VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR CLAREMONT HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMY

Name of School:	Claremont High School Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Nicola Hyde-Boughey
Hub:	Chrysalis
School phase:	Secondary
MAT (if applicable):	Chrysalis Multi Academy Trust

Date of this Review:	07/06/2021
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	12/02/2020
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	13/05/2015

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Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers, agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

Leadership at all Levels	Not applicable
School Improvement Strategies	Not applicable
Approach to recovery and remote learning	Not applicable
Area of Excellence	None submitted for this review
Previously accredited valid Areas of Excellence	Raising progress of disadvantaged pupils through a whole school approach, 12/02/2020 A strategy for recruiting and retaining high quality staff, 29/01/2019
Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate	Not applicable

Please note that a Challenge Partners Quality Assurance Review is not equivalent to an Ofsted inspection, and agreed peer evaluation estimates from the review are not equivalent to Ofsted judgements.

The peer evaluation estimate included on this report has been collectively agreed between the lead reviewer, review team and host school. The estimate is based on the evidence seen as part of the virtual Leadership Quality Assurance Review.

Whilst every effort has been made to triangulate the evidence presented during the review, it is important to note that the nature of working remotely means that the estimate given only encompasses that which is able to be explored virtually.

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1. Context and character of the school

Claremont High School Academy established the Chrysalis Multi Academy Trust (CMAT) with Sudbury Primary School in 2017. The current headteacher was appointed as executive headteacher of CMAT in 2019. The trust is responsible for over 2500 pupils across the two schools and is very oversubscribed, for example with over 1000 applications for 270 places in Year 7. Currently, there are 1650 students at Claremont, including 320 in the sixth form. 10% of places are reserved for students with musical ability and the school has a long history of promoting music and the performing arts.

Claremont is a diverse and harmonious community with 55% of students speaking a language other than English at home. Almost three-quarters of students are of Asian Indian origin, with the rest being made up largely of Black Caribbean and Black African. Trends show a growing Eastern European population changing the demographical make-up of the school. The number of disadvantaged students is broadly in line with the national average.

The school's aim is 'to prepare students to reach their full potential'. Students, staff and parents are totally committed to the school's core values of 'Excellence, Respect, Aspiration, Enjoyment and Perseverance'. Last year, the school achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark Centre of Excellence award.

2.1 Leadership at all Levels - What went well

- Senior leaders are talented and driven. They have very high expectations of themselves, staff and students. Governors are equally ambitious and share the school's vision.
- Middle leadership is very stable and many postholders are highly experienced, competent and confident. Middle leaders enjoy and appreciate a significant level of autonomy. The bespoke programme of middle leadership development is ensuring that the quality of departmental performance is becoming even more consistent.
- Staff, students and parents are highly aspirational. Everyone is very invested in the school, as demonstrated by the low staff turnover. Relationships are very strong, and students and staff feel listened to and valued. Students told reviewers how much they enjoy school and feel challenged to do their best.
- Leaders ensured that students remained motivated about learning during lockdown. In discussions with reviewers, students were overwhelmingly positive about school life.

- Curriculum review is central to the school's work. Subject leaders thought carefully about how to adapt their curriculum plans during the pandemic. As post-Covid life resumes, they are skilfully getting the normal curriculum back on track.
- This year particularly, there has been a significant focus on bespoke pastoral support. Staff held individual meetings with students to ensure support was targeted to need, and that students' mental health was a priority.
- Quality assurance systems are well developed and will be refined further post-pandemic. Teachers have continued to inject rigour and challenge into their teaching since students returned to face-to-face teaching.
- Expectations of teaching and learning are very high and remained so during the delivery of remote lessons. Senior and middle leaders continued their usual rigorous quality assurance activities, with some specific adaptations, during lockdown.
- Leaders have focussed on embedding knowledge into students' long-term memory. While this has been interrupted somewhat during lockdown, the school's early analysis is showing that students' knowledge is still embedding well.
- There is a real celebration of diversity in the school, an example of which is the annual cultural dress day. Leaders have recognised the need to promote equality and diversity even further, given the national agenda and the school's context. They have focussed particularly on racial literacy.
- Leadership of provision for disadvantaged students and those with additional needs is very strong. Teachers are cognisant of individual students' needs and a range of strategies supports and enhances these students' learning opportunities.
- Leaders value the extra-curricular activities that all students are offered. There is a huge array of opportunities and students participate very readily in these activities which help to broaden their skills and talents.

2.2 Leadership at all Levels - Even better if…

…teachers continued to develop and consolidate further the already well-established work on embedding knowledge into students' long-term memories.
…leaders continued the already established good practice of identifying and addressing in-school variations.

