

Inspection of Bishop Challoner Boys' School

352 Commercial Road, London E1 0LB

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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 enjoy school. In many lessons, they jump at the chance to learn. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to increase their knowledge across lots of different subjects. However, the breadth of subjects they study in Year 9 narrows because pupils choose their GCSE subjects at the end of Year 8. This means that in some subjects, pupils' learning is cut short.

Pupils said that changes to the way behaviour is managed have improved the atmosphere around the school. Lessons are calm and well organised. Pupils arrive to lessons on time. Learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils are respectful of each other and polite to adults.

Pupils feel safe in school. They said that there is little, if any, bullying. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, including online. If they are worried about something, pupils know who to turn to for help.

Pupils get opportunities to learn about the world outside school through the personal, social, health and economic programme. Pupils learn about respect and tolerance for others, as well as different religious traditions. Through the school's Catholic principles, pupils learn the difference between right and wrong.

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

Leaders, including the acting executive headteacher, are making the education pupils receive better. They are supported by staff, pupils and parents and carers. Procedures for safeguarding and behaviour have been strengthened. This is making a difference. Pupils' response to leaders' high expectations is positive. They have noticed that things are improving. Better behaviour allows the curriculum to be delivered without interruption.

Despite these improvements, leaders and governors know there is more to be done. At present, the roles of senior leaders are not always clear. This makes it difficult for leaders to all pull in the same direction. The chair, and the few governors who remain, have taken decisive steps to build leadership capacity and ensure that safeguarding continues to be effective. However, they are not in a strong position to check thoroughly that leaders are doing their job properly.

In some subjects, learning is organised carefully so that pupils learn new knowledge and skills in a logical, sequenced way. For example, in English and mathematics, teachers ensure that pupils build on their previous learning. They also provide help for those that have fallen behind with their reading. Teaching moves onto new subject content when pupils are ready, and repeats work to consolidate learning. Leaders and staff are clear about what pupils should learn and in what order they should learn it. This enables pupils to make strong progression through the curriculum in these subjects.

However, these arrangements are not consistent in all subjects. In science, pupils learn how to do things but not the knowledge that lies behind what they are doing. For example, pupils are taught to read graphs but not the knowledge to understand what they mean. In design and technology, pupils study a series of different projects but these are not always joined together. This makes it difficult for teachers to build on pupils' previous learning and ensure pupils' progression, including for disadvantaged pupils.

At present, pupils start their GCSE courses in Year 9. Although pupils study a broad range of subjects in Years 7 and 8, the depth of their learning is compromised. This means that pupils have not learned enough about those subjects that they chose to discontinue in Year 9. Leaders are rightly planning to change this so that pupils have a three-year course before choosing their GCSE subjects.

In most subjects, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported suitably. Teaching assistants are deployed appropriately. They help teachers deliver the curriculum to meet pupils' needs.

Leaders ensure that pupils have experiences aimed at helping them become full members of society in modern Britain. Pupils learn about treating all groups fairly and have opportunities to reflect on their own actions. They raise funds for a range of local and national charities. Careers education, which starts in Year 7 and includes work experience in Year 11, provides pupils with unbiased advice about post-16 opportunities. The careers programme meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that pupils' safety and welfare are at the top of their agenda. They are alert to keeping pupils safe. Safeguarding policy and practice have been strengthened. Appropriate vetting checks are made for all staff and governors. Staff are trained in the new safeguarding procedures, including issues that are particular to the school. Staff know how to raise and report a concern if they are worried about a pupil.

Regular lessons teach pupils how to stay safe online. Pupils learn to understand the potential risks of social media, including sharing or accessing inappropriate images

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum is planned effectively. Pupils are taught the essential elements so that they are able to build their knowledge and make connections between different topics. Teaching uses repetition, checks understanding and corrects misconceptions. However, this clarity is not a feature

of all subjects. In some cases, too much emphasis is given to teaching procedures rather than the knowledge that lies behind them. In other cases, activities are 'one-offs' and do not link with other tasks or are over dependent on the GCSE syllabus. Leaders should ensure that all subjects define the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn by the end of the course. Each subject should sequence the curriculum so that it builds pupils' knowledge in a structured, organised way.

- The two-year key stage 3 curriculum limits pupils' learning. It does not provide sufficient time in some subjects for pupils to gain the necessary knowledge and skills they need. Leaders' plan to move to a three-year key stage 3 curriculum is sensible and should be implemented as soon as possible.
- New leadership is making a difference. There is a stronger vision and clear priorities for improvement. Leaders and governors share this vision, and the emphasis is on raising pupils' achievements. However, there are weaknesses that dilute the impact of leaders' work. Some leaders' responsibilities are ill defined, making it difficult to act strategically as a team. In addition, the governing body does not have the capacity to hold senior leaders fully to account. Leadership needs to be improved by defining roles more clearly and making sure that agreed policies and procedures are fully implemented. This includes improvements to the curriculum. In addition, new governors are needed with appropriate skills and expertise to support and challenge senior leaders.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	133289
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10201346
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	573
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Evans
Headteacher	J-P Morrison (acting executive headteacher)
Website	www.bishopchallonerfederation.towerhamlets.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	February 2018

Information about this school

- Bishop Challoner Boys' School is a Roman Catholic voluntary-aided school for pupils aged 11 to 16.
- The previous executive headteacher left the school in August 2021.
- The school shares the building and teaching resources, including staff, with the girls' school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Meetings were held with the acting executive headteacher, the head of the boys' and girls' schools, senior leaders, staff, pupils and the chair of the governing body.

- Meetings were held with the safeguarding lead, and inspectors scrutinised school records of the safeguarding checks on adults working in the school.
- Deep dives were conducted in English, science, art and design, and design and technology. In each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils about their work and where possible met with teaching staff to talk about their approach to the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the views of 66 members of staff who responded to the confidential staff survey and the nine responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, which included eight free-text responses.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school. Inspectors also considered the 37 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jasper Green

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

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 2021