

Inspection of a good school: Bishop Challoner Catholic College

Institute Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands, B14 7EG

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 October 2021

Outcome

Bishop Challoner Catholic College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that is rightly proud of its academic standards. Pupils study a wide range of subjects. They learn effectively in all subjects. The sixth form provides students with a rich curriculum. Staff routinely use up-to-date educational research to inform and improve their teaching. They understand that there is more to be done before assessment is used equally well in all subjects.

The school places as much emphasis on promoting pupils' wider development as it does on academic success. Pupils enjoy an impressive range of activities and opportunities beyond the classroom. Sixth formers play a full part in the life of the school and the community. Pupils and students recognise how fortunate they are to have these opportunities at their fingertips. They are well prepared for life after school, whether they leave when they are 16 or 18.

Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Most are studious and well behaved. They enjoy school, are happy and feel safe. Staff know pupils well and care for them. Pupils appreciate the care they receive. They trust staff to support them, for example if they experience bullying or other problems.

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

The school is well led. Senior leaders and governors provide clear, empathetic leadership. They are motivated by a shared commitment to the school's vision of being a 'living and caring community of faith'. Senior leaders are mindful of the workload and well-being of staff. The school's staff form a united team who are very proud to work at Bishop Challoner Catholic College.

Leaders and teachers have worked hard to develop the curriculum in their subjects over recent years. They have put much thought into their choice of topics and the order in which they are taught. They provide carefully structured lessons that revisit key pieces of

knowledge. As a result, pupils' learning builds well over time. In most subjects, pupils remember what they have been taught.

The curriculum is particularly strong in some subjects. For example, in English, pupils study a unit about 'race and identity'. Here, they experience a rich variety of novels, poems, and other texts. Through these, they explore what 'race and identity' mean when living in Birmingham. The curriculum in physical education (PE) is similarly innovative. It aims to promote pupils' physical and mental health. It systematically develops key skills such as agility, balance and coordination from year to year. Many pupils who spoke with inspectors named PE as their favourite subject.

Teachers enjoy a wide range of training that the school provides. They reflect on their practice and seek to develop it. They know their subjects well and they use this expertise to provide clear explanations of new ideas and content. Teachers' expertise and love of their subject is especially evident when teaching in the sixth form.

There is variability in how well teachers use assessment in different subjects. They use it well in some subjects. In others, teachers do not always check what pupils have learned and remembered. They are not always aware of pupils' misconceptions and they do not consistently address these. Consequently, pupils sometimes move on to new learning without having understood previous content.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities well in school. Leaders provide teachers with clear information about pupils' needs. Teachers use this information effectively to plan pupils' learning. These pupils achieve well as a result.

The school places a strong emphasis on the importance of reading. All pupils are encouraged to read regularly. Staff provide effective support for pupils who find reading difficult. This helps them become more fluent readers.

Pupils are keen to learn. They work hard in class and disruption to learning is very rare. The school site is cramped, especially with building work taking place at the moment. Pupils behave sensibly at social times and as they move around school. Sixth form students provide excellent role models for younger pupils.

The school's work to promote pupils' wider development is exemplary. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is thorough and well organised. It is delivered thoughtfully and skilfully by staff.

The school provides many high-quality extra-curricular activities for pupils before the start and at the end of the school day. Sport features highly, and there are also many other clubs, including debating, creative writing and a 'drone club'. Pupils support several charities. They mentor younger pupils in local schools. Leaders monitor and encourage attendance at extra-curricular activities. They intend that no pupil will miss out.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe and well cared for in school. Leaders provide staff with regular and comprehensive training. As a result, staff are alert to the signs that pupils might need extra support. Staff pass on concerns to leaders using the school's safeguarding systems. Leaders ensure that pupils get the help they need, involving outside agencies when necessary.

The school has efficient systems in place to ensure that staff are recruited safely. Governors check that safeguarding is effective, and they ensure that the school carries out its statutory duties.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The use of assessment is inconsistent between departments. In some subjects, teachers do not check systematically pupils' understanding. They are not always aware of pupils' misconceptions. Consequently, they do not always provide clear, direct feedback to address such misunderstandings. They do not always adapt their teaching in the light of the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should ensure that assessment is used equally effectively in all subjects.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 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 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	103560
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10200006
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1242
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	258
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Greg Keegan
Principal	James Coughlan
Website	http://www.bishopchalloner.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	13–14 September 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school, within the archdiocese of Birmingham. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in October 2017.
- The principal took up his post in September 2019.
- The school uses three registered providers of alternative provision. A small number of pupils attend one of these.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the principal, and other senior leaders. They also met with six governors, including the chair of the governing body. An inspector spoke with a representative from the archdiocese of Birmingham.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, PE and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered safeguarding by meeting with the designated safeguarding lead and other members of the safeguarding team, scrutinising policies and records relating to child protection and examining the safeguarding checks made on staff before they join the school.
- Inspectors considered responses from staff to their online inspection questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They observed the school at these times.
- Inspectors considered responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online inspection questionnaire, including written responses.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alexander Laney

Her Majesty's Inspector

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