

# Inspection of a good school: Christ's College Finchley

East End Road, East Finchley, London N2 0SE

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Inspection dates:

3–4 March 2020

## Outcome

Christ's College Finchley continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value the great level of care that the staff provide. They say that they experience an environment which develops their character, interests and passions.

Pupils feel safe in school. They agree that bullying is not frequent and teachers follow it up when it happens. They feel confident that they can speak to teachers about their concerns. The 'I heart' initiative in Year 9 helps pupils cope with pressure and develop resilience.

The calm and focused atmosphere in lessons helps pupils work productively. They show respect towards their teachers and work well with their peers. Movement to lessons is swift. Behaviour is orderly in communal spaces.

The 'my zone' enrichment period ensures that all pupils can pursue their interests within the school day. It includes study skills for those in examination years and community service for older students. Sixth-form students also engage in local initiatives. For example, some students are trustees of a charity which helps people with psychological difficulties. The school also offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Some of these sessions support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with their work or their social needs.

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

Leaders have constructed a curriculum that provides pupils with strong foundations.

Leaders monitor the quality of education regularly. They are aware of the effectiveness of teaching across subjects. They use training well to respond to the needs identified. It has recently focused on helping pupils retain previous knowledge over time.

Subject leaders ensure that pupils' learning is well thought out. For example, the teaching of the Industrial Revolution in history coincides with an assembly on 'A Christmas Carol'. This helps pupils to better understand the key themes of the novel.

Learning follows a clear structure. Teachers revisit and explore topics further to deepen pupils' understanding. For instance, in science pupils learn about sustainability in Year 8. They build upon this later, in Year 11, when pupils explore the life cycle of different materials. Teachers, especially in the sixth form, use homework well. The homework set provides opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge. They use this knowledge to perform analysis and application tasks.

Leaders are aware that the curriculum for some languages has not been implemented as well as it could be. The retrieval of previous knowledge is not regular and rigorous enough. It does not form a platform for building learning further. As a consequence, many pupils rely on simple, repetitive patterns in their writing. Leaders understand that pupils' performance in languages hinders a wider English Baccalaureate uptake.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment productively. For instance, in economics teachers' questioning probes students' prior knowledge. This helps students produce more sophisticated answers. In English, pupils have regular opportunities to edit their work. They respond to their teachers' guidance effectively. This is not yet the case in all of the languages. Misconceptions are not addressed promptly and systematically. This prevents pupils from moving forward more rapidly in their language acquisition.

Teachers display strong subject knowledge. This fosters a relationship of respect and trust. Attitudes to learning are very positive.

Students in the sixth form act as role models, and mentor their younger peers. They are proud of their academic achievements. They understand how these will help them secure a place at the universities of their choice.

Pupils with SEND study the full curriculum. Lessons are inclusive and involve these pupils in the learning in line with their peers. Learning assistants provide pupils with support out of lessons through targeted interventions. These help pupils develop their key skills.

The school experiences a high level of pupil mobility. Leaders follow local authority procedures when pupils leave. However, not all leaders appeared to have full oversight of the reasons why pupils had left the school and the profile of this group. This was rectified during the inspection.

Staff feel very well supported. They said that leaders reduce unnecessary workload. Teachers appreciate that leaders adhere to one meeting a week. They value the recent attempt to limit and control the volume of emails. They also recognise the efforts to cut communication during holidays.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Comprehensive documentation, regular training and refreshers support all staff members. Leaders involved in the safeguarding team meet regularly to review key cases. They work with external agencies effectively, for example to address areas including relationships, mental health and bereavement. Sixth-form students have a dedicated learning manager.

They receive support when experiencing stress or anxiety.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online through the assembly programme and in lessons. Leaders have also produced an information bulletin for parents. The school council is currently working on its own e-safety project.

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

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

- Most subjects in the school are designed to help pupils build on their previous knowledge. In some languages, pupils do not build on what they have previously learned. As a result, pupils' work is not of a high standard. Leaders must ensure that the content and sequencing of the languages curriculum is clearly thought out.
- In the majority of subjects, pupils are given opportunities to address their mistakes following an assessment. This helps them build their knowledge and understanding. This is not yet the case in all of the languages taught. Leaders should ensure that, in all languages, pupils are given regular opportunities and guidance to correct misconceptions.

## **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 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 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 24–25 May 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 are the school 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

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|---|--|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>                    | 137388   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                            | Barnet   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                          | 10121557   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                             | Secondary  |
| <b>School category</b>                            | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                        | 11 to 18   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                           | Mixed  |
| <b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>   | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>        | 779  |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b> | 203  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                      | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                             | J Bowra  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                                | S Olusanya   |
| <b>Website</b>                                    | <a href="http://www.christscollegefinchley.org.uk">www.christscollegefinchley.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>                | 24–25 May 2016   |

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses one alternative provider, the Alternative Centre of Education.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about life at school and their work. We had meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, trustees, and the school improvement partner and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the alternative provision.
- Information regarding pupils' and students' attendance and behaviour was scrutinised.
- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 71 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including comments received via the free-text facility. We also

considered the 43 responses to a questionnaire for staff and the 140 responses to a questionnaire for pupils.

- We did deep dives in the following subjects: English, languages (French and Spanish), business studies and economics. We met with subject leaders, spoke with pupils, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teaching staff. Science was also considered as part of the inspection.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff and support provided for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Luisa Bonelli, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Fiona Abankwah

Ofsted Inspector

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