

# Claydon High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124846
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	328230
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paula Heaney HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	757
Sixth form	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Eustace
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elizabeth Soule
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Church Lane Claydon Ipswich Suffolk IP6 0EG
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 836110
<b>Fax number</b>	01473 836117

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Students' standards on entry to the school are broadly average. The school population is predominantly White British (95.4%). The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average, as is the proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Claydon has a humanities specialism and operates a joint sixth form with Thurleston High School which is managed by joint teams of staff and governors. The school works with two local further education colleges to offer additional curricular provision and has Healthy Schools accreditation.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Claydon High School is a good school as most students are now making good progress, the teaching and learning are mostly of a good or better standard and students' progress is monitored thoroughly. All students are supported well to achieve the best they can, including those who need extra help with learning and those with disabilities. Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory with some good aspects. However, the behaviour of a few students in a very small minority of lessons affects the progress both they and other students ought to be making. The majority of parents are supportive of the school, but a small minority of parents is concerned about the more disruptive behaviour in a few lessons, which is not dealt with by teachers effectively. Standards at the school are broadly average overall and rising, as improvements made and students' good progress are reflected in results. Standards and the rate of progress made by students fell after the last inspection as a number of staff left the school, due largely to retirements and promotions. This resulted in some instability, which is now resolved. In national tests at the end of Year 9 standards in science are good. At the end of Year 11 standards in English and science are good, but in mathematics standards are below average. Standards vary across other subjects. Most lessons are well planned with activities which enthuse students and provide sufficient challenge and variety. Where this is not the case the behaviour of a few students can affect their progress and that of others.

Most students enjoy school and are enthusiastic about the support they receive from their teachers and other staff; care, guidance and support are good. Students feel safe and secure, are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles and develop good skills for their future economic well-being. The curriculum is good and expanding, and includes an increasing range of vocational options. Students participate enthusiastically in a very good range of extra-curricular activities. The sixth form will move to new premises in September 2010, as the result of effective local partnership work to increase opportunities post-16.

Leadership and management are good and are focused strongly, at all levels, on continued improvement. Increasingly challenging targets are set across the school and for the school's specialist humanities subjects. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion and is increasing its links into the wider community. Governance is good and the school provides good value for money. There is good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

Achievement is good overall. Sixth formers are supported very well by their teachers and personal tutors. They value this support highly. Sixth formers have lower than average starting points, as the school recruits some students with lower entry qualifications who show enthusiasm, commitment and good attendance. Standards in the sixth form are improving and individual subject results are broadly in line with national averages. However, results between subjects vary and students' performance overall is below the national average.

The curriculum is good, as an effective partnership with another local school extends the subjects available to students, although some class sizes are very small. A popular level 2 course is available in Year 12 to enable students who have been less successful at GCSE to progress into the sixth form. Teaching and learning and the personal development and well-being of sixth formers are good.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good overall, although teaching and learning are not sufficiently well monitored across the sixth form partnership. The sixth form will move from Claydon in September 2010, following the creation of a new school formed through a local partnership, to broaden curricular opportunities further.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in the main school and the sixth form where some subjects are not performing as well as others.
- Ensure all students are involved actively and challenged in lessons across all subjects, by improving further the quality of teaching and learning.
- Ensure good behaviour throughout classes by taking effective measures at all levels.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement by the end of Year 11 is now improving and inspectors saw evidence in lessons and in records that this is now good for most students due to improvements made. Progress is particularly good in science, due to the careful monitoring of students and good teaching and learning. It is improving in mathematics, now that staffing is more settled. Students who need extra help in lessons and those with disabilities make good progress because of the good support they receive. At the end of Year 9, results in national tests are broadly satisfactory overall and are good in science. Standards are maintained to the end of Year 11 where students also reach a satisfactory standard. The proportion of students gaining five GCSEs graded A\* to C, including English and mathematics, rose in 2008 to around the national average. The results in English and science are above national averages, but results in mathematics are lower. Performance across other subjects has varied from year to year. Current work and records show that standards and achievement are on course to rise to meet the school's own challenging targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most display positive attitudes and behave well, both in lessons and around school, but a very small minority do not behave as well as they could in lessons. Attendance is improving, although still average and the number of fixed term exclusions has reduced since the last inspection. Students enjoy coming to school, feel safe around the site and appreciate all that staff do for them. They are clear that any bullying will be treated seriously and dealt with swiftly and fairly. The majority of students are well aware of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles, and they are particularly appreciative of, and participate well in, after-school sports clubs. Students acquire a good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. There is a good ethos of mutual respect and appreciation of others' achievements. On the first day of the inspection all year groups worked together on particular themes, and they enjoyed and applauded one another's work. Students also respond generously to charity appeals. Wider school life is enriched through the leadership roles students undertake, becoming mentors, prefects and taking sports leadership roles. The School Council represents students' views well and plays an important part in communicating their ideas to school leaders. Students develop good work-based skills to contribute to their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Much of the teaching and learning at the school is good and, where teachers inspire students with appropriate and stimulating activities and lessons are delivered enthusiastically, they can be outstanding. The use of praise for students' contributions to learning enhances this positive and enjoyable environment and students make good progress. However, in a few lessons activities are not designed sufficiently well to meet students' needs or provide sufficient challenge. As a result, a very small minority of students do not behave as well as they should, which hampers progress. The monitoring of lessons by senior teachers and heads of department, whilst identifying many strengths, has not focused on this aspect sufficiently well.

Good practice is shared across the school and has led to a more consistent approach to lesson planning so that, for example, lesson plans now set out clearly what students are expected to learn. Aspects of lesson planning and delivery have improved due to effective training. The inspection team saw examples of particularly effective practice in science and physical education where high expectations and expert guidance on what to do to improve ensured that all students made good progress in their understanding and development of skills.

Students know what level they are working at and what their target grades are. The marking of students' work and the feedback they receive is not always closely related to their levels of attainment and does not always contain sufficient information on what they need to do to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Students entering the school in Year 7 benefit from an innovative project on 'medieval life and castles', which ensures a smooth introduction to the school. Cross-curricular work has recently included a highly enjoyable 'stop-the-clock' day in which students took part in a stimulating range of activities and themes to develop their personal, learning and thinking skills.

In Years 10 and 11, the school offers a good range of vocational courses for those students for whom a full programme of GCSEs would be inappropriate. An effective partnership with two local colleges enables the school to offer courses in hairdressing and food and drink manufacturing. Plans to introduce the new diploma in travel and tourism in September 2010 are underway.

A very good range of extra-curricular activities is much appreciated and is taken up enthusiastically by both girls and boys, this both supports and enhances learning. Students are well prepared for the world of work through an effective programme of personal, social and health education, which includes the use of speakers from business and the local community.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Vulnerable students are monitored very carefully. Their needs are well known and the school ensures that the work of a range of professionals is co-ordinated well to provide effective support. There is good liaison between the school and outside agencies and the induction programme within the school is a particular

strength. Safeguarding procedures are robust and the school ensures students' welfare and safety through careful attention to risk assessments and safety on site.

There is an increasingly effective system for tracking the progress of each student and this is beginning to contribute to improving standards and achievement. Students have challenging targets to aim for in all subjects and are well aware of them. The school's regular reports to parents include National Curriculum levels and target grades for examinations. These help parents to understand how their child is progressing and provide opportunities for them to help. The school prepares students well for their next stage in education or training.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides good leadership with all staff, sharing the vision of a continuously improving school. A number of staff left the school after the last inspection, largely because of retirements and promotion, resulting in some disruption to teaching and a drop in standards, but staffing at the school is now stable. Senior leaders and managers focus strongly on improving achievement and standards, and together with middle leaders monitor the performance of all students closely. The school's evaluation of its work provides an accurate picture of strengths and areas for further development. However, the behaviour of a minority of students has insufficient focus in improvement plans. Priorities for future development focus tightly on what needs to be done to improve standards, and on achieving the increasingly ambitious and challenging targets the school sets for students' attainment at the end of Years 9 and 11. There is a comprehensive system for analysing assessment data which is used well to set challenging targets for national test results and for the school's humanities specialism. Students who find learning difficult and/or have disabilities are served particularly well by this system.

Middle managers, with responsibilities for subject areas, progress and pastoral care have benefited from good professional training and development and are making an increasingly effective contribution to improving achievement. Governors are very supportive and do a good job, promoting the school's interests and challenging senior leaders when appropriate. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. The school is committed to equality of opportunity and the school community works together well. There is a growing number of links with the local community, mainly through school performances and sporting activities, and these are increasingly enriching school life. The school manages its resources well and gives good value for money.

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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

23 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Claydon High School, Claydon, IP6 0EG

As you know, we inspected your school recently and this letter is to tell you about our findings. First, I would like to thank you for your openness and cooperation during our visit. We enjoyed meeting you and appreciated your comments and opinions.

The inspection found that yours is good school with a good sixth form. It is well managed. Standards are around the national average and are now improving, although standards vary between subjects. You make good progress overall in the main school. In the sixth form, standards are broadly average overall, and you make good progress when compared with your entry qualifications. Throughout the school your teachers and other staff are supporting you well to get you to achieve the best you can.

Most of the lessons that we saw were good, with a good range of activities which you clearly enjoyed. A few did not provide sufficient variety or challenge you well enough. Your behaviour is satisfactory overall, as is your attendance. In some of the lessons we saw a few of you did not behave as well as you could.

We have asked your headteacher to:

- raise standards in the main school and the sixth form in subjects which are not performing as well as others
- ensure you are involved actively and challenged in lessons across all subjects
- ensure good behaviour throughout classes.

You can help by behaving well at all times in lessons. We wish you well with your future studies.

Best wishes

Paula Heaney

Her Majesty's Inspector