

Inspection of a good school: The Deanery Church of England High School and Sixth Form College

Frog Lane, Wigan, Lancashire WN1 1HQ

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 May 2022

Outcome

The Deanery Church of England High School and Sixth Form College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The Deanery school values are woven through all aspects of school life. Pupils are well cared for and valued by staff. They flourish as young people. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, treat each other with respect and kindness, regardless of ethnicity, gender or culture.

Pupils feel safe and happy. They enjoy coming to school. Pupils are confident that leaders will act to address any incidents of bullying quickly and sensitively.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils live up to these high expectations. For example, they work hard and try their best. Pupils behave well in lessons. The school is an oasis of calm, including at lunchtime.

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, learn well. They benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those pupils who are disadvantaged.

Pupils experience a rich variety of interesting and inspiring opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. For example, pupils take part in a wide range of music and sports clubs. They take pride in contributing to their local community through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award. All pupils are encouraged to take advantage of these activities.

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

Leaders and governors are passionate about giving all pupils, and students in the sixth form, the best possible start in life. Since the last inspection, leaders have made a number of improvements to the curriculum. This broad and ambitious curriculum includes more subjects than before. The number of pupils choosing to study modern foreign languages

in key stage 4 has improved. This has increased the proportion of pupils studying the full range of the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn. Leaders have made sure that teachers are clear about what curriculum content to deliver and when to deliver it. In a small number of subjects, leaders are in the process of refining their curricular thinking. These curriculums are at an earlier stage of development.

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum builds up pupils' knowledge in a logical way, across all key stages. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this expertise to select appropriate activities so that pupils can build up their learning securely. This helps pupils to apply their learning in new and more complex situations.

Teachers typically check carefully for any knowledge pupils might have missed or forgotten. They use this information to adapt teaching so that pupils can gain or recover any learning that they need. However, a small number of teachers do not check carefully enough that pupils have understood the intended curriculum. Some pupils' learning is less secure as a result.

Leaders work well with staff to make sure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly and accurately. They provide teachers and staff with valuable training to enable them to support pupils with SEND to learn well from the same ambitious curriculum as other pupils.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic means that some pupils are not able to read as fluently and accurately as they should. Leaders have provided more time and resources during the school day to help these pupils to catch up quickly.

Pupils conduct themselves well, both in lessons and during social times. Pupils and students attend school regularly and arrive on time. They show positive attitudes to learning, especially in the sixth form. Learning is rarely disrupted. These attitudes make an important contribution to their achievement.

Leaders have designed an appropriate curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. Teachers deliver this curriculum sensitively and effectively. Pupils learn about the features of healthy relationships, including topics such as consent. Leaders also provide pupils with a rich set of faith and cultural experiences to enhance their learning. Therefore, pupils develop a strong set of moral and spiritual values.

Students in the sixth form take a full part in the wider life of the school. They are well prepared for modern life. They support younger pupils well.

Pupils across the school benefit from a structured programme of independent careers education, advice and guidance. This programme supports pupils to make informed choices about the options available to them when they leave school. Consequently, pupils and students are well prepared for the next steps in education, employment or training.

Governors ask leaders appropriately challenging questions to hold them to account for their work to improve the school. Leaders and governors are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff described the school as a happy place to work. They feel valued by leaders. Staff are very proud to be part of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure a strong culture of safeguarding across the school, including in the sixth form. Pupils' welfare is at the heart of everything that staff do. Staff are vigilant for signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They report concerns in a timely manner.

Leaders know pupils and their individual circumstances well. Leaders work closely with external partners to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help that they need.

Pupils are knowledgeable about the potential dangers that they might encounter outside school. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders' work to develop the curriculum is at an early stage. This means that staff are not sufficiently clear about what knowledge pupils need to learn. Leaders must make sure that, in these curriculums, teachers have enough information about the most important learning for pupils. This will help to ensure that pupils learn all that they need to know in readiness for the next stage in their education.
- On occasion, staff do not check thoroughly enough that pupils have understood what they have learned before moving on to new learning. When this happens, pupils' knowledge is less secure. Leaders must ensure that teachers check carefully on pupils' learning and only move on to new learning when pupils' knowledge is secure.

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

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| Unique reference number | 106534 |
| Local authority | Wigan |
| Inspection number | 10226067 |
| 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 | 1,448 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 165 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Gary Speakman |
| Headteacher | Martin Wood |
| Website | www.deanery.wigan.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 and 29 September 2016 |

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school. The school's most recent section 48 monitoring inspection took place in December 2021.
- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2019.
- A small proportion of pupils attend alternative provision at four registered providers and one unregistered provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved 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 leaders and have taken

that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with governors, a representative of the Diocese of Liverpool, a school improvement partner and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors also met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, other senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and English. They visited a sample of lessons in these subjects, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, reviewed pupils' and students' work and held discussions with teachers, pupils and students.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and students about their experiences of school and their views of behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentary evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- An inspector looked at safeguarding policies and reviewed leaders' records of checks on the suitability of staff and governors. They met with the leaders who have overall responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and students about leaders' work to keep pupils and students safe.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils and students.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included some free-text responses.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| David Hampson, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jane Holmes | Ofsted Inspector |
| Dympna Woods | Ofsted Inspector |

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