

Clapton Girls' Academy

Laura Place, Lower Clapton, London, E5 0RB

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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' progress from their starting points to the end of Key Stage 4 is significantly better than that of students nationally, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Students who are eligible for pupil premium funding make excellent progress from their starting points and are quickly catching up with their peers.
- Students' attainment at GCSE has improved rapidly since the academy opened in 2011.
- Students behave impeccably well and feel extremely safe. Safeguarding arrangements are robust.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well through an impressive range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- Over a third of teaching is outstanding and the overall proportion of good and better teaching is high.
- The sixth form is good and student achievement is improving strongly, particularly in vocational subjects.
- The headteacher's drive and enthusiasm has created a whole-academy ethos of high aspirations and expectations in which students thrive.
- Governors know the academy very well and make an impressive contribution to driving improvements, particularly in teaching and achievement.
- Students and staff have excellent relationships founded on mutual respect.
- Parents, staff and students share exceedingly positive views about the academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons, taught by 41 different teachers. Four of these observations were conducted with members of the senior leadership team, including the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, heads of faculty, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and nine other governors. Inspectors also discussed performance management with teachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with four groups of students and spoke to others informally. They listened to a number of students reading during lessons and in an additional support group for students for whom English is an additional language.
- The inspection team observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the academy's improvement planning, monitoring records, analysis of students' achievement, performance management information, behaviour logs and safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered 42 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). They analysed 36 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Michael Blakey, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Olson Davis	Additional Inspector
Babrul Matin	Additional Inspector
Sulina Piesse	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Clapton Girls' Academy is an average-sized secondary school, with a small sixth form. It converted to become an academy in September 2011. When its predecessor school, Clapton Girl's Technology College, was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2008, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for students in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those whose parents are in the armed services) is much higher than that found nationally, and is increasing.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is much higher than that found nationally.
- The proportion of students for whom English is not their first language is much higher than that found nationally.
- The proportions of students registered as disabled or with a statement of special educational needs and those supported at school action plus are below average. The proportion of students supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of students joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is broadly average.
- A small proportion of students attend part-time education at alternative provision. In 2012-13, four students attended a creative business enterprise course at New Regents College and one student attended Hackney City Farm.
- The school's performance meets the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure consistency in the quality of marking that students receive from all teachers so that it is clear and concise and enables all students to make rapid progress, particularly in the sixth form.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students join the academy with standards of attainment that are well below those found nationally. By the end of Key Stage 4, the proportions of students making or exceeding expected progress, particularly in English and mathematics, are high compared to national levels.
- Leaders and managers have a strong track record of accurately predicting GCSE results. The proportion of students predicted to achieve 5 A*–C grades including English and maths in 2013 is high, at 72%. Attainment is particularly strong in design and technology, art and design, religious education and statistics.
- Students are entered early for GCSE mathematics. This is an effective strategy which is contributing to strong improvements in attainment overall. In 2013, 77% of students attained a Grade C or above in GCSE mathematics, representing a 14% increase from 2012. This strategy does not limit the progress of the most able as they continue to study mathematics in the summer term.
- Students who are eligible for the pupil premium, including looked after children and those entitled to free school meals, make excellent progress. In 2012, this group of students formed 68% of Year 11. These students are quickly catching up with students who are not eligible for free school meals because the school uses pupil premium funding very effectively to close gaps in achievement, particularly in mathematics and literacy. Information available to the academy, including average point scores at GCSE, clearly shows that the progress of these students is significantly better than that found nationally for this group.
- Students for whom English is an additional language make very good progress because the additional support they receive is highly targeted and effective. They confidently read aloud in groups and use dictionaries to find the meanings of words such as 'cottage' and 'antennae', for example.
- Reading widely is actively promoted across the curriculum for all students. Students who are internally excluded or returning to the academy following a fixed-term exclusion read on a daily basis at break time or in the dedicated reading lesson.
- Students who are disabled and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress because teachers and other staff know exactly how to cater for their individual needs. For example, a learning assistant with a science background works closely with students during science lessons and ensures that they are able to engage fully.
- The quality of students' written work is very good. In an information and communication technology lesson, students were able to write clear design instructions for web banners and share these with each other.
- Students speak with confidence. They regularly engage in discussions and present their ideas well to adults and students alike. They respect each other and listen intently. The wide range of extra-curricular activities extend their skills further; for example, students interview prominent professors of reproductive biology.
- A few students undertake tailored alternative provision. They achieve very well because the academy monitors their progress effectively and the curriculum is appropriate for their needs.
- Achievement in the sixth form is securely good. Attainment is improving strongly but is not yet outstanding when compared to national levels. Students make particularly good progress in vocational subjects.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teachers know their students exceptionally well, including those with disabilities or special educational needs, and students have excellent relationships with each other. This leads to a mutually supportive culture in which students and teachers encourage and support each other to

achieve challenging targets.

