QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR CLAREMONT HIGH SCHOOL

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

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	27/01/2025
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	Leading
Date of last QA Review	31/01/2024
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Outstanding
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	13/05/2015

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR CLAREMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Quality Assurance Review

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

Leadership at all levels	Leading
Quality of provision and outcomes	Leading
AND	
Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs	
Area of excellence	Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education(including Relations and Sexuality Education) Accredited
Previously accredited valid areas of excellence	31/1/24 Embedding a reading culture across the school to develop literacy. 23/1/23 The Co-curriculum 23/1/23 PD/Coaching and Professional Development at our school and across the Hub
Overall peer evaluation estimate	Leading

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR CLAREMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Important information

- The QA Review provides a peer evaluation of a school's practice in curriculum, teaching and learning, and leadership. It is a voluntary and developmental process, and the peer review team can evaluate and offer 'peer evaluation estimates' based only on what the school chooses to share with them.

- The QA Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.

- The QA Review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. If you choose to share this report, or extracts thereof, externally (e.g. on your website or with parents), please ensure that it is accompanied with the following text:

  Challenge Partners is a charity working to advance education for the public benefit. We are not a statutory accountability body. The QA Review does not audit schools' safeguarding or behaviour policies and practices. However, Lead Reviewers and visiting reviewers are expected to follow Challenge Partners' safeguarding policy and report any concerns as set out in the procedures.

QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

REVIEW REPORT FOR CLAREMONT HIGH SCHOOL

1. Context and character of the school

Claremont High School is a larger than average secondary school and sixth form. The academy established the Chrysalis Multi-Academy Trust with Sudbury Primary School in 2017. Claremont is a lead hub school for Challenge Partners across eighteen schools and twenty thousand students. Claremont's headteacher was appointed as executive headteacher of the Trust in 2019 and she is also the Challenge Partners hub leader.

The school is very popular and oversubscribed. Most students live locally. Claremont has earned a strong reputation for promoting music and the performing arts over many years. Ten per cent of places at the school are reserved for students with musical ability. Just over half of the students speak English as an additional language (EAL). Almost three-quarters of the population of the school is of Asian Indian origin, with the rest being largely of Black Caribbean and Black African origin. There are a growing number of Eastern European students. The proportion of disadvantaged students is broadly in line with the national average. Claremont's aim is 'to prepare students to reach their full potential.'

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

.

- The executive headteacher is highly experienced and passionate about inclusion and equipping students to succeed in whatever next steps they take. She has continued to drive the school forward and maintain its consistently high standards over a sustained period. She has forged excellent working relationships with her senior leadership team, middle leaders and staff as a whole. Consequently, outcomes for students in all three key stages are consistently above national averages, and results in external examinations last year were the strongest yet.
- The headteacher is supported by a strong, enthusiastic, and highly effective senior leadership team which works well together. Leaders ensure that whole school change is systematically researched, planned and embedded. For example, recent changes to the school's behaviour policy were not made until extensive research had been carried out and considered.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Linked to this is a detailed school improvement plan with clear strategic planning. As a result, leaders have a clear understanding of what the school's priorities are moving forward.
- Claremont is a highly inclusive school. The school achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark Centre for Excellence Award in 2019 and has secured this in every subsequent year, as well as achieving Flagship Status in 2023. The school is recognised and accredited as a Centre of Excellence. Consequently, the school is a happy place with a strong community feel and the school's values of enjoyment, perseverance, aspiration, respect and excellence

genuinely underpin everything the school does. Throughout the school the behaviours for learning are excellent and students clearly enjoy coming to school.

- The quality assurance of teaching is rigorous, and leaders at all levels are fully involved in a range of activities. There is an annual monitoring calendar which includes learning walks, book looks and deep dives. Heads of department are given a level of autonomy around feedback and marking so they can tailor these to their specific subject's needs. Leaders are currently developing the Claremont Way of teaching based on the four pillars of questioning, literacy, marking and feedback and memorisation. This represents a more streamlined approach to classroom expectations which will help teachers strengthen their practice even further.
- Leaders are mindful of staff well-being and ensure that they have a work/life balance. The school is sharply focused on reducing workload for staff. There has been specific training around how to manage workload. The school has continued with virtual parents' evenings and staff are able to leave school early to prepare at home. There is a wellbeing drop-in centre and recently the school invested in a fitness suite which staff use on a regular basis. If required, the school pays for counselling services. Consequently, staff retention is high and sickness low.
- Both leaders and students provide effective support to other schools. For example, leaders supported the primary school in the Trust to drive up standards in Key Stage 2 to well above average. Sixth Form students train the prefect team at the primary school and drama ambassadors support Year 6 pupils to deliver their annual production.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if…

… leaders at all levels held form tutors to account in relation to monitoring and supporting pupils' behaviour, attitudes and well-being.

