

Inspection of an outstanding school: Bonus Pastor Catholic College

Winlton Road, Downham, Bromley, Kent BR1 5PZ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2023

Outcome

Bonus Pastor Catholic College continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's values of respect, responsibility and ambition are reflected in everything the school does. These values describe the day-to-day experience of every pupil perfectly. Pupils recognise this and said that the school is a community in which they are kept safe.

Supporting pupils and nurturing their interests are central to the school's strong ethos. Promoting pupils' well-being is inextricably linked to enabling pupils to achieve their best academically. This means that pupils' academic standards and the school's work to encourage personal accomplishments are equally strong, and that each contributes to the other.

One result of this approach is that pupils behave very well. Lessons are rarely interrupted by silly behaviour, allowing pupils to concentrate on their work. Bullying is rare and although pupils said it does sometimes happen, they were clear that staff resolve concerns quickly. Pupils feel safe, and are safe, because staff are well trained to ensure pupils' welfare and safety.

As well as a strong academic curriculum, pupils have lots of opportunities to become involved in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Many do so. These range from clubs and societies to award programmes, sports and positions of responsibility. The 'Bonus Pastor Charter' exemplifies the school's commitment to getting pupils involved in activities outside the classroom.

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

Everything the school does is about helping to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their background or starting points, achieve the best they can. Across all subjects, the curriculum is highly ambitious, including the character and personal learning (CPL) lessons. A great deal of thought has gone into setting out what pupils will learn at each stage of their time at the school. Subject planning goes beyond what is expected nationally and provides pupils with a broad range of knowledge and skills. For example, in

each subject, teachers have identified the 'big ideas' they want pupils to have learned by the time they leave the school. Emphasis is given to reading and to ensuring that no pupil falls behind. Pupils become self-assured readers as a result.

Underpinning these big ideas, subject knowledge and skills are broken down into manageable chunks of learning. A great deal of weight is placed on helping pupils to remember what they have learned previously. For example, lessons often start with a recap of previously taught learning. Teachers check that pupils have a firm grasp of the basics before moving on to the next step. This logical sequencing of learning helps to ensure that pupils make links between different bits of information, allowing them to build on what they already know and take their knowledge and skills to the next level.

The CPL curriculum ensures that pupils are prepared effectively for the next stage of their lives. Relationships and sex education is an important part of this programme. So, too, are citizenship and careers, ensuring that pupils learn about life in the modern world. These programmes help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well.

The strong curriculum is extended most effectively by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The breadth of after-school clubs and activities is eclectic. It ranges from, for example, a history society, science, art scholarship, geography, Young Enterprise, choir and music, to all kinds of sports, such as netball, football, rugby and handball. In addition, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, a link with a local independent school and trips to museums, local places of interest and overseas provide further opportunities to extend learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the same high-quality education as their peers. Teachers know their pupils' needs well and provide targeted support to help them catch up or to understand new topics. The work of teaching assistants is well managed so that pupils get individual support when needed.

The school is expertly led and managed. High expectations are the norm, for pupils' academic achievements and personal development and for maintaining high levels of attendance. This is recognised by parents, who greatly appreciate the school's endeavour. The governing body contributes strongly to the school's work, checking carefully that pupils continue to be well served.

Staff's well-being is a priority, and taken seriously by the leadership team. The school takes a number of effective measures to support staff's workload. For example, leaders have adopted revised approaches to marking and assessment to make sure that these are manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2017.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100752
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10289787
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	921
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pat Barber
Principal	Jonathan Ronan
Website	http://www.bonuspastor.co.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	12, 14 and 15 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic voluntary-aided secondary school. The last section 48 inspection took place in May 2018.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school is currently working to convert to an academy.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Abbey Manor College.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, geography, physical education and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum and visited some other subjects.
- Meetings were held with the principal, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors also met with the chair of the governing body and governors. They spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Iles-Smith

His Majesty's Inspector

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