

Inspection of Canon Slade School

Bradshaw Brow, Bradshaw, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 3BP

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Canon Slade School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders at Canon Slade High School have high expectations of what pupils and students in the sixth form can and should achieve. Most pupils and students enjoy their time at school and want to succeed. Overall, their behaviour in lessons reflects leaders' high standards. Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. However, over time, older pupils have not benefitted from a well-considered curriculum. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Despite mostly behaving well in lessons, some pupils conduct during social times is inappropriate. Some pupils told inspectors that use of discriminatory language is common when pupils are outside of lessons. While many pupils said that staff address inappropriate language effectively, other pupils did not agree. These pupils told inspectors that some staff do not take pupils' use of derogatory language seriously enough.

The majority of pupils feel safe in school. They value the pastoral support that staff give them. When bullying occurs, staff at the school take suitable action to address it.

Leaders are determined that all pupils should experience life in all its fullness. For example, pupils access a range of extra-curricular activities open to all, including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, sports clubs, book clubs and the annual school show. However, the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is in the early stages of development. Pupils and students are not prepared well enough for life in a diverse, modern society.

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

Leaders are in the early stages of improving the curriculum. In key stage 3, leaders have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to remember. Leaders have ordered the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop their knowledge over time. However, leaders and teachers are less clear about the essential knowledge that pupils must learn at key stages 4 and 5. As a result, some pupils, and students in the sixth form, do not build a rich body of subject knowledge across a range of subjects.

Teachers deliver the redesigned key stage 3 curriculum effectively. They choose appropriate activities and high-quality resources to support pupils to learn well. However, in key stages 4 and 5, teachers' delivery of the curriculum is hampered because they do not know precisely what to teach. Teachers do not consider how learning should be revisited and developed over time. Assessment strategies are less effective in these key stages because teachers are not clear about the knowledge that they expect pupils to remember. As a result, older pupils sometimes find it more difficult to remember and apply their prior learning.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. Teachers are well trained to support pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers. Teachers make appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of each pupil. Consequently, pupils with SEND learn as well as their peers. However, due to the weaknesses in the curriculum, pupils and students with SEND in key stages 4 and 5 are hindered in their learning in the same way as other pupils.

Leaders are beginning to develop a programme to support those pupils who find reading more difficult. They have identified pupils in key stage 3 who have gaps in their reading knowledge. Leaders have put appropriate support in place to help pupils overcome these gaps. However, leaders have not extended this programme into key stages 4 and 5. This means that older pupils and students who find reading difficult are not receiving the support that they need to catch up quickly. This hinders how well these pupils access the wider curriculum.

Leaders have introduced a system to promote pupils' positive behaviour, which is applied consistently by most staff. This means that learning is rarely disrupted. However, outside of lessons, some pupils and students described the casual use of sexist, racist and homophobic language among friends as common. Leaders have not created a culture in school where the use of this type of language is not tolerated.

Leaders are in the process of developing the curriculum to promote pupils' personal development. They have not clearly defined what they want pupils to learn in each year group. In addition, leaders have not ensured that pupils and students are taught about tolerance and diversity sufficiently well. For example, pupils do not learn why the use of derogatory language is unacceptable.

Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. They appreciate the support that staff give them when planning their next steps.

Many leaders are new to their roles. Governors and trustees are supporting leaders to make positive changes to the quality of education that pupils receive. However, it is too early to measure the impact of much of this work. Staff said that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have been trained well in their safeguarding responsibilities. They are vigilant and understand the systems in place to report concerns that they may have about a pupil's welfare. The pastoral team works closely with the safeguarding team to help keep pupils and students safe.

Leaders ensure that concerns are referred to external agencies when necessary. This means that pupils and their families receive timely and appropriate support.

However, at times, leaders do not record safeguarding concerns as comprehensively as they could. From time to time, this prevents leaders from having a secure overview of the patterns and trends of safeguarding concerns across the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when in school and in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in key stages 4 and 5 is in the early stage of development. Leaders are not clear enough about the essential knowledge that pupils must gain to build on their learning from key stage 3. This hinders the learning of older pupils. Leaders should ensure that they finalise their curriculum thinking across key stages 4 and 5, so that teachers know what pupils should know and remember over time.
- Leaders' plans to support older pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge are in the early stages of development. This means that some older pupils do not read as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that they identify the deficits in these pupils' reading knowledge and support them to catch up with their peers.
- The PSHE programme to support pupils' personal development is not fully formed. Leaders have not identified the core knowledge that they want pupils to learn about citizenship, British values, and relationships, health and sex education. For example, pupils do not learn about respecting and valuing diversity. Leaders should ensure that there is a cohesive programme in place to ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in a diverse and modern society.
- Pupils' use of sexist, racist and homophobic language in school is seen as acceptable by some of their peers. At times, teachers do not challenge this unacceptable behaviour as effectively as they could. Leaders should ensure that they engender a culture where this type of language is not tolerated.
- Leaders' records of safeguarding concerns are not as comprehensive as they could be. This means that they are less able to spot patterns related to safeguarding with ease and speed. Leaders should develop their systems for recording safeguarding concerns, so that they are able to gain a sharper overview of trends and recurring issues.

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	144044
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10242476
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1758
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	268
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Canon E Nicholls
Headteacher	Karen Sudworth
Website	www.canon-slade.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Canon Slade School converted to become an academy school in December 2017. When its predecessor school, Canon Slade CofE School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Manchester. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2017.
- The school is part of The Bishop Fraser Trust.
- Leaders use three registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- 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

Inspectors carried out this graded 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 spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and staff. An inspector spoke with members of the local governing body, the chief executive officer and trustees of the multi-academy trust.
- An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and students about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' and students' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings, minutes of trust board meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and students to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, mathematics, geography, design and technology and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and some pupils and students about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Charlotte Oles, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Amanda Downing	His Majesty's Inspector
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