

# Inspection of a good school: John Henry Newman Catholic College

Chelmsley Road, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, West Midlands B37 5GA

---

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2021

## **Outcome**

John Henry Newman Catholic College continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a welcoming and caring school. Staff have high expectations for how they want pupils to behave and what they want them to achieve. Regardless of the barriers to learning some pupils face, teachers do not let these stand in the way. Staff do not allow pupils' backgrounds to be a barrier to success. The school's motto, 'heart speaks to heart', runs through all parts of the school's work.

Pupils are positive about the school and behave well. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and complete the tasks that are asked of them. Pupils move around the school building in a calm and orderly way. They eat and play together sensibly at social times. Pupils say that staff deal quickly and decisively with any issues of bullying.

Leaders have thought carefully about the design of the curriculum. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects well. Leaders want pupils to have lots of different learning experiences so that they better understand the world in which they live.

Pupils participate in various activities outside of lessons. The school offers a number of different extra-curricular sports clubs, including football, basketball and badminton. Several pupils also attend a dance and drama club as part of the school's upcoming play 'Matilda'.

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

Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. They have a strong understanding of the local community. Senior leaders meet regularly with subject leaders to review and evaluate curriculum plans. This time is used well to ensure that the curriculum continues to evolve and improve.

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Topics have been mapped carefully for each year group, including in the sixth form, so that pupils are able to build on what they

already know. In most subjects, leaders have considered what key ideas they want pupils to remember. In history, for example, pupils develop their understanding of democracy through the study of different periods of time. They talk confidently about this and how they are making progress in their learning. There are similar strengths in English. Pupils have weekly 'English in Action' lessons where they read texts on topics like food, culture and politics. This helps to strengthen pupils' reading and writing skills over time. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge and ideas they want pupils to know from each topic. This sometimes means that pupils struggle to remember the key things they need to.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and receive regular training on how they can improve their practice. Teachers check pupils' understanding through activities at the start of lessons. They also provide feedback to pupils regularly. This helps teachers to identify misconceptions quickly. In most lessons, teachers deliver challenging content well by explaining things in a clear and structured way. Occasionally, some pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), struggle to access the work given to them. This means they find it too hard to make sense of the work and achieve well.

The curriculum in modern foreign languages is well structured. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to know and remember in Spanish. Pupils develop their understanding of sounds, pronunciation and grammar effectively. Teachers provide time for pupils to go back over their learning to ensure it is secure before moving on. The number of pupils studying a language at key stage 4 is low. This means that the proportion of pupils completing the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) combination of subjects is much lower than the government's national ambition. Leaders recognise this and have started to put in place plans to increase the uptake of pupils studying a language at key stage 4.

The school's provision for pupils' broader development is strong. Leaders have clear plans for how relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) is taught. This is delivered through personal development lessons and the school's 'impact' days and RSHE-focused sessions. Pupils are taught about RSHE in an age-appropriate way, alongside the school's Catholic values. There is a 'pride' group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils. The school also has a 'diversity week' where outside speakers come in and talk to pupils about their own experiences. The school's careers programme ensures all pupils understand what future opportunities are available to them. Visits take place to local universities, and careers events are planned for each term. This includes a UCAS fair for pupils in the sixth form. Leaders ensure pupils are aware of the different pathways that are available to them when they leave school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have strong systems in place to help and protect those pupils who may be at risk of harm. The safeguarding team works together closely to ensure that issues are identified quickly and appropriate action is taken. Staff receive regular training on

safeguarding and are clear about what to do if they have a concern about a child. The school has on-site support for pupils, including help for issues relating to mental health. Leaders are aware of their most vulnerable pupils and check on them regularly. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the school's curriculum and tutor sessions.

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

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

- The proportion of pupils opting to study languages at key stage 4 is low. This is because the breadth of the key stage 4 curriculum does not always help them to choose this subject as part of their options. In addition, a small number of pupils in Year 9 are not positive about the subject. Leaders should ensure that more pupils choose languages if they wish to pursue the subject.
- In a few subjects, leaders have not precisely identified the key knowledge and concepts that pupils need to remember. This means that some pupils struggle to build on what they already know and make connections to new learning. Leaders should ensure that all subjects set out the key knowledge and ideas they want pupils to know, so that pupils can remember more in the long term.
- Some teachers do not implement the curriculum as effectively as they could do. This means that some pupils, including those pupils with SEND, sometimes struggle to access the work set by their teachers. Leaders should ensure that teachers deliver the intended curriculum in a way that carefully meets pupils' needs and that they provide appropriate support so that pupils can make better progress in their learning.

## **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 November 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136347
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200361
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<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>	1343
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	188
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Angela Gilbride
<b>Acting Principal</b>	Brendan McGurran
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://johnhenrynewmancatholiccollege.org.uk/">johnhenrynewmancatholiccollege.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 to 10 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- At the time of this inspection, the deputy headteacher from the school's sponsor, Bishop Challoner Catholic College, was acting Principal.
- The school has a Catholic ethos. It had its last section 48 inspection in July 2018. Its next inspection is due before July 2023.
- The school uses four registered alternative provisions.

## 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 focused on the following subjects: English, science, history and modern foreign languages. Inspectors examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- Inspectors viewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff, and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with the acting principal, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and free-text comments. Inspectors also considered pupils' questionnaires and responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.

## **Inspection team**

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alexander Laney

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gill Martin

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021