

Inspection of Christ The King Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre

Stamford Road, Southport, Merseyside PR8 4EX

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel happy, safe and valued at this welcoming school. They enjoy a calm and respectful environment that helps them to study and learn. Pupils and staff are immensely proud of the improvements made to the school in recent years.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a broad and varied curriculum. They enjoy their lessons and work hard. The school has raised its expectations for all pupils' achievements. Typically, pupils learn well. However, some students in the sixth form do not achieve as well as they should in some subjects.

The school has established a consistent and well-understood approach to supporting pupils' positive behaviour. In lessons, pupils typically embody the school's ethos to 'be the best version of themselves' through positive attitudes towards their learning and their behaviour.

Pupils appreciate the vast array of extra-curricular activities on offer to them. They relish experiences that help them to nurture their wider talents and develop their leadership skills. Pupils know that their opinions matter. They said that they feel listened to by staff.

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

The proportion of pupils being entered for the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is below national averages. Nonetheless, the school has ensured that pupils study a broad range of subjects that meet their interests and prepare them for the next stages in education, training and future careers.

Although some pupils who left Year 11 in 2023 did not achieve outcomes in line with their peers nationally, these examination results do not reflect the progress of current pupils through the curriculum.

Across key stages 3 and 4, the school has identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn in each subject. Curriculum content and vocabulary are logically ordered to build on what pupils have learned before.

Teachers select appropriate activities to deliver the curriculum as intended. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about how lesson activities, such as quizzes and teacher-modelled examples, help them to remember what they have already been taught. However, in some subjects, assessment strategies to check how well pupils are learning are underdeveloped. This means that teachers are unsure of pupils' misunderstandings, and gaps in pupils' knowledge go unaddressed.

Across key stage 5, the school has not thought carefully enough about the content and organisation of subject curriculums. Nor has it ensured that assessment

processes check that students are learning subject curriculums in sufficient depth. As a result, some students do not achieve as well as they should.

The school ensures that pupils are confident readers. Reading sessions in form time encourage pupils to read for interest and for pleasure. Pupils who struggle to read are quickly identified. Staff provide these pupils with a range of targeted support that helps them to catch up swiftly with their peers.

The school promptly identifies pupils with SEND. Teachers use pupils' information effectively to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to enable these pupils to access the curriculum successfully. Pupils with SEND, and those who are disadvantaged, are included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils readily meet the school's high expectations of their behaviour. Typically, classrooms are calm and harmonious. Students in the sixth form support each other well in lessons and enjoy their studies. They act as excellent role models for the rest of the school.

Pupils' attendance is not high enough. Too often, the persistently low attendance levels of some pupils mean that they miss out on essential learning. While actions have been taken to support these pupils and their families, the school recognises that it needs to continue this work so that pupils attend school regularly and on time and benefit fully from their education.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. There is a strong focus on giving pupils rich experiences beyond academic learning. Pupils receive regular lessons and assemblies that address themes such as healthy relationships, drug misuse, consent and misogyny. This continues into the sixth form. Pupils enjoy attending a range of clubs, including for anime, robotics and a plethora of sports activities.

Pupils benefit from an effective careers programme. They are well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment. Sixth-form students particularly appreciate this guidance, with many aspiring to study a variety of degrees at university.

Governors know the school extremely well. They support and challenge leaders during meetings and when visiting the school. At all levels, leaders actively look for areas that they can further improve. This ensures that there is a clear, consistent focus on strengthening the school's quality of education for all pupils.

Staff are proud members of the school community. They work hard and feel valued. The school engages with staff well to reduce their workload while encouraging them to contribute new ideas to make the school a better place for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers are not clear about the gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that misconceptions go unchecked and are not addressed. The school should ensure that assessment supports teachers to swiftly identify and address any misunderstandings and gaps in pupils' learning.
- In the sixth form, the school has not identified all the essential information that students must learn across a number of subject curriculums. Nor has it ensured that its assessment processes check that students are learning subject curriculums to sufficient depth. As a result, some students do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that all curriculums are complete and logically ordered, and that these set out the most important things that students need to know and remember. This is to ensure that all students are even better prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Some pupils' attendance is not high enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. Levels of persistent absence are too high. This means that some pupils miss essential learning. The school should ensure that these pupils attend school regularly and on time.

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	104964
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10291125
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
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	831
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	119
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Isobel MacDonald-Davies
Headteacher	Erin Wheeler
Website	www.christtheking-school.com
Dates of previous inspection	4 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Catholic school is part of the Archdiocese of Liverpool. Its most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character took place in November 2018. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place before the end of 2025.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers and one unregistered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors spoke with representatives of the archdiocese and of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' 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 and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, mathematics, science, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.

Inspection team

Kate Bowker, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Hammersley	Ofsted Inspector
Sheldon Logue	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2024