

Inspection of Christ The King Catholic High School

Lawrence Avenue, Frenchwood, Preston, Lancashire PR1 4PR

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Different pupils have very different experiences at Christ The King High School. This is because leaders' systems for managing unkind behaviour, such as bullying and name-calling, are not as effective as they should be. Some pupils said that they feel happy and safe at school. However, a number of other pupils disagree.

Pupils described the atmosphere in lessons, communal spaces and corridors as generally calm and orderly. Despite pupils' positive perceptions, leaders have not made sure that all pupils behave as well as they should. For example, on occasion, pupils experience racist, homophobic or unwanted sexual language from their peers. Some pupils said that they do not feel confident reporting this behaviour because some adults do not take these concerns seriously or do enough to tackle this disrespectful behaviour. Some pupils told inspectors that leaders do not do enough to safeguard them in school.

Pupils are at risk of harm because leaders', including governors', attitudes to safeguarding are lax. Keeping pupils safe is not perceived as everyone's business at this school.

Leaders do not have high enough expectations of what some pupils can and should achieve. For example, some pupils are precluded from studying a broad and balanced curriculum, particularly at key stage 3. These pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they should be.

Some pupils value and enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities that are on offer. The pupils who access these activities develop their talents and confidence. For example, they become school council representatives or reading buddies for younger pupils. However, many pupils do not engage in the wider enrichment opportunities available to them.

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

Over time, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is ambitious enough for all pupils at key stage 3. Some pupils are not able to access the full range of national curriculum subjects. This includes some pupils who are disadvantaged or pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Furthermore, in a small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that pupils acquire the breadth of knowledge that they need to gain a secure understanding. This means that pupils are not as well prepared for the demands of the key stage 4 curriculum as they should be.

In many subjects, leaders have started to clarify the knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each year group. However, in other subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. This, coupled with the lack of ambition in the curriculum, means that some pupils do not build a rich body of knowledge across a wide range of subjects.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. In subjects where the curriculum is well designed, teachers choose appropriate activities to help pupils to remember important knowledge over time. However, in other subjects, the tasks that teachers prepare do not support pupils to learn the intended curriculum as effectively as they should. As a result, some pupils do not recall prior learning easily. This hinders how well they learn new topics and concepts.

Leaders are in the process of revising the systems that teachers use to assess how well pupils are learning the curriculum. The approaches that staff currently use do not help some teachers to identify the gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding with sufficient accuracy. As a result, some pupils are moved on to new learning before they are ready.

Leaders have taken steps to ensure that pupils with SEND are accurately identified. Leaders make sure that teachers are furnished with useful information about the specific needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers are using this information increasingly well to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for these pupils. However, the weaknesses in the overall curriculum design affect how well some pupils with SEND learn and achieve.

Leaders have started to raise the profile of reading across the school. In key stage 3, leaders identify pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. These pupils receive appropriate support to help them to catch up with their peers. However, leaders' work to support pupils in key stage 4 who struggle with reading is not as well developed. This means that some older pupils struggle to read with confidence and accuracy. This hinders their access to the curriculum. Leaders are beginning to take effective steps to address this weakness.

For the most part, pupils are able to concentrate without disruption to their learning. However, leaders do not have an accurate understanding of the patterns and trends in pupils' behaviours and attitudes over time. As a result, leaders do not provide sufficient support to some pupils who struggle to regulate their own behaviour.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the importance of equalities, healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. However, a minority of pupils do not act upon what they have been taught. They make disrespectful comments to their peers and do not know how to discuss their views in a considered way. There is an acceptance among some pupils that this is just the way that things are. Some staff do not challenge these pupils effectively enough to mitigate this risk of potential harm.

Leaders provide pupils with access to appropriate careers information, advice and guidance. There has been an increase over time in the number of pupils who remain in education, employment or training when they leave school.

