

Inspection of Churchill Academy & Sixth Form

Churchill Green, Churchill, Winscombe, Avon BS25 5QN

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils respond well to rising expectations of them in the classroom. Most pupils focus on their learning well. The curriculum is effective in meeting pupils' needs. Nonetheless, pupils are not yet clear about the good conduct that is expected of them outside of the classroom. Some behave disrespectfully. Others gather in inappropriate places, where they behave poorly and are then late to lessons.

Some pupils experience bullying and name-calling. Many readily report this to staff, including their tutors. Once aware of it, staff offer their support. However, some pupils are not sure that reporting incidents will make a difference. Older pupils, including students in the sixth form, play a leading role in fostering kindness in the school community. They help to promote understanding of people with different characteristics.

There are many opportunities for pupils of different ages to work together and support one another. Some pupils take up leadership roles, for example as house captains or as members of the school council. They take confidence from this and are proud to be involved in improving the school. Everyone is encouraged to take part in extra-curricular trips and activities and many do.

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

Leaders encourage pupils to be aspirational in the way they approach their learning. They ask pupils to think hard and make the most of lessons. Teachers make their classroom expectations clear by regularly referring to their 'top five' rules. Disruption to learning is now much less frequent than it had been previously, although some pupils still describe its ongoing impact.

Leaders have not yet turned their attention to pupils' behaviour around the school site. Their expectations of how pupils will move around and use the 'campus' are not well understood. Some staff do not insist upon good conduct. Consequently, some pupils avoid the parts of the school where they know behaviour to be poor.

Leaders have updated the ways in which they gain an overview of pupils' experiences at school. However, leaders, including the trustees, do not yet ask the right questions about the information they gather. This makes it difficult for leaders to prioritise the right actions.

Many disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are regularly absent from school. Over time, this means that some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Leaders provide an interesting curriculum which helps pupils to build up their knowledge in different subjects. Pupils often come back to previous curriculum content, and this helps them to remember it. Older pupils, including those in the sixth form, discuss their learning confidently, showing detailed knowledge. Leaders'

work to review the way that teachers use assessment is paying off. They provide useful training for staff, such as to help them to check for common misconceptions.

More and more pupils are choosing to study a curriculum made up of the English Baccalaureate subjects. Leaders have strengthened the curriculum in languages. Increasingly, pupils see themselves being successful in French or Spanish and are choosing to study these subjects for longer.

Many pupils are avid readers. Others do not read widely or often. Where pupils have fallen behind with their reading, they receive literacy support. However, leaders are not sure whether pupils have gaps in their knowledge of phonics. They have not yet made arrangements to provide a phonics curriculum where needed.

Pupils with SEND usually receive the support they need to learn successfully. Staff receive useful information which helps them to meet pupils' needs. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of parents are dissatisfied with the school's provision for this group of pupils. Leaders recognise that there is some inconsistency among staff and are addressing this appropriately.

Through the school's values of kindness, curiosity and determination, leaders seek to help pupils to develop positive character traits. A strength of the school is that pupils develop independence by taking the lead on initiatives and events. Pupils learn the value of healthy relationships and this continues into the sixth form. The careers programme is well established, which supports pupils well with their next steps.

Leaders encourage staff to work together and learn from each other. They help staff to manage their workload and make decisions with their well-being in mind. Many staff and parents value the thoughtful way that leaders, supported by the trustees, engage with them and the wider local community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are clear on their role in keeping pupils safe. Leaders keep staff up to date with developing risks in the local area. Staff use the school's systems for reporting concerns confidently. Nevertheless, staff are not always vigilant for examples of poor behaviour around the school site which lead some pupils to feel uncomfortable.

Leaders provide a 'key worker' to individual pupils who are especially vulnerable. A range of specialist staff provide support to pupils, including with their mental health.

The school has reflected carefully on the issue of sexual abuse and harassment in schools. They talk openly with pupils about the impact of words and actions. Where incidents occur, leaders support and protect pupils effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- High expectations for pupils' conduct and behaviour are not reflected around the school site. A significant minority of pupils are not punctual. Some congregate in inappropriate places, where they engage in poor behaviour. Some are disrespectful in their personal interactions with each other. Leaders should ensure that expectations of pupils' conduct around the school are clear and consistently applied by staff.
- Leaders, including trustees, do not put the information that they gather on pupils' behaviour and attitudes to good use. They do not fully understand the experiences of different groups of pupils. As a result, leaders' school improvement strategies are not well focused. Leaders should ensure that their priorities are informed by an incisive analysis of the information that they hold.
- The opportunities for pupils to read widely, or to catch up where they have fallen behind, are not well developed. Consequently, some pupils do not read as often, or as well, as they should. Leaders should develop the reading curriculum, including a focus on phonics where appropriate.

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

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| Unique reference number | 137000 |
| Local authority | North Somerset |
| Inspection number | 10266482 |
| 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 | 1,636 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 335 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Anne Oakley |
| Headteacher | Chris Hildrew |
| Website | www.churchill-academy.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 14 and 15 July 2015 |

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The 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 met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, including the special educational needs coordinator, and the board of trustees. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with a school improvement partner commissioned by the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, history, modern foreign languages, mathematics, physical education and psychology. 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 samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited lessons, including sixth-form lessons, in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector considered the school's procedures for recruiting and vetting staff and met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss safeguarding systems and practices. Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils and staff about the wider culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors observed and spoke with pupils in lessons, in small discussion groups and during social times in order to evaluate the standard of behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also took into account the responses to the surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Lydia Pride, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Helen Coulson | Ofsted Inspector |
| John Weeds | Ofsted Inspector |
| Richard Barnes | Ofsted Inspector |
| Matthew Collins | Ofsted Inspector |

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