- Over a third of teaching is outstanding and almost half is consistently good across the key stages and subjects, including English and mathematics. Very occasionally teaching requires improvement. Typically, this is when supply teachers are covering for absent colleagues and relationships between teachers and temporary staff are not as well developed as they might be. Almost all parents who responded on Parent View stated that their children were taught well.
- The teaching of literacy is of high quality. In 2012, English was an additional language for over two thirds of students. Whole-school strategies, including the use of small-group teaching, ensure that students make rapid progress and are able to read, write and speak confidently.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and plan lessons very well to ensure that students make rapid progress. Typically, lessons are well planned and engaging and students respond very well to the wide range of learning activities. Students ably assess their own work and that of their peers. Often students work in pairs or groups to solve problems and then share their findings with each other. In a Year 11 mathematics lesson, the teacher used questioning exceptionally well to check understanding and then provide excellent explanations to enable students to solve problems.
- Teachers consistently have the highest expectations and aspirations for students and this is clearly evident on a daily basis around the academy. In art, for example, students' work based on the inspiration of Antoni Gaudi is celebrated during the lesson in a class gallery and is clearly linked to the Spanish curriculum and planned trip to Barcelona.
- Students' work is marked regularly and the quality of the feedback they receive is often excellent. This approach ensures that students know exactly what they need to improve and develop further. However, a few teachers do not always provide this level of feedback and the academy is already working to improve this aspect of teaching.
- Teaching in the sixth form is typically very good and has improved over time. In a Year 13 biology revision lesson, students were given time to become experts on a specific exam question and then they presented their findings to fellow students. This approach improved students' knowledge and understanding and contributed to better exam technique and mathematical understanding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- A clear behaviour code ensures students behave impeccably around the academy and in lessons. They clearly demonstrate respect for each other, staff and the academy buildings. Almost all students, staff and parents agree. Occasionally, when students' behaviour falls below the expected standard, the academy's behaviour management policy is followed and students are internally excluded. The provision for internal exclusion is excellent and students work individually with the support of dedicated and highly effective staff. As one student said: 'My behaviour didn't used to be so good, but the academy has helped me to manage it better and now I'm pretty good most of the time!'
- Attendance has improved substantially over recent years and is above average. A small proportion of students with previously poor attendance, including those with statements of special educational needs, have been very effectively supported to re-engage so that their attendance was brought back in line with their peers. The number of fixed-term exclusions has dropped year on year and is low. Students are punctual to school and to lessons.
- Students, including the small number that attend alternative provision, say that they feel extremely safe and 97% of parents who responded to the online survey agree that their children are safe. Students know how to keep themselves safe, especially on social networking sites and on the internet, and in their local community.
- Students say that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. All kinds of bullying, including racist behaviour and homophobia, are well understood and students have confidence in teachers to sort things out if there is a problem.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is exceptional.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, senior leadership team and middle managers are highly committed to ensuring the very best education and care for all students, including disabled children and those with special educational needs. They have the full confidence of staff and parents, who agree that the school is well led and managed. Together they have clearly demonstrated their ability to drive improvements, for example in GCSE mathematics. Their relentless focus on achievement has ensured that students make exceptional progress from their starting points, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Leaders and managers have effectively driven improvements in teaching and set challenging and ambitious targets for further development. For example, by 2014, leaders expect 95% of teaching to be good or outstanding and school evaluations show that the school is currently achieving 93%. Teachers are effectively performance managed and heads of faculty make recommendations to senior leaders about salary progression. The small proportion of teachers who do not perform to the required teachers' standards are provided with robust support packages to help them improve. Professional training and development for teachers, particularly newly qualified staff, is of the highest quality and enables staff to share what they consider to be their best practice.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and leaders and managers at all levels are clear about priorities for improvement. Academy development planning is founded on sound evidence and external challenge.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures, including the safe recruitment of staff, meet all statutory requirements and are robust and effective.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the academy exceptionally well. The robust committee structure ensures that they are involved in every aspect of the school and make a significant contribution to driving improvements. They ably performance manage the headteacher, are involved in approving all performance reviews and provide appropriate challenge and support to the senior leaders. Governors' understanding of data is particularly impressive and they are clear about what the academy needs to do to improve further.

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	137442
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	413327

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1066
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Camilla Allwood
Headteacher	Dr Cheryl Day
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8985 6641
Fax number	020 8986 4686
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