

# Inspection of Notre Dame Catholic College

180 Great Homer Street, Liverpool, Merseyside L5 5AF

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Notre Dame Catholic College is a warm, welcoming school at the heart of the community. Pupils embrace the school's mission to open hearts, minds and doors to every member of the Notre Dame family.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils. In recent years, leaders have quickly improved the school. Pupils recognise that the quality of education they receive is better than in the past. However, further curriculum development is needed in some subjects in key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils and students do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils say that their school is a safe, happy place. Staff spoke positively about changes for the better being made. Morale is high. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and recognise each other's differences. If bullying does occur, staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils said that there is always someone on hand to talk to and help when needed.

Leaders place significant emphasis on pupils' personal development. For example, the 'faith in action' group helps to enhance pupils' confidence and moral development. Pupils expand their knowledge of differences in society through the schools' active diversity group. Pupils have opportunities to develop their leadership skills. They spoke positively about the growing range of extra-curricular activities available to them.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance have raised staff's and pupils' aspirations. Staff are well supported by a comprehensive programme of training, which is quickly strengthening the quality of education that pupils and students receive. Increasingly, pupils are achieving more than seen previously.

The curriculum across key stage 3 has been designed well to meet the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This includes those pupils in the specially resourced provision. In key stage 4, leaders make sure that pupils can study a broad range of subjects. For example, pupils now study more subjects than in previous years. Growing numbers of pupils study a modern foreign language.

The work to strengthen subject curriculums in key stage 4 and the sixth form is well under way. Subject curriculums are increasingly ambitious. However, in some subjects, leaders are still developing the order and depth in which knowledge is taught. In these subjects, pupils and students do not progress through the curriculum as well as they should.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they deliver. In many subjects, teachers use their expertise well to help pupils to understand important

knowledge, concepts and skills. Pupils spoke about how this was helping them to learn more of the curriculum.

Leaders have introduced effective assessment strategies across all subjects. However, not all teachers use these strategies well enough to check what pupils and students have learned. For example, some teachers do not pick up on misconceptions as they happen. Occasionally, teachers do not revisit learning when they have found gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.

Leaders have invested in effective reading resources and staff training to support those pupils at an early stage of reading. For example, pupils in Year 9 told inspectors about how they enjoy reading in form time as a group. They said that their reading has improved and is more enjoyable. As a result, more pupils read with confidence and fluency.

Leaders and teachers have the skills required to identify pupils with SEND quickly. They work closely with a range of specialists to support pupils, including those who are part of the specially resourced provision, to provide effective support.

Leaders have developed an environment that encourages positive behaviour and attitudes. Typically, lessons take place without disruptions. Pupils said that teachers apply rewards and sanctions fairly.

Pupils and students spoke positively about how the personal development curriculum enables them to understand their rights and responsibilities. They are increasingly confident to talk about their understanding of relationships, sexual harassment and consent. Students in the sixth form felt that they were prepared well to tackle many of the issues they may face in early adulthood.

Leaders have established an effective curriculum that supports pupils' and students' understanding of future careers. Students in the sixth form spoke excitedly about their next steps into university or apprenticeships. When leaving key stage 4, most pupils, including those with SEND, progress on to appropriate further education, employment or training.

Governors are knowledgeable and skilled. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They use their understanding to provide effective challenge and support for leaders.

Staff appreciate leaders' actions to support their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff are highly knowledgeable and skilled to keep pupils safe and well. All staff receive extensive training. Staff watch carefully for signs that pupils may need help and quickly refer any concerns if needed. Leaders have

developed close links with agencies who provide help and support for pupils when needed. Leaders have provided trauma and mental health support for pupils. This helps pupils to deal with some of the issues that they may face.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about the dangers of online abuse, and drugs and alcohol misuse.

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

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

- In some subjects, particularly in key stage 4 and the sixth form, leaders are not clear about the knowledge that pupils and students will learn and the order in which it should be taught. As a result, some pupils and students do not develop a deep enough body of subject knowledge. Leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking and ensure that teachers are clear about what they want pupils and students to learn.
- Leaders have put in place new systems to check how well pupils have learned the curriculum. However, at times, teachers do not use these checks as leaders intend. Consequently, some subject leaders and teachers are not clear about where pupils have missed or forgotten important knowledge. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment effectively to check that pupils and students have learned important knowledge in the curriculum securely before introducing new knowledge.

## **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>	104706
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	10216077
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<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>	966
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	116
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Collette Rowlands
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Duffy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.notredameliverpool.com">www.notredameliverpool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 January 2019

## Information about this school

- Notre Dame Catholic College is a voluntary aided, 11 to 18 Catholic school. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in November 2016.
- Leaders use two registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school hosts a local authority commissioned specially resourced provision for eight pupils aged 11 to 16 with autism spectrum disorder and/or moderate learning difficulties. At the time of the inspection, seven pupils were part of the specially resourced provision. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- 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

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the chair of the governing body, other governors, subject leaders and groups of staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector held separate telephone calls with representatives of the Archdiocese of Liverpool and the local authority. The lead inspector also spoke with a national leader of education who is currently providing support for school leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, geography, science, English and computing. In these subjects, inspectors held meetings with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' and students' work and held discussions with teachers, pupils and students.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders to discuss curriculums and visited lessons in other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the leaders responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. They also scrutinised leaders' safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff. Inspectors evaluated leaders' procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about their well-being and workload. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different year groups. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils and students.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the free-text comments.

## Inspection team

Gary Kelly, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Cocker	Ofsted Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector

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