

Handsworth Christian School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	373/6026
Unique Reference Number (URN)	107167
Inspection number	397597
Inspection dates	16–17 May 2012
Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090070.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2012



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Handsworth Christian School is a non-selective independent Christian day school for boys and girls aged from four to 16 years. The school opened in 1986. Situated on the outskirts of Sheffield, it serves a wide geographical area with pupils travelling from Sheffield, Rotherham and surrounding villages. It is registered for up to 140 pupils and currently has 114 full-time pupils. Five pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils are White British, with around a quarter from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small number who speak English as an additional language. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision is a Reception class for up to 10 children aged from four to five years. Currently there are eight children on roll. The school was last inspected in May 2009.

The school aims to 'provide an education, underpinned by a Christian ethos, to children from both Christian and non-Christian backgrounds, which meets the needs of pupils both academically and in terms of personal, moral and spiritual development.'

Evaluation of the school

Handsworth Christian School meets its aims and provides a good quality of education. As a result of the good curriculum and largely effective teaching, pupils make good progress overall from their individual starting points. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall and pupils' behaviour is good. Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective and provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils is good overall. Although parents and carers are generally positive about the school, around a third of those who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed some negative views or concerns. There have been some improvements since the previous inspection and the school meets almost all of the regulations for independent schools.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good overall and provides a broad and balanced range of subjects and experiences for pupils. However, the curriculum for the Early Years Foundation

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Stage has some minor shortcomings, notably in the provision of free access to outdoor learning. In the lower school, taught largely by the class teachers, work is planned around the National Curriculum with appropriate emphasis on English and mathematics. Pupils are also taught art, music, history, geography, information and communication technology (ICT), science and religious studies. Spanish is taught by a specialist subject teacher. From Year 6 pupils join the upper school, where the curriculum continues to be broad and balanced and pupils move to different rooms for each lesson. Subjects are taught by more specialist subject teachers. Almost all pupils go on to study at least eight subjects to GCSE examination level.

ICT skills are developed appropriately and good use is made of ICT in other subjects. For example, in a Key Stage 3 science lesson pupils used the internet to research the scientific and moral issues associated with cloning animals and humans. Parents, carers and some pupils expressed concern to inspectors about a recent change of syllabus in ICT following some very disappointing examination results in 2011. The inspection confirmed that the reasons for this change are sound. Pupils receive some careers education and this meets requirements. However, some parents and students indicate that they would welcome more support, careers guidance and, possibly, work experience formally arranged. Pupils are enthusiastic about sport and although there is an adequate amount of time devoted to physical education and older pupils visit a local sports centre, parents, carers and pupils would welcome more. Although there are some educational visits arranged parents and carers indicate that they would welcome more.

Although good overall, the quality of teaching and assessment varies across the school and between subjects. The quality of the lessons observed ranged from good to satisfactory with a very small number which were inadequate. Teaching in English and mathematics is more typically good and this is one of the main reasons why pupils make consistently good progress overall in these subjects. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally positive and productive. Pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of their work in lessons and they work well individually and demonstrate high levels of concentration. While clear routines and expectations are a strong feature in most classrooms and effectively contribute to pupils' learning, this is not an established feature in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and the teachers in this part of the school have received only limited access to training to develop their skills.

A particularly strong feature is the small size of classes, which means that all pupils benefit from much individual attention. Pupils value this provision and are not afraid to ask for additional help; they report that it helps them to make good progress with their work. Teaching builds on pupils' previous learning and often enables them to apply and extend their understanding and skills successfully. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly; mostly indicating by ticks when pupils are being successful in their learning. Comments are positive and encouraging. This is particularly effective where the next steps are identified to help pupils produce better quality work in the future. For example, one teacher uses a system of 'two stars and a wish' to identify what

pupils have done well and what they need to improve next. However, good practice in marking and feedback is not found consistently across the school.

Pupils' progress during their time at the school is good overall, but this varies from year to year and between subjects. By the time they leave the school pupils generally reach above average standards overall. The proportion of pupils gaining GCSE grades A* to C in both English and mathematics is usually above average.

Since the previous inspection, a computerised system to track the progress of students in mathematics has been introduced and recently extended to English. In mathematics, this is well used to carefully track the progress of each student and where necessary provide extra help. However, this is not in place for all other subjects.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall with good features in the way that pupils' moral and social skills are developed. However, although it meets almost all the regulations, there are relative weaknesses in the provision for teaching pupils about their own and other cultures. Within the lower school some topics include information about different faiths and cultures. However, this is not the case in the upper school where there is no systematic plan to teach pupils about other cultures. Some parents, carers and pupils indicate that they would like pupils to be taught more about the wide nature of modern British society and the different faiths represented at the school. Although all pupils generally get on well at the school there has been some tension between some groups of girls. Pupils understand the school rules and have very good attitudes to their work and their learning. This is evident in the good and sometimes excellent behaviour of almost all pupils in lessons and around the school. However, there are some inconsistencies in the application of the school's policy for managing behaviour.

Pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong through their daily routines, the curriculum and through assemblies. Pupils' attendance is very good and they mostly state that they enjoy coming to school. In lessons they are well motivated and keen to learn. Many talked enthusiastically about their enjoyment of lessons particularly the mostly good relationships with the staff. Pupils co-operate very well in lessons and are keen to help the teachers to hand out books or tidy up. Pupils learn about English institutions such as the police and local democracy in history, through work on changes in English society.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Effective procedures are in place to safeguard pupils' welfare, health and safety, and these are good overall. Procedures for the recruitment of staff ensure that whoever is employed is suitable to work with children. Regular risk assessments are undertaken of the site, including fire safety risk assessments and there are regular

fire practices. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for. In response to the pre-inspection questionnaires, a small number raised concerns about bullying but the majority stated that they were confident that if there were any concerns they would be listened to and that if bullying were to occur it would be dealt with. There are appropriate routines and practices in place to ensure that pupils are supervised around the site. An appropriate number of staff hold first aid qualifications, including paediatric first aid qualifications, and update them regularly. Appropriate risk assessment procedures for a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities including off-site visits are in place. There is an appropriate policy in place for child protection which is effectively implemented. There is a designated member of staff identified for the purposes of child protection and staff are trained to the required level. Pupils know the importance of regular physical exercise and a healthy diet. Younger pupils are encouraged to take part in the supervised activities at break and lunchtime. However, opportunities for upper school pupils to take part in sport at break and lunchtime are limited by the size of the available space. Arrangements for the registration of admissions and attendance are good. The school fulfils its duties under the Equalities Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Effective safeguards are in place to ensure that pupils do not encounter unsuitable adults. Prior to appointment, appropriate checks are made on staff. Information is kept in a single central register to show that all staff have been subjected to the required checks.

Premises and accommodation at the school

Occupying a small compact site, space within the buildings and outside is satisfactory but limited. Outside, a suitable hard-surfaced area is available. However, there is not an outdoor space for the dedicated use of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and there are no large grassed areas or facilities for indoor sport available on the site. The school day is planned so that all pupils have appropriate access to outdoor space at break times and lunchtime, while children in the Early Years can use the space at other times. The school has appropriate accommodation to meet the needs of pupils. Although classrooms are small they are suitable for the number of pupils in the class groups. Standards of decoration are satisfactory. The number of washrooms for the age of pupils is adequate. However, pupils comment that these sometimes smell and if one of them is out of use it can take a long time for it to be repaired. The school does not provide a suitable room for the care of pupils who are ill.

Provision of information

The school website has very recently been updated and now provides all of the required information for parents, carers and prospective parents about the school, the curriculum and various policies. Parents and carers receive an annual report about pupil progress. Since the last inspection there has been an increase in the

number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and who therefore receive some funding from local authorities. The school has overlooked the requirement to provide an annual statement of income and expenditure to these local authorities.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's procedures for handling complaints have very recently been updated and are available to parents and carers on the school's website. This meets all of the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (standards in part 2) and must:

- ensure that pupils acquire an appreciation of, and respect for, their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions (paragraph 5(e)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are ill, in accordance with regulation 5 of the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 (paragraph 23(k)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- where a pupil who is registered at the school is wholly or partly funded by the local authority, submit an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 24(1)(h)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- improve the quality of teaching so that none is inadequate and more is good
- improve the consistency of marking and feedback so that it is more typically as good as the best
- further develop pupils' understanding of the wide range of faiths that are present in Great Britain today
- within the Early Years Foundation Stage improve the use of the outdoors and establish routines so that expectations are clear to all children.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
--	--	---	--	--

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Christian day school		
Date school opened	September 1986		
Age range of pupils	4-16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 68	Girls: 46	Total: 114
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 4	Girls: 1	Total: 5
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,456		
Address of school	231 Handsworth Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S13 9BJ		
Telephone number	0114 2430276		
Email address	office@handsworthchristianschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Pauline Arnott		
Proprietor	Registered company number 3809725 Chair of governors – Mr A Marshall		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Handsworth Christian School, Sheffield S13 9BJ

Thank you all for the welcome you gave to Mrs. Drake and me when we inspected your school recently. We found talking to you, looking at your work and observing you learning very helpful. We judged that your school is providing you with a good education. The main reasons for this are as follows.

- The good curriculum and mostly good teaching, along with the good relationships with staff help you to make good progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The small class sizes means that your teachers are able to give you all individual time and attention.
- Staff take good care of you.
- You behave well in lessons, which helps you learn, and the majority of you get along well with each other.

We have suggested some things which your headteacher and staff can do to make things even better for you.

- Improve the quality of teaching.
- Improve the consistency of teachers' marking and feedback.
- Develop further your understanding of the wide range of faiths that are present in Great Britain today
- Improve the use of the outdoors and establish routines so that expectations are clear to all children in the Reception class.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector