can play an important role in developing responsibility.
- There is a student council, though a number of students, especially in lower years, were critical of how this operates. Younger students would appreciate many more opportunities to become further involved in the functioning of the college. At present, they do not feel sufficiently consulted or involved in key decisions about the development of the college.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The Principal offers a clear and visionary future for the college. His calm approach ensures that leadership at all levels, including governance, is ambitious and geared to improving the college. Continuous improvement and refinement of the college's systems ensure that it successfully

maintains excellence across all aspects of its work.

- The leadership and management of teaching provide an unstinting drive for excellence. Rigorous procedures are used to evaluate teachers' performance, ensuring that staff are accountable for the progress that their students make.
- Detailed and effective systems for tracking progress help teachers meet the challenging targets set for students. They enable staff to identify quickly any student at risk of falling behind. Such monitoring enables staff to put in place additional support so that lost ground is recovered.
- A carefully planned and expanding range of subjects offered leads to outstanding outcomes for students of all abilities. The very strong provision made for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the college's aims of developing well-rounded young adults who are able to care for others, display determination and integrity, and be tolerant of difference.
- The college effectively deploys resources to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all. The rate of progress of students who are eligible for the pupil premium is above average and ensures that gaps in performance are being closed. The same applies in Year 7 where 'catch-up' funding is ensuring that gaps in literacy skills are being tackled successfully.
- Morale is high. Staff questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive. As one commented, 'I believe that the college has improved significantly and continually tries to improve further. There have been no mornings that I have not wanted to come in and teach.' Parental satisfaction is high, with 98% happy to recommend the college.
- The college works closely and fruitfully with its local authority, whose own moderation of the college is that it is outstanding.
- All arrangements for safeguarding, including risk assessments for off-site education, meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors share the desire to make the college even better. They challenge leaders through close checks on students' performance in examinations, for example, and they visit regularly. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the college. They check decisions on pay awards for teachers and make sure that students' progress justifies better pay or promotion. Governors fully endorse leaders' actions to tackle underperformance. They know about the targets set for teachers to manage their performance and how well they are progressing towards meeting them. Financial planning is good and governors understand how pupil premium funding is being used and how effective this is in improving progress and achievement.

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	114584
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	424599

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,168
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Whitehead
Headteacher	Paul Swatton
Date of previous school inspection	18 September 2007
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