

# Inspection of Covenant Christian School

48 Heaton Moor Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 4NX

---

Inspection dates: 23 to 25 January 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
------------------------------	-------------

---

The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	<b>Good</b>
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
--	------

Does the school meet the independent school standards?	<b>Yes</b>
--	------------

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Covenant Christian School is a happy place, where pupils enjoy socialising with their friends and discovering new learning. Pupils are proud of their school and welcoming to visitors. Pupils develop strong and caring bonds with each other and with the staff. Pupils feel safe at school. They are confident to report any concerns that they may have to staff. Pupils know that their concerns will be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

Leaders, staff, parents and carers share the school's values and its high aspirations for pupils. Pupils respond exceptionally well to these expectations. They achieve well across the curriculum.

The school encourages pupils to be well-behaved and responsible citizens. Pupils are respectful and diligent. They strive for excellence. Pupils work and play together well. This creates a peaceful and purposeful school environment.

Pupils care deeply about others. Recently, they sold candles, greetings cards and cakes at a local makers' market. Pupils donated the profit that they made to different worthy causes. Pupils enjoy visiting a local care home, where they sing and play board games with the elderly residents.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of educational trips, such as visits to castles and museums. Older pupils recently went to Manchester to see a production of Romeo and Juliet. Pupils visited Chester, where they learned about the Romans, and a stately home, to find out about life as Tudor lords and ladies.

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

The school has created a carefully structured Bible-based specialist curriculum that matches the ambitions of the national curriculum. The curriculum is broad and wide-ranging. The school has identified the knowledge and skills that it wants pupils to learn in each subject from Reception Year to Year 11.

Most staff are volunteers and parents. The school ensures that these staff get the training that they need to deliver the curriculum well. Typically, checks are in place to help staff establish how well pupils are learning the curriculum. However, recently the school has revised the curriculum in a few subjects. In these subjects, the school has not finalised the checks for staff to carry out on pupils' learning. This means that staff do not identify and address gaps and misconceptions that some pupils have in their learning. Nevertheless, most pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

The school prioritises reading. It ensures that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Staff are determined to help pupils to become confident, knowledgeable, and fluent readers. Pupils like to read science fiction books, historical novels, adventure stories and Shakespeare's plays and poems. Pupils read aloud confidently

and with powerful expression, much to the joy of their peers. Pupils in key stage 4, are especially well-prepared for their English language and literature GCSEs.

Pupils respond well to the school's early reading and phonics programme. This is taught effectively by skilled staff. Typically, pupils enjoy sounding out new letters and words. Those pupils who are struggling readers get the additional help that they need to catch up with their peers. These pupils develop their reading knowledge and skills quickly so that they can access the wider curriculum.

Staff identify the additional needs of any pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) early. The school works well with parents and a wide range of specialist staff to make certain that these pupils get the support that they need promptly. The specialist staff ensure that staff know how to adapt the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This helps these pupils to access all areas of learning and to achieve well.

Pupils are eager to participate in lessons. They are keen to share their ideas with their peers. Disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils are resilient and hard working. This was evident during the inspection when pupils practised the many songs that they had learned, some in Korean, in preparation for a major singing event in Manchester. Older pupils enjoy nurturing and looking out for their younger peers.

The school provides for pupils' personal development well. Pupils hone their musical talents by playing different brass and woodwind instruments, such as the cornet and flute. They engage in different sports, including gymnastics, netball, swimming and football. Some pupils play basketball for local and national teams. Pupils appreciate the fundamental British values, including those of democracy and the rule of law. They learn about different cultures and religions. Pupils have visited different places of worship, including a mosque and a synagogue. Pupils know how to eat healthily. They also understand the importance of regular exercise. Pupils recognise how to maintain their mental health. They also learn about safe and appropriate personal relationships. This prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

The school's careers education provision is in development. The school does not offer a complete programme of careers information, advice and guidance. As a result, some pupils in the senior school are not as well informed about their future careers and training opportunities as they should be.

All parents are members of the parents' association. The school encourages parents to be actively involved in school life. For example, parents regularly come into the school to find out how well their children are learning. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about their children's safety, personal development and academic achievement.

The proprietor and trustees know the school well. They are mindful of the staff's well-being and workload. Staff are fully involved in decisions about the curriculum and pupils' welfare. Leaders make sure that staff get the training, support, and resources that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. The school, including

senior leaders, the proprietor and trustees, have a strong appreciation of the independent school standards ('the standards'), which they ensure are consistently and securely met. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders ensure that key information is made available on the school's website, including the school's safeguarding policy; curriculum information; and the behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)**

- In some subjects, curriculum plans have recently been revised. In these subjects, checks to identify how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum are evolving. This means that staff's understanding of how well pupils are acquiring knowledge and skills is not as secure as it should be. The school should take action to refine and fully implement the use of assessment in these curriculum subjects.
- The school's programme of careers, information, advice and guidance is in development. As a result, some pupils in the senior school do not have a secure understanding of the education, employment and training opportunities available to them. The school should enhance this aspect of pupils' personal development and ensure that pupils are aware of, and can make informed choices about, their post-16 training and learning options.

## **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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106158
<b>DfE registration number</b>	356/6021
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	10298730
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	38
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	None
<b>Proprietor</b>	Roger Slack
<b>Headteacher</b>	Abigail Limbach
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	Voluntary contributions
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 432 3782
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.covenant-christian-school.co.uk">www.covenant-christian-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@covenant-christian-school.co.uk">info@covenant-christian-school.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 to 12 December 2019

## Information about this school

- The previous standard inspection took place between 10 and 12 December 2019.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2023. The head of the secondary school was appointed this term.
- Covenant Christian School is located at 48 Heaton Moor Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 4NX.
- This is a Christian faith school.
- The school is registered for up to 70 pupils.
- The school subscribes to the Christian Schools' Trust which provides advice and training to leaders and staff.
- The Christian Education Trust provides external governance to the proprietor, school leaders and managers.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the head of the senior school. They also held meetings with other staff, including those responsible for attendance and pupils' behaviour, welfare and personal development and pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the standards and the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with trustees from the Christian Education Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: English and early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss their workload and well-being.
- The lead inspector met with parents and reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- 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.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises with the headteacher.

### