

# Inspection of Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Engineering College

Glenburn Road, Skelmersdale, Lancashire WN8 6JW

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Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils typically enjoy coming to school. They get on well with each other, feel safe and appreciate the work of staff.

Pupils behave well during lessons and most try hard. Although some parents and carers have concerns about how the school deals with bullying, pupils typically do not. They say that bullying is rare and that teachers are good at dealing with it.

In many subjects, pupils have not achieved well in external examinations over the last few years. This is because the quality of education has declined since the last inspection. It is now improving, although the curriculum does not yet reflect the high expectations that leaders have for all pupils.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. Pupils develop compassion and empathy, particularly for those who are less fortunate than themselves.

The school offers many extra-curricular opportunities. Pupils have many opportunities to develop and showcase their creative talents.

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

The quality of education received by pupils has declined since the last inspection. Pupils have not benefited from a curriculum that has been carefully designed. Pupils who have left the school in the last three years have underperformed in external examinations.

Leaders have started to address the shortfalls in the curriculum. This has led to improvements in pupils' learning in subjects such as mathematics and science. In these subjects, leaders have thought deeply about what pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it. These improvements are complementing those areas in which pupils have learned well for a long time, such as art and design and music.

In other subjects, such as English and modern foreign languages, leaders' efforts to improve the curriculum are at an earlier stage.

The quality of pupils' learning continues to vary significantly across subjects. For example, in history, pupils in key stage 3 do not study a curriculum that is the equal of the national curriculum. Subject curriculums do not systematically build pupils' cultural capital. For example, until recently, the English curriculum had not exposed pupils to enough great works of literature.

Leaders have done less work to develop the curriculum in key stage 4 than they have in key stage 3. In some subjects, the key stage 4 curriculum is overly focused on preparing pupils for external examinations.

The proportion of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate is increasing. Staff have the same academic expectations for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are supported well to access the same curriculum as other pupils. However, they have not achieved well in external examinations.

Pupils behave well during lessons and around the school site. Leaders have improved the systems to improve pupils' attendance. However, rates of absence remain high.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. Careers education is very thorough. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to learn about different cultures and faiths.

Leaders' efforts to improve the school are gathering momentum. This is partly because there is now greater stability in the senior and middle leadership teams. Leaders are enacting clear long-term plans to improve the curriculum. However, they have not always taken decisions that match their overall intent. For example, all pupils in Year 10 are currently being prepared to sit their English literature examinations in the summer of Year 10. This is inconsistent with leaders' aim of helping pupils to achieve their academic potential in all subjects.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils benefit from considerate pastoral support. Staff use their training to identify potential signs of abuse or neglect.

The school works well with parents and external agencies to protect pupils who are vulnerable. For example, they work closely with the police to protect pupils from the dangers associated with criminality.

Pupils value the way that the school helps them to develop an age-appropriate understanding of risk. This includes the risks related to being online and the risks linked to relationships.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Pupils have not benefited from a good quality of education since the last inspection. This has led to a sharp decline in pupils' achievement. Leaders must accelerate their efforts to improve the curriculum. They need to ensure that teachers of all subjects have thought deeply and precisely about what they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn it. This should reduce the

variability that currently exists in the depth and security of pupils' learning across the curriculum.

- Pupils' learning in key stage 4 is often too focused on preparation for external examinations. In some cases, this limits pupils' learning. Leaders should therefore ensure that teachers give as much consideration to the content and order of pupils' learning in key stage 4 as many have in key stage 3. This will ensure that pupils' learning remains broad and ambitious in key stage 4.
- Leaders have a clear vision for improving the quality of the curriculum. They are in the process of redesigning the curriculum so that pupils can achieve their academic potential. During this transitional phase, leaders' decisions have not consistently aligned with this vision. For example, they have decided that all pupils currently in Year 10 will sit their examination in English literature GCSE at the end of this school year. Leaders should therefore ensure that the future decisions that they make about the curriculum are consistent with their values. This will ensure that pupils have the best chance of doing their best in all subjects.
- Pupils do not attend as regularly as they should. Leaders have improved their processes for encouraging regular attendance and challenging unnecessary absence. There are small signs that this work is beginning to have impact. Leaders should continue with this work to improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.

## 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 are the provider and you are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119782
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122042
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	889
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kath Gresty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Knight
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.olqp.org.uk">www.olqp.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 June–1 July 2015

## Information about this school

- The new headteacher was appointed as substantive headteacher in September 2017. Prior to becoming headteacher, she had worked at the school for several years.
- Most senior leaders and many subject leaders have been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school's last section 48 inspection was in November 2015.
- The school uses the following alternative providers, mainly on a part-time basis, to provide education for a small number of pupils: The Acorns School, West Lancashire College, Creative Hub and BDS Training.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During the inspection, we spoke formally with pupils about their work and school life. We also spoke to pupils during lessons and around the school site. We held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, governors and teachers, including

those who are new to the profession. We also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the archdiocese.

- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 56 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View, as well as the 32 comments received via the free-text facility. We considered the 73 responses to the questionnaire for pupils and the 38 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection focused deeply on mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, science, music and geography. In these subjects, we met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. We looked at other subjects, such as history and art and design, in less depth.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

### **Inspection team**

Will Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dawn Farrent	Ofsted Inspector
Iain Sim	Ofsted Inspector
Rachel Goodwin	Her Majesty's Inspector

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