Governors and leaders have overseen a decline in the quality of education since the previous inspection. Governors have not done enough to ensure that all pupils enjoy school life free from harmful name-calling or bullying. Leaders and governors do not

share a coherent view about how best to improve the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Governors do not fulfil their statutory responsibilities to ensure that pupils are safe. Over time, they have failed to ensure that leaders carry out their safeguarding duties effectively. Governors have made assumptions that pupils are safe. They have too readily accepted what leaders have told them.

There are no formal systems in place for governors or leaders to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. This lack of accountability has led to serious and widespread failures that put pupils at considerable risk of harm.

Some leaders have not had sufficient safeguarding training. Some of the senior leaders responsible for safeguarding are also new to post. The handover arrangements with previous leaders have been ineffective. New leaders do not ensure that they have an accurate overview of ongoing cases where pupils are at risk of harm. During the inspection, inspectors had to seek assurances from the local authority designated officer that serious safeguarding allegations had been followed up.

Leaders could not provide inspectors with assurances that serious concerns about pupils had been dealt with in a timely and effective way. Leaders do not do enough to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. This includes pupils who may have been subjected to unwanted sexual behaviour.

Leaders have not maintained accurate, up-to-date records about safeguarding incidents. Records and reports, including legal checks made on adults as part of the safer recruitment processes, were incomplete and disorganised at the time of the inspection. Due to a legacy of disorderly safeguarding practices, leaders are unable to connect information to provide clear chronologies of events. As a result, leaders cannot demonstrate that they routinely respond or make appropriate referrals to outside agencies when pupils are at risk of significant harm.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Governors do not fulfil their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding. There are no clear systems or structures in place that allow governors to maintain an oversight of safeguarding arrangements at the school. This means that there is a lack of accountability and rigour that puts pupils, including vulnerable pupils, at risk of harm. Governors must ensure that they have the knowledge and expertise to fulfil their statutory duties so that they can make sure that safeguarding policies and practices keep pupils safe.

- Leaders do not have the capacity to carry out their safeguarding duties. There is a lack of clarity regarding their legal roles and responsibilities to keep pupils safe. As a result, pupils are at risk of harm. Leaders must act to ensure that those with oversight of the day-to-day safeguarding arrangements receive the training and resources that they need to fulfil their statutory responsibilities so that pupils are safeguarded.
- The curriculum is not sufficiently well designed or delivered. This is particularly the case in key stage 3, where the curriculum is narrowed for some pupils. As a result, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and some pupils with SEND, are not sufficiently well prepared for the next stages of their education. They do not learn all that they should. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently well designed and implemented across all subjects. They should ensure that all pupils can access all the subjects in the national curriculum.
- Some leaders and teachers do not use effective assessment strategies to maintain an overview of pupils' learning and development. This is particularly the case in key stage 3. This means that some teachers do not have an accurate understanding of where there are gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers are suitably equipped to check on pupils' learning and then address gaps so that pupils are ready to learn new topics and concepts.
- Some pupils reported that there are occasions when pupils show a lack of respect for each other. Some pupils experience sexual, racist and homophobic language. Pupils do not have full confidence that staff will deal with their concerns effectively. This makes pupils feel unsafe. Leaders do not have a good enough overview of pupils' behaviour. They do not routinely record incidents of poor behaviour and use this information to bring about improvement. Leaders must ensure that they implement clear systems that enable them to identify and address unacceptable behaviour so that pupils are confident that their views and concerns are taken seriously.

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.

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	119781
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226343
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ann Cowell
Headteacher	Simon Corless
Website	http://www.ctlc.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, governors have appointed a new headteacher and there have been several changes to the senior leadership team.
- This is a Catholic school. The last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in March 2022.
- The school makes use of an unregistered alternative provider for one pupil.
- 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 graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: mathematics, English, modern foreign languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school improvement partner and the Diocese of Lancaster.
- The lead inspector met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to attendance, behaviour and leaders' plans for improvement. They also considered leaders' self-evaluation documentation.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding arrangements, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, as well as with staff and pupils, to discuss wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers through their review of Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of the staff and pupil online surveys.

Inspection team

Amanda Downing, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Ben Hill	His Majesty's Inspector
Elaine Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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