

Inspection of Saint Pius X Catholic High School A Specialist School in Humanities

Wath Wood Road, Wath-upon-Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S63 7PQ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 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?

Saint Pius X is a welcoming school. Pupils care for each other and know that teachers will keep them safe. In modern foreign languages lesson visits, inspectors saw pupils celebrating the success of their classmates. Assemblies led by pupils, such as one about protecting the environment and nature, help pupils to develop a sense of community and respect. The Catholic ethos of the school underpins this.

During the inspection, inspectors saw pupils behaving well. Pupils say this is how it is normally. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils who inspectors spoke with believe that teachers will help them in lessons. Social times are well organised. Pupils are relaxed and confident in outdoor spaces. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that teachers will deal with it when it does occur.

In most subjects, lessons are carefully planned so that most pupils know what they are learning and why they are learning it. The quality of education, however, requires improvement because some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the support they need in lessons. This is because teachers are not given detailed information for pupils without an education, health and care (EHC) plan. The culture of reading is not well developed across the school. Pupils told inspectors that they do not enjoy reading in their own time.

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

Most leaders plan the curriculum so that most pupils build their knowledge over time. Teachers know what pupils need to learn at each stage of their education. Leaders have worked with the diocese to make changes to the way pupils are assessed. In lessons, teachers use mini quizzes and retrieval tasks to check that pupils have learned the curriculum. Formal assessments check that specific knowledge is remembered and that pupils are ready for the next stage of learning. In some subjects, pupils cannot always recall what they have learned. The new approaches to assessment are not fully embedded.

Leaders' plans for creating a strong culture of reading do not extend across the whole school. Pupils are aware of the importance of reading but say that they do not read in their own leisure time. Pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 have a reading book with them but said that they do not regularly read it.

Pupils with EHC plans receive strong pastoral support because it is tailored for their specific needs. Leaders work closely with these pupils. Leaders have not planned in the same way for pupils with SEND who do not have an EHC plan. Teachers do not receive detailed information about how to adapt the curriculum for these pupils. Leaders do not check on how well supported these pupils are in lessons. Teaching assistants are not always given clear direction about how to help pupils with SEND that they work with.

The personal development programme for pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils who inspectors spoke with talked about making positive contributions to society. Some pupils are involved in projects such as the Rucksack Appeal. Links with the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development help pupils to understand issues in the wider world. Lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) develop pupils' respect for religions outside the Catholic faith. When speaking to inspectors, pupils understood democracy, respect, and tolerance. Leaders have developed well-sequenced plans to inform pupils about careers and education opportunities after they leave Saint Pius X. One large local employer has worked with the school to offer virtual work experience for younger pupils. Mock interviews were conducted remotely for Year 10 pupils during COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions. Careers fairs are carefully planned so that pupils speak to employers that match their interests and aspirations.

Parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View told inspectors that the school helps to create a strong sense of community. They believe that leaders and teachers ensure that pupils' behaviour is good. Inspectors agree. Routines for behaviour are well established and understood by pupils. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' requests. Movement between lessons is calm. Teachers greet pupils warmly as they arrive at lessons. Leaders' strategies to work with pupils at risk of exclusion are effective. Leaders work with parents and pupils to ensure a clear understanding of the steps that will be taken. This helps many pupils to successfully integrate back into school.

Governors do not have a clear enough understanding of the school's priorities. Some of the information which governors receive from leaders does not provide enough detail about specific plans to improve implementation of the planned curriculum. Governors do not take action to ensure they receive detailed information about leaders' plans to improve the school. This means they are not always able to ask challenging questions about school improvement. Leaders' plans are not always clearly understood by staff because they lack detail.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils who inspectors spoke with said they felt safe at school. They told inspectors that lessons in PSHE helped them to understand and build healthy relationships.

Leaders are aware of local safeguarding risks. They share this information with staff through regular safeguarding training. The PSHE curriculum develops pupils' awareness of safeguarding risks. When appropriate, teachers make links between subject content and safeguarding issues. This means that a culture of safeguarding is well developed across the school.

Leaders keep clear records. Actions and outcomes are recorded. Leaders work closely with external agencies to support pupils where necessary.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading strategy is not well developed across the school. This means that pupils do not develop a love of reading and do not regularly read for pleasure. Leaders should develop a whole-school strategy to develop pupils' love of reading.
- Teachers do not receive clear guidance to help them adapt lessons for pupils with SEND. Leaders do not check how pupils with SEND are helped in lessons. This means that some pupils with SEND, especially those without an EHC plan, do not receive appropriate support. Leaders should ensure that teachers are provided with the information that they need to plan effectively to support all pupils with SEND.
- Leaders' plans do not routinely have clear timeframes and specific actions. This means that strategies to improve the school are not implemented effectively or understood clearly by all, including governors. Leaders should identify specific actions that they will take and check the impact of these actions. Governors should ensure that they have a clear and thorough understanding of the actions that leaders intend to take so that they can hold leaders to account.

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	106962
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10200679
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	680
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Frances Walsh
Headteacher	Sue Smith
Website	http://www.saintpiusx.school/
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There are no pupils attending alternative education provision.
- Saint Pius X has a Roman Catholic denomination. The last section 48 inspection took place in July 2016. The next inspection should take place within the prescribed period. Section 48 inspections (or the equivalent inspection of an academy) are usually carried out every three to five years (and usually within two to three years of a new voluntary-aided school or academy or free school opening). Section 48 inspections have been suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and will restart in September 2021. The first inspection will be within eight years of the last, rather than the usual three to five years.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and assistant headteachers with responsibility for curriculum, behaviour, safeguarding and attendance. Inspectors also spoke with the special educational needs coordinator and representatives

from the diocese and local authority. Inspectors spoke with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders responsible for developing a culture of reading across the school.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders of geography, art, music and PSHE.
- Inspectors reviewed records of safeguarding and spoke with leaders responsible for safeguarding. They also spoke with pupils and staff about safeguarding and checked how safeguarding is woven into the school curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour upon arrival at school, at social times and when leaving school. Inspectors visited an assembly.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, staff and pupils through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Marc Doyle	Ofsted Inspector
Aejaz Laher	Ofsted Inspector
Tudor Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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