

Handsworth Christian School

231 Handsworth Road, Handsworth, Sheffield S13 9BJ

Inspection dates

28–30 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

Effectiveness of leadership and management
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
Personal development, behaviour and welfare
Outcomes for pupils
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate
Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders and managers have been too slow to implement improvements across the school.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that the independent school standards have been met consistently.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not robust enough to bring about improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Information about pupil performance is not being used effectively by leaders and managers to fully evaluate how well pupils are doing.
- Not enough pupils are making good progress, particularly in the lower school.
- Not all leaders have the knowledge and skills to effectively carry out their roles.
- Leaders and managers do not ensure that there is a consistency of approach in implementing policies and procedures across the school.
- Governors are not fully effective in holding leaders to account, particularly those with an area of responsibility.
- Some teachers are not able to set work that meets the wide range of pupils' needs.
- Too many teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils' behaviour is not always well managed by adults and expectations of acceptable behaviour are often too low.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe and there are clear systems in place to keep them safe.
- Pupils in the upper school behave well and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils make good progress in some subjects such as mathematics, art and Urdu.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the developmental needs of the very youngest children and assess their progress well.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (the 'independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by setting clear goals with urgent timescales to ensure that:
 - the quality of teaching and learning is monitored rigorously and teachers are held to account for the progress pupils make
 - teachers are given regular opportunities to improve their teaching skills
 - information on pupils' attainment is used to evaluate that they are making the progress they are capable of and that this information is acted upon
 - policies and procedures are followed consistently and accurately across the school
 - governors hold senior leaders to account, particularly those with an area of responsibility.

- Improve the quality of teaching by giving teachers more guidance on how to improve so that:
 - they are more proficient at meeting the needs of the different abilities of pupils in lessons, particularly in the lower school
 - they have higher expectations and a more realistic picture of what pupils are capable of achieving.

- The school must meet the following independent school standards.
 - **Part 1. Quality of education provided**
 The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability and that lessons are well planned using effective teaching methods. They must also ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainment of pupils (Part 1, para 3, 3(a), 3(c) and 3(d)).
 - **Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled**
 The proprietor must ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils (Part 7, para 33).
 - **Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools**
 The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school (Part 8, para 34(1)) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently (Part 8, para 34(1)(a)). The proprietor must also ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently (Part 8, para 34(1)(b)).

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate

- The school's weaknesses were clearly identified in a whole school review 12 months ago. The areas identified have not been acted on in a timely manner and consequently teaching, learning and behaviour in the school are not improving at a fast enough rate.
- Over one third of parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire do not consider the school is well led and managed.
- Leaders and managers do not have effective means of evaluating the quality of teaching or pupils' progress. Therefore, too many teachers are not given guidance or the opportunity to improve their teaching. Neither are they held to account for the progress pupils make.
- School leaders have recently started to use a local authority assessment system which is helping them to build a profile of pupil's individual progress. However, they do not at this time have a clear knowledge of the progress pupils are making in most subjects. They do not follow pupils' progress from their starting points. Neither do leaders consider the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Teachers of the youngest pupils make accurate assessments which clearly demonstrate the progress pupils have made this year. In mathematics in the upper school, pupils' progress is tracked more effectively to identify how much progress pupils have made. However, this is not yet being used to improve teaching and learning in mathematics or in other subjects across the school.
- Senior leaders responsible for supporting those pupils with additional needs do not monitor their progress frequently enough. They do not have a clear idea of how well these pupils are doing and whether the support they are receiving is valuable.
- School leaders do not have clear policies and procedures for processes such as marking and feedback. Therefore, there are major inconsistencies in the implementation of procedures across the school.
- Pupils learn about British values through a range of activities such as recent debates about the European referendum. Pupils, particularly in the upper school, study a range of subjects such as British law and the impact of drug use.
- Senior leaders have ensured that this school is a very inclusive school. Pupils from different faiths and cultures are welcomed in this Christian school as are pupils with a wide range of emotional and educational needs. Along with some study of different religions this helps promote tolerance and understanding of those with differing beliefs for all pupils. Teachers do not always make the best use of opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures such as helping pupils to understand why other pupils are taking part in Ramadan and subsequent celebrations.
- Pupils study a curriculum that ensures they can be adequately equipped for the next stage of their education, employment or training. There is also a range of clubs, trips and whole school theme days such as a Star Wars Day which enhance this curriculum. The broad curriculum, combined with enrichment activities supports pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained to promote pupils' safety. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that any recent guidance is immediately communicated to all staff. They also ensure that all adults, including parents, have access to comprehensive guidance from the local authority on all aspects of safeguarding. Appropriate checks are made on all staff. A trained pastoral team is in place to support the emotional needs of pupils should they need to talk. The designated safeguarding lead takes advice from appropriate external agencies to support the safeguarding needs of pupils.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors and senior leaders have not ensured that policies and procedures are both comprehensive and correctly followed. The complaints policy is not effectively implemented and consequently parents are not satisfied with the outcomes of the complaints they have raised.
 - Governors do not challenge senior leaders well enough. They do not receive enough accurate information on the quality of teaching or pupil progress.
 - Governors are now in a stronger position to challenge and support the school following an external review. This has enabled them to accept their responsibility for improvement and they now have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, they have not ensured that the pace of improvement has been fast enough.
 - The setting-up of different sub-committees according to governors' skills and knowledge is supporting

school improvement, albeit too slowly. A review of governors' skills is currently being undertaken to improve their effectiveness.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Some teachers do not have the skills to make sure that learning in lessons is adapted to meet the range of pupils' abilities. This means that some learning is not at a fast enough rate, particularly in the lower school.
- A number of teachers do not recognise the capabilities pupils have, and expectations are too often too low. Consequently, this hinders the progress made by some pupils.
- Teachers, particularly in the upper school, make learning in lessons progressively harder which supports pupils' learning. This helps the most able pupils to learn at an appropriate pace.
- Pupils have good relationships with their teachers and this gives them the confidence to ask questions and not be afraid to make mistakes.
- Many teachers show great skill when questioning pupils. They ensure that questioning deepens understanding. In a mathematics lesson in the upper school, pupils were questioned effectively by their teacher to check their prior understanding. The pupils were then supported well to help them in reaching accurate conclusions following some challenging work.
- Pupils receive homework on a regular basis which helps consolidate work they are doing in school.
- The teaching of the youngest pupils is knowledgeable and takes account of their developmental needs. Adults play alongside the children while skilfully questioning them and helping them learn.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Some pupils benefit from personal, social and health education lessons in which topics are studied that effectively promote their personal development. Not all classes have these lessons, and therefore some pupils miss out on learning about issues such as extremism and grooming.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of cyber bullying and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Senior leaders have also ensured that parents can benefit from this training, and many parents have embraced this training and found out more about keeping their children safe when they go online.
- Pupils, particularly those in the upper school, are confident and self-assured learners. They are self-disciplined in their learning and demonstrate good social skills, which help them make better progress in lessons.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and they are confident that they could approach any adult to help them. Older pupils know which adults are in the pastoral care team and that they can ask them for help if they need to.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils and parents commented that behaviour is sometimes disruptive, particularly at non-structured times. The inspection team observed this type of behaviour.
- Sometimes behaviour is not as good as it could be because it not managed effectively by adults or because teaching does not interest and engage pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is higher than that of other pupils nationally and is increasing. The attendance of pupils overall is in line with other pupils nationally and is now carefully monitored by adults.
- The very youngest and the oldest pupils behave well; they are interested and engaged in their learning and they enjoy excellent relationships with the adults who help them learn.
- Pupils comment that there is very little name-calling and everybody welcomes the differences in culture, religion and learning needs that are present in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils enter the school with a range of abilities and at different ages; however, their starting points are not recorded. Teachers do not track their progress and monitor progress effectively. Pupils' work in books and in lessons indicates that many pupils do not make good progress over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs do not make the same progress as their peers. Their individual educational plans are not reviewed regularly enough, so progress against their personalised targets is not always timely. Work in their books demonstrates that their progress requires improvement.
- As with other pupils, the progress of the most able pupils is variable across the school. In mathematics in the upper school, expectations are higher and teachers have a better understanding of what pupils can achieve, and therefore pupils make good progress. Younger most-able pupils make good progress in reading as teachers set appropriate work and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) meets the needs of these pupils.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 is broadly in line with other pupils of the same age nationally, demonstrated by evidence in books and recent assessments.
- All pupils from Year 11 who left the school in 2015 were well prepared for the next stage of their career. They all successfully went on to further training, education or employment. Of these pupils, 64% gained five GCSEs at grade C or above, including mathematics and English. This is above the level of other pupils of the same age nationally but lower than levels of attainment reached in previous years.
- Pupils in mathematics, particularly in the upper school, make good progress as a direct result of the quality of teaching. In mathematics lessons, the teacher supports pupils' learning well by modelling the answers and giving pupils valuable feedback during lessons and when marking books.
- Younger pupils make good progress in learning Urdu. Teachers make lessons fun, and pupils with no prior knowledge of the language confidently construct sentences while playing games.
- Overall, the very youngest pupils have made progress which is typically expected for pupils of their age from starting points which are typical or slightly above those expected. However, progress in some areas, such as literacy, is often good or outstanding.

School details

Unique reference number	107167
Inspection number	10012836
DfE registration number	373/6026

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Independent Christian school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	4–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	55
Proprietor	Handsworth Christian School Ltd
Chair	Nicola Duran
Headteacher	Antony Swift
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,634–£5,808 per annum
Telephone number	0114 243 0276
Website	www.handsworthchristianschool.co.uk
Email address	office@handsworthchristianschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 May 2012

Information about this school

- Handsworth Christian School is a non-selective independent school for boys and girls between the ages of four and 16 years.
- The school is registered for 146 pupils. Currently there are 55 pupils on roll. Three pupils have either a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils in the infant and lower school are taught in classes which cater for a range of different year groups. Pupils in the infant class range from Nursery age to Year 2, and in the lower school from Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils in the upper school are generally taught by specialist teachers in discrete year groups.
- Handsworth Christian School accepts pupils from different faiths. Many pupils are of minority ethnic heritage and follow faiths other than the Christian faith.
- The school has, on occasion, used alternative provision for music for its secondary-age pupils.
- The school was last inspected in May 2012 when it was judged to be good.
- A new headteacher has been in post since April 2015. The assistant headteacher completed an external evaluation of the school in April 2015 as an external consultant, and took up her current post in May 2016.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out over two and a half days, by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- The inspectors held a meeting with representatives of the governing body who are also directors and trustees of the Handsworth Christian School Ltd. They also met with all members of the senior leadership team and other members of staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils both informally and formally during the school day. They also considered the work in books in a range of subjects for the majority of pupils in school. The inspectors studied the information on pupil attainment that was available.
- The inspectors visited all the classrooms and observed learning in a range of subjects. They also observed and considered behaviour throughout the school day as well as considering the views of pupils, parents and staff.
- The inspectors toured the building both inside and outside to ensure the relevant independent school standards were met and that pupils' welfare is taken into account.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and considered 12 parental responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors spoke to a number of staff and studied 18 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. The views expressed were taken into account.
- The inspectors examined school documentation, including a range of policies required as part of the independent school standards and early years requirements. Documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and welfare, as well as health and safety documents, were also studied.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Redshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector

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