

Inspection of a good school: Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 1RX

Inspection dates:

22–23 October 2019

Outcome

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers, staff and pupils have a high level of confidence in the new headteacher who took up post one year ago. The relationships between pupils and teachers are calm and positive. Pupils get along well together, show respect for others and say that they enjoy going to school. Pupils say they have someone they can talk to if they are worried or upset. Pupils told us that they feel well supported by anti-bullying ambassadors and staff on the rare occasions that bullying happens.

We saw pupils behaving well in their lessons and during social times. Leaders want the very best for all pupils and aspire for them to excel in their lessons and beyond. Pupils are given a wide choice of enrichment activities. For example, they take part in an extensive range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including rowing. Pupils also join a range of clubs, such as those dedicated to drama and arts and crafts, that enable them to develop their creative and artistic talents. Pupils told inspectors how much they value the opportunity to take part in different enrichment activities, as it enables them to develop their character and life skills.

Staff work hard to help pupils overcome any difficulties they face. They know individual pupils well and make sure that pupils feel comfortable and cared for. Pupils are taught that it is okay to be different and learn how to become responsible citizens. They are taught to understand the wider world and show respect and tolerance for others. Pupils benefit from highly effective careers education.

Pupils do not learn as well as they could across the curriculum. This is because teaching does not consistently help pupils to know and remember more in each subject as they move through the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The new headteacher has made some significant improvements to the quality of the curriculum across the school. She has instilled in staff a clear desire for pupils to succeed both academically and socially. All staff say that they are proud to work at the school. They say they are well supported by leaders.

In most subjects, teachers have thought hard about what pupils need to know. Curriculum leaders have carefully planned what pupils will learn and the order they will learn it in. This is helping them to teach in a way that enables all pupils to be successful, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, not all teachers use effective strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve the best they can. As a result, these pupils do not flourish as they could.

Teachers have good relationships with pupils. Staff use school routines, rewards and sanctions fairly. Most pupils respect staff, work well and concentrate in lessons. Some teachers use thoughtful ways to recap and review knowledge. This is helping pupils to learn more effectively. Consequently, they are more successful in their knowledge recall and examinations. Inspectors saw this commonly in art and English lessons. This does not happen consistently well across the school and pupils do not make the progress that they could.

Pupils' personal development is very well supported across the school. Pupils are helped to build their own character and to understand how to be good citizens. Staff work very hard to make sure that all pupils attend school regularly. The attendance of pupils is improving. However, disadvantaged pupils are still more likely to be absent more regularly than others at the school and nationally. This impacts negatively on the progress that these pupils make in their subjects.

A small number of pupils attend alternative provision. The provision meets their needs well. The school checks on the well-being and progress of pupils who are educated away from the school site regularly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are suitable to work with children. All staff receive appropriate training, which means that they know what to do to keep pupils safe. Staff take pupils' welfare seriously. They know pupils well and are quick to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They take appropriate action to ensure that pupils get the help they need. The safeguarding leader works well with external agencies. She ensures that pupils and their families get extra help when they need it.

Pupils learn about risks they face through the formal curriculum and assemblies. Pupils have a good understanding of different risks. They know how to keep safe when using the internet and particularly on social networking sites.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Across the curriculum, pupils are not always able to remember their learning well enough. This lack of confidence and weak ability to recall prior learning limits pupils' outcomes and prevents them from doing as well as they could in external examinations. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently employ strategies that enable pupils to recall prior learning more confidently.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is still too low. This is limiting their progress. Leaders need to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so they can learn more effectively and keep up with their peers.
- Teachers should consistently implement effective strategies and approaches to enable pupils with SEND to achieve as best they can.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 2–3 March 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and

pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	111456
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10110983
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	809
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rev Peter Montgomery
Headteacher	Ms J Langstaff
Website	www.cardinal-newman.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	2–3 March 2016

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection a new headteacher has been appointed. She has been in post since September 2018. The governing body has also gained a few additional members.
- A very small number of pupils attend part-time alternative provision at New Horizons, a pupil referral unit.

Information about this inspection

- We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject and middle leaders, teachers, pupils, governors and external support partners. We scrutinised school documents, including curriculum plans and school development plans.
- The subjects that were looked at closely as part of this inspection were art, mathematics and geography. For each of these subjects inspectors: visited lessons, met curriculum leaders, met teachers, spoke with pupils, and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors talked to leaders and teachers about their curriculum plans. They also talked to pupils about what they knew and remembered in these subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break and lunch times. An

inspector visited an assembly. During the inspection, they spoke with pupils about life at school and their work.

- Inspectors looked at a range of other information about behaviour, attendance, extra-curricular activities and wider enrichment events.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding arrangements and documentation, including the single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed the 63 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and the 63 comments that were made by the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the 48 responses to the staff survey. No pupils completed the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Dawn Platt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nell Banfield

Ofsted Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, 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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2019