

Inspection of Trinity Academy Cathedral

Thornes Road, Wakefield WF2 8QF

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Trinity Academy Cathedral is a school with a very special atmosphere and sense of purpose. Leaders have improved the school rapidly and created an exceptional setting in which pupils thrive. Pupils have access to a high quality, knowledge-rich curriculum, as well as the school's very popular performing arts pathway.

At the heart of the school, leaders have established comprehensive systems of pastoral care and personal development. Pupils behave exceptionally well, are mindful of each other and work very hard. If bullying occurs, pupils are confident to use the 'Call it Out' system. They told inspectors that staff deal with concerns effectively.

Pupils are enthusiastic participants in the impressive array of sporting, cultural and creative activities on offer at the school. They value the opportunities the school arranges and the support their teachers give them.

Leaders at all levels are confident and passionate about the community they serve. They have worked with their trust to bring about rapid change to the school, without losing sight of its local identity and distinctive Church of England ethos. Leaders are very proud of the achievements of their pupils and the destinations they go on to.

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

Leaders have high expectations of all their pupils. They have established a rich and ambitious curriculum, with a strong emphasis on the full range of English Baccalaureate subjects, as well as the specialist performing arts programme. Curriculum design is systematic and planning precisely identifies what pupils need to learn in each subject. Teaching focuses on pupils gaining and remembering the most important knowledge. This helps pupils to be continually ready for the next step in learning. For example, in music, pupils quickly develop a strong knowledge of the key elements of music. Pupils use this knowledge with confidence to describe music and to reflect on their rehearsal of increasingly complex pieces.

The quality of planning and the school's approach to classroom delivery support all pupils in their learning. Effective assessment plays an important part in this, with careful checks on understanding using the school's 'masters of recall' approach. Information about special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is used very well to plan support for pupils in lessons and throughout the school.

Working with the trust, leaders have established a rigorous programme of professional development based around the 'teaching and learning elements'. This programme is rooted in ongoing research and supported by bespoke resources. As a result, the curriculum is led and delivered by expert staff who are adept in the way they teach. Staff value the practical and professional support they receive from leaders. Teachers, including those starting their career, feel their workload and development are very well supported. They are very proud to work at the school.

Leaders expect the very best from pupils. They have established very high standards of pupil behaviour. These standards are backed by effective systems. As a result, behaviour around the school is impressive, with pupils showing care, courtesy and maturity. Learning is rarely interrupted by low-level disruption, and pupils sustain highly focused, industrious efforts in lessons.

Leaders have established a rigorous approach to early intervention. For example, pupils who need help to become accurate readers are identified early. They are then supported through a range of well-targeted and effective programmes. As a result, pupils are gaining the knowledge they need to enjoy the school's excellent curriculum and wider reading programme. Pupils who have accessed this support told inspectors that they value the programme, and have discovered renewed confidence in themselves.

Leaders' approach to the personal development of pupils is exemplary. Their vision for all pupils to have belief in themselves, and to develop strong character traits, is embedded in the day-to-day offer. Nothing is left to chance and all areas of personal development, including careers education, are systematically planned and tracked. Teachers ensure that education about safety in the community and online is emphasised in the school's personal, social, health and economic education programme. Leaders have ensured that the range of experiences on offer to all pupils is wide and of noteworthy quality. Pupils value these experiences and tell inspectors that they are almost spoiled for choice by the options available.

Well-established systems of challenge and support between the trust and the knowledgeable governing body have ensured rapid improvement across all areas of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a meticulous culture of vigilance across all aspects of safeguarding. Regular high-quality training, as well as effective reporting and recording systems, is thoroughly embedded. Staff are knowledgeable about signs of concern and how to report these. Diligent and highly tenacious leaders respond to concerns in a timely manner, working extensively with external agencies and families. Pupils feel safe and very well supported by adults in the school. Where pupils access off-site provision, leaders are exceptionally careful around ensuring pupil safety.

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	145579
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10227647
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1010
Appropriate authority	The Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	John Hanson
Principal	Rob Marsh
Website	cathedral.trinitymat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Trinity Academy Cathedral converted to become an academy school in 2017. When its predecessor school, known as Cathedral Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2016, it was judged to require improvement.
- The school is a Church of England Academy in the Diocese of Leeds. As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is also inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, most recently in February 2020. The timescales for reinspection have been extended in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Across years 7 to 11, approximately 120 pupils in the school are part of the CAPA Juniors programme. These pupils follow a performing arts-rich curriculum.
- The school makes use of three alternative providers, one of which is a registered school.
- Careers guidance in the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which means pupils in Years 8 to 11 receive information about the full range of education and training options available to them. This includes opportunities for a range of providers to speak to pupils about 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 of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the principal, the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and non-teaching staff.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the chief executive officer and a director of the Trinity multi-academy trust. Members of the local governing board also met with the lead inspector.
- Inspectors carried out 'deep dives' in these subjects: English, music, science, modern foreign languages and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at and listened to samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to other subject leaders, looked at additional curriculum plans, visited lessons and reviewed a range of pupils' work. They visited the reading intervention programme and discussed reading with pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including policies and records. They spoke with pupils about how they learn to keep themselves safe. The lead inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding leaders and inclusion manager, reviewing the school's safeguarding records and relevant policies, and scrutinising the single central record. A representative from the local authority was also spoken to.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally. This included pupils with SEND, pupil leadership groups and special interest groups.
- Inspectors observed breaktime and lunchtime arrangements, assemblies and rehearsals. Inspectors also visited some enrichment events that were taking place in school.
- An inspector visited the school's inclusion base centre and spoke to staff and pupils.
- An inspector spoke to the representatives of the unregistered alternative provision used by the school and scrutinised associated safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, behaviour records, and minutes from governors' meetings.
- Inspectors also considered the views of staff and pupils as well as parental responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gabrielle Reddington, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Hemming	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Wren	Her Majesty's Inspector
Malcolm Kirtley	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nick Horn	Ofsted Inspector

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