

Inspection of Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School

Grammar School Road, Latchford, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 1JL

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are immensely proud of their school. They value the sense of belonging that they feel in this tight-knit community. Many pupils told inspectors that they feel part of the 'Boteler' family. Pupils were positive about the close relationships that they forge with adults. In lessons and around the school site, pupils behave well.

The school community celebrates diversity. Pupils said that the school is a safe space where they can grow, free to be themselves. They are happy. Teachers do not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Pupils are accepting of each other's differences. They said that bullying of any kind is rare. Teachers resolve any occasional incidents of bullying swiftly.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers support pupils to build a rich foundation of knowledge in each subject. Pupils progress well through the curriculum. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training.

Pupils spoke highly of the many opportunities on offer to develop their character and resilience. Pupils in all year groups welcome leadership responsibilities, such as being prefects and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils benefit from an extensive extra-curricular programme.

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

Leaders have successfully improved the quality of education for all pupils at Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School. At key stage 3, pupils follow an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum. At key stage 4, leaders ensure that there is a suitably wide range of subjects that meet pupils' interests and ambitions. Leaders' high aspirations for pupils are reflected in the considerable increase in the number of pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, who choose to study a modern foreign language in key stage 4.

Across the curriculum, subject leaders have thought deeply about the essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn, and the order in which they should learn it. Leaders have detailed and precise curriculum plans in place which carefully outline this knowledge. As a result, most teachers are clear about exactly what pupils must learn to progress through the curriculum. Many pupils acquire a rich body of knowledge and they achieve well.

Although subject leaders have planned an effective curriculum, in a small number of subjects, leaders do not check how well teachers are delivering the planned curriculum effectively enough. As a result, a small number of teachers do not always choose the most appropriate activities that enable pupils to apply the knowledge that they have learned to different contexts.

Across the school, teachers use assessment well to check whether pupils have remembered new learning. When misconceptions arise, teachers are quick to address any errors. Overall, teachers ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure before they move on to the next steps in learning.

Teachers and leaders are skilled in identifying the specific needs of pupils with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator ensures that teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum successfully for pupils with SEND. Teachers are adept at ensuring that pupils with SEND, including those in the on-site specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), gain the knowledge that they need to progress well through the curriculum.

Leaders prioritise reading well. They successfully support pupils who are behind with their reading to catch up quickly. By the end of key stage 3, most pupils read with fluency and confidence. However, leaders' plans to implement reading catch-up strategies in key stage 4 are only just under way. A small number of older pupils have missing reading knowledge, which hinders how well they access the curriculum.

Leaders and pupils share high expectations of behaviour. Pupils behave respectfully. They can learn in lessons without disruption.

Pupils said that they are taught how to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and have healthy relationships. Well-qualified staff deliver high-quality, ongoing careers information, advice and guidance to pupils in all year groups.

Governors and trustees support and challenge leaders well. Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Staff spoke highly about leaders' support for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. This includes the checks that they make to ensure that all adults are safe to work with pupils. All staff have been appropriately trained to identify the risks that pupils may face, including those in the local community. Staff are fully conversant with the processes for reporting concerns. Leaders have secured effective support for vulnerable pupils and their families. They work effectively with outside agencies.

Pupils learn how to keep physically and mentally healthy, including how to stay safe online. They know what to do if they feel worried. Pupils trust staff to support them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, leaders do not check effectively enough how well teachers deliver the curriculum. This means that in some subjects, teachers do not always select the most appropriate activities to enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the topics and concepts that they are studying. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders are trained to check that teachers are delivering the curriculum effectively.
- Leaders' plans to develop pupils' reading knowledge are not fully implemented in key stage 4. As such, a small number of older pupils are behind with their reading. As a result, some of these pupils do not access the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should roll out their plans to support those pupils who struggle with reading in key stage 4 so that they catch up with their reading and so that they can access the full curriculum.

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	144799
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10200843
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	683
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Stuart Titchard
Headteacher	Beverley Scott-Herron
Website	http://www.boteler.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected.

Information about this school

- Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School converted to become an academy school in June 2017. When its predecessor school, Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school uses two alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school had its most recent section 48 inspection in February 2017.
- There is a designated specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with learning and cognition difficulties.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 11 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 educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The 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 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and three members of the local governing body. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Chester.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, geography, history and music. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Year 7 to Year 11. Inspectors also observed breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding procedures and the checks made on staff. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding. An inspector also checked the arrangements for pupils attending alternative provision.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, the school development plans, self-evaluation documents, curriculum plans, minutes from meetings of the governing body and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors considered the 66 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 113 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils. Inspectors also considered the views of the 46 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. This included the 45 comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Rachel Goodwin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Philip Wood	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Cocker	Ofsted Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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