

Inspection of a good school: Cardinal Pole Catholic School

205 Morning Lane, Hackney, London E9 6LG

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 March 2022

Outcome

Cardinal Pole Catholic School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are safe and well cared for. The school has a strong sense of community, and everyone feels included. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils and ensure that pupils study a broad range of subjects.

Pupils appreciate the school's focus on both academic and extra-curricular activities. They value the personal and social development that is provided. They also feel very well supported.

Pupils really enjoy school and want to achieve. They are committed learners and take advantage of opportunities given to them. The school celebrates the diversity of its community, and this resonates through all aspects of school life.

Pupils show genuine warmth and care. They behave kindly towards one another, making the school a harmonious place. Bullying is not tolerated. If it occurs, leaders respond quickly and effectively.

Reading is central to all aspects of school life. Pupils are given opportunities to read widely and often. Sixth-form students support the reading of younger pupils. Since the start of September, leaders have been working hard to restart the wide offer of enrichment clubs and trips. Pupils across all year groups have taken part in debating to enhance their reading and writing skills.

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

Leaders and staff nurture pupils' love of learning. All pupils can access the curriculum, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Where needed, pupils receive additional, targeted help with their learning. Leaders understand the importance of providing a curriculum that successfully prepares pupils for life in modern Britain.

The school teaches a broad range of subjects that reflect the national curriculum. In most subjects, leaders plan important knowledge pupils should learn, and the order in which they should learn it. For instance, in English, students used their previous learning about sound and rhythm in poetry to access demanding poetic texts independently in the sixth form. In science, for example, pupils used their knowledge of energy in particles to make predictions about how quickly particles move when heated. However, the curriculum in a small number of subjects, such as design and technology, does not pay enough attention to the knowledge that pupils require or the order in which this should be taught. This hampers pupils' achievement in a small number of subjects.

Most teachers understand what they should be teaching and when they should be teaching it. They help pupils to recall their learning at the start of each lesson. These opportunities help them to talk confidently about what they remember. In physical education, pupils used what they knew about inhaling and exhaling to understand how to lift weights. They could make connections with the work they have been learning in science. Where this is not the case in a small number of subjects, pupils' knowledge is less secure. In these subjects, pupils struggle to remember essential key knowledge with accuracy and do not always use subject-specific vocabulary correctly.

Pupils work hard in lessons and give their best, even when they struggle. Staff make sure that classrooms are places where pupils can focus on their learning. This helps pupils behave very well. Pupils' positive attitudes to school mean that they can learn without disruption.

Staff know pupils well. They plan for pupils' broader development. Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities made available to them. They lead and take part in fundraising events for local charities. Leaders makes sure that all pupils are included. Pupils appreciate the needs of others and donate to Hackney Food Bank and Hackney Clothes Bank.

The school takes part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme to support the development of pupils' confidence, resilience and commitment. Leaders include pupils with SEND in their plans and those who are disadvantaged.

After Year 11, pupils are able to choose from a wide range of A levels and vocational subjects. The majority of pupils stay on and continue their studies at the sixth form. They like the varied post-16 offer. Teachers give pupils helpful support on how to apply to university. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. They make informed choices at key transition points.

Leaders and governors support the well-being of staff and pupils. Staff appreciate leaders' actions to support them with their workload. Staff said that they enjoy working at the school and like being part of a cohesive team. Staff said that they feel valued and proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are acutely aware of the challenges in the local community and respond well to these. They have a strong commitment to addressing safeguarding issues. Leaders have developed well-established systems that help to support pupils over time. The school has clear procedures for reporting concerns. All staff know these and receive regular safeguarding training. The school carries out thorough checks when recruiting new staff.

Pupils know how to stay safe, including when online. They receive age-appropriate lessons on issues around consent and sexual harassment. Pupils know how to get help if they need it. Leaders work well with outside partners, such as the local authority.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, such as design and technology, the curriculum does not pay enough attention to the knowledge that pupils require or the order in which this should be taught. This hampers pupils' achievement. Leaders should support the professional development of subject leaders, so that all subjects are planned and delivered well in Year 7 to Year 9.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils embed key knowledge in their long-term memory. Aspects of the curriculum do not enable pupils to deepen their understanding of all subject content taught. This means that pupils do not always use subject vocabulary accurately. Leaders should build on their existing work to refine and strengthen the planning and delivery of the curriculum in Years 7 to 9. This should include making sure that pupils have embedded the essential ideas they have learned.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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	100285
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	10211181
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,090
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Justin Madubuko
Headteacher	Jane Heffernan
Website	www.cardinalpole.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 January 2017

Information about this school

- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This is the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, associate headteacher, two deputy headteachers and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with two members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. They also spoke to the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, art, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss curriculum

plans, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed pupils' work, met with pupils to discuss their learning and met with subject teachers.

- Through discussion with leaders, governors, pupils and staff, inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding. They also looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks carried out before appointing staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils in lessons and at social times to consider their views on the school. Inspectors considered the well-being and behaviour of pupils during lesson visits and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including early career teachers and support staff, about behaviour and workload in the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey and the free-text responses from five parents and carers. They also took account of the responses from 58 staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Ogugua Okolo-Angus, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Katerina Christodoulou

Ofsted Inspector

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