3.1 School improvement strategies and the extent to which these address the needs of different groups of learners, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs- What went well

- Central to the school's philosophy is the investment in high quality staff. Leaders retain staff enthusiasm, drive and ambition by providing opportunities such as

visits to other schools and becoming examiners. Staff go above and beyond what is expected because they are hugely committed to the school.

- Continuing professional development (CPD) for all staff is a core tenet of the school's ethos. Staff who lead this area of the school's work are extremely able and passionate. There has been a strong focus on continuing the CPD programme, despite the difficulties of Covid. For example, this has included training a new group of coaches and work on equalities.
- Provision for wellbeing is very well established. Staff and students' wellbeing was a major focus during lockdown. All staff that requested, and students, had an individual meeting to voice their concerns, with bespoke support programmes implemented as required. Staff feel very supported and listened to. Equally, students are very enthusiastic about the wellbeing work they have undertaken such as 'Mindfulness Mondays'.
- The curriculum has been carefully planned and sequenced, and students benefit from a rich and varied choice of courses, both academic and vocational. Teachers are supported and encouraged to become the best they can be, and they are skilled and committed professionals. Consequently, students make considerable strides in their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Leaders continually review and reflect upon their practice and adapt their plans accordingly. This has been especially impressive during Covid where forward planning was difficult, and leaders had to respond very nimbly to the ever-changing landscape.
- Leaders demonstrate a forensic use of data. Data on all aspects of school life are routinely analysed and action plans put in place. Staff are quick to act, and good practice is frequently shared. Consequently, in-school variations are diminishing.
- Leaders ensure that there is a constant focus on the needs of disadvantaged students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Students in these groups are learning well. Provision for students with SEND is focussed on personalised provision according to need. A particularly successful strategy is the staff forum where staff can discuss strategies for targeted individuals. The varied range of strategies for disadvantaged students is having demonstrable impact on enhancing their learning.
- Students come from diverse backgrounds and are very respectful and supportive of each other. The school's work on equalities ensures that values are based on mutual respect.
- Students' attendance is on an upward trajectory and there are very strong strategies in place to support families and students who find coming to school difficult.
- Despite the school's success, leaders are constantly seeking ways to work with other schools to share good practice and learn from other school contexts.

3.2 School improvement strategies and the extent to which these address the needs of different groups of learners, especially disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs - Even better if…

…subject leaders and class teachers were fully aware of and adapted curriculum plans accordingly in order to recognise students' ability and prior attainment especially in relation to Key Stage 2.
…subject leaders were particularly cognisant of individual SEND learning goals and adjusted the curriculum accordingly.

4.1 Approach to recovery and remote learning - What went well

- The school's approach to remote learning was carefully planned and successfully implemented. Lessons were learned after the first lockdown, which resulted in higher quality provision since January 2021.
- Leaders quickly adapted to a digital platform to deliver lessons. Students' engagement increased as staff became progressively more skilled and confident in remote pedagogies.
- Leaders looked carefully at curriculum sequencing and made appropriate adjustments to ensure that students could be as successful as possible.
- Middle and senior leaders continued with quality assurance activities thus ensuring that students enjoyed high-quality delivery.
- Students benefited from intensive pastoral input through regular phone calls home. The systems put in place to track and monitor students' attendance are highly commendable.
- Work to support mental health was very successful. Leaders' thoughtful actions ensured that everyone remained as positive and productive as possible.
- Throughout the pandemic, vulnerable students were welcomed on-site. As face-to-face teaching resumed, staff managed to teach on-site and off-site students simultaneously which is testament to their skill.
- Where possible, the school supplied technological equipment to students in need. Where this was not possible, students received work packs through the post or they were hand delivered. Consequently, nobody missed out on their learning.
- Students' and parents' views of remote learning were regularly sought and acted upon. For example, students asked to reduce screen time, and so more physical activities, such as the 'climb Mount Everest' challenge, were introduced. Consequently, student and parental satisfaction with remote provision was high.

4.2 Approach to recovery and remote learning - Even better if…

…leaders considered ways to mark and return work for students without digital access, should there be a further lockdown.

5. What additional support would the school like from the Challenge Partners network, either locally or nationally?

The school does not require any additional support at this time.

This review will support the school's continuing improvement. The main findings will be shared within the school's hub in order that it can inform future activities.

Schools can also access the School Support Directory, the Challenge Partners online tool that enables schools to connect with other schools in your hub and across the national network of schools.

Schools can also attend Sharing Leading Practice events where schools showcase excellent and/or innovative practice. Sharing Leading Practice events allow school leaders with specific improvement needs to visit a school or attend an online webinar hosted by a school, with outstanding provision in that area.

Both the School Support Directory and the Shared Leading Practice events can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website.