3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- Teachers have expert subject knowledge and strong, mutually respectful relationships with students result in students enjoying their learning and making consistently good progress. In a Year 12 politics lesson students were keen to share their ideas about the powers of the Prime Minister and were not afraid to make mistakes.
- Students demonstrate that they are remembering what they have learned and can effectively retrieve prior learning. All lessons begin promptly, usually with a "Do it now" activity which is often about recalling previous learning. For example, in a Year 12 RE lesson students studying aspects of Islamic faith were able to remember three different forms of prayer.

- Teachers use a range of strategies to encourage students to talk and discuss their learning in order to deepen their understanding. For example, in a Year 7 drama lesson the teacher used “Think, turn and share” to provide students with the opportunity to discuss the notion of status in Commedia Dell’arte. As a result, students were confident to answer when they were questioned.
- Across all three key stages the curriculum is broad and balanced and leads to consistently strong outcomes for all students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. The curriculum is underpinned by the key principle that every student is provided with the opportunity to fulfil their potential and is ambitious for everyone. In Year 7 all students study two languages. The Key Stage 3 curriculum contains opportunities beyond the national curriculum, for example all students study finance. At Key Stage 4 most students study a foreign language and, as a result, many qualify for the Ebacc. At Key Stage 5 there are a wide range of academic and vocational subjects available, and students can mix and match their chosen pathways. Consequently, students are highly successful in moving on to degree courses at a wide range of universities including Redbricks such as University College London, Nottingham and Warwick.
- The school provides exceptional pastoral care and personal development and is sharply focused on students’ well-being. Consequently, students are highly positive about the support they receive and feel valued as individuals. As one student commented, ”PSHE lessons are really useful for life and taught at the right time for where we are at school.” Another pupil said, “PSHE lessons are a safe space to talk openly and relationships with the teacher are really good.”
- The quality of work seen in folders and workbooks across year groups and subjects is exceptional. Students take immense pride in their work. Teachers have high expectations and provide feedback which requires students to respond and improve their work. As a result, books are an excellent resource to enrich students’ learning,
- Throughout the school there is a strong focus on literacy and the development of students’ love of reading. Students struggling with reading have reading passports which provide teachers with strategies to support them. Older students work with younger students to listen to them read. Consequently, students quickly catch up with their reading. The library is a welcoming space with a rich array of attractive and up to date books which are well used by students. Popular with students is an online reading programme which rewards their reading and encourages them to read further.
- The school also provides a rich and varied range of extra-curricular activities in order to develop students’ cultural capital. These include the ‘Horrible Histories’ and performing arts clubs and a wide array of sporting opportunities. Every year there is a whole school production. This year, ‘Frozen’ involves students across the school and is well attended by parents and carers. Additionally, there are many opportunities for students to take on leadership roles, including leading sports clubs and working with younger pupils.

- Attendance is above average, and pupils arrive punctually to school in the mornings and to their lessons throughout the day.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if…

… existing strong questioning practice, the Claremont Way, was used more consistently and was further developed through formative assessment strategies to check whole class understanding.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- Leadership of SEND provision is highly effective. The SENDCo has a detailed knowledge of all students on the SEND register. The SENDCo works closely with the SEND team and the leadership team to ensure that students are closely monitored and receive the support they need. Consequently, students with SEND make consistently good progress and their attendance is above the national average.
- All students with SEND have a detailed student passport which is available to all teaching and support staff. The passport contains a range of strategies tailored to an individual student's needs to ensure there are no barriers to their learning.
- The school's inclusion board meetings enable the leadership team and heads of department to look closely at the attainment and progress of disadvantaged students and, as a result, put appropriate interventions in place to close gaps. Consequently, disadvantaged students achieve well and outcomes in Year 11 are better than for other students nationally.
- Leaders at all levels ensure that there is a focus on disadvantaged students in the classroom. For example, they are prioritised on seating plans and their books are marked first, resulting in the teachers continually having these students on their radar.
- The extra-curricular programme is driven by a strong ethos of inclusion and participation. Leaders consistently monitor student choices and involvement and there are no gaps between the participation of disadvantaged students and their peers.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if…

- … learning support teachers regularly participated in 'learning walk fortnight' in order to assess the impact of training and the teaching and progress of students with SEND.

5. Area of Excellence

PSHE and RSE

Accredited

5.1 Why has this area been identified as a strength? What actions has the school taken to establish expertise in this area?

Personal, social, health education (PSHE) is a timetabled independent subject. As with other curriculum subjects, students have a teacher for the year who is a dedicated member of the PSHE team rather than their form tutor. Students are provided with dedicated exercise books and are regularly assessed. By giving PSHE dedicated curriculum time, this demonstrates to students the importance leaders attribute to PSHE. In a recent student voice poll, over 93% of students agreed that "My teacher takes PSHE seriously." The PSHE programme is expertly led and based on wide-ranging research. All staff teaching PSHE are experts in their field and receive regular training to keep up to date.

The school regularly audits the curriculum which has shown that it delivers all DfE expectations from Key Stage 2 through to Key Stage 4. The content expected to be delivered at primary schools is re-visited in Year 7 due to variable student starting points. The curriculum also covers certain sections of Citizenship education like government and democracy, as well as contributing to the Gatsby Benchmarks for careers knowledge, with lessons relating to employability and GCSE choices.

Additionally, the PSHE curriculum takes into account local needs, including issues in the local area such as domestic abuse, drugs abuse and gang culture. It also contains strong cross-curricular links to the school environment, including links such as online safety or discrimination with PRE lessons on Islamophobia.

The Young People's RSE Poll 2024 from the Sex Education Forum provides a national picture of the quality of PSHE & RSE, from the perspective of students. In the poll, 1001 students were asked to rate the quality of their RSE education as a whole. Just over 50% of the respondents returned a rating of "good" or "very good." When the same question was asked of Claremont students in a Student Voice Survey, "good" or "very good" was selected by almost 90% of respondents. More data from the school's Student Voice Survey showed that Claremont students find PSHE to be accessible, enjoyable, safe and of high quality. Over 93% of respondents agreed that PSHE was an important use of their time.

5.2 What evidence is there of the impact on pupils' outcomes?

The school achieves consistently strong outcomes across all three key stages. This is not just because of the consistently effective teaching and learning but also because the school has students at the heart of its work. This includes exceptional pastoral care and the strong PHSE programme that is delivered with conviction and integrity. As one pupil said, "PHSE really helps with my thinking."

Leaders are confident that PSHE has also had a demonstrable impact on students' non-academic outcomes. For example, the numbers of reported racist incidents and of bullying are extremely low. The Year 9 curriculum contains information on finance to support students to be ready for life in modern Britain. The PSHE programme reacts to new challenges. Recently because there was a sharp rise in vaping, the consequences were discussed at length. As a result, incidences of vaping have reduced significantly.

5.3 What is the name, job title and email address of the staff lead in this area?

Leo West Head of PSHE
Leo.west@claremont-high.org.

Following the QA Review

The review report is primarily for the school's internal use to support the school's continuing improvement. However, we encourage you to share the main findings with your hub/hub manager so that they can support your hub's activity planning. Challenge Partners will also collate and analyse content reports from across the hub networks including using AI tools to create an aggregate picture of what is going on across the sector (sharing these with the partnership) each year. The QA Review reports remain confidential to Challenge Partners and the host school. This ensures that schools embrace the review as a development process, acting as a catalyst for their ongoing improvement. This is the primary purpose of the QA review. However, our aim is that the thematic analysis will demonstrate the additional value of a sector wide overview, illustrated with real-life examples.

For further support following your QA Review, schools can 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. The School Support Directory can be accessed via the Challenge Partners website. (https://www.challengepartners.org/)

Finally, following the QA Review, schools may find it useful to refer to research such as the EEF toolkit to help inform their approach to tackling the EBIs identified in the report (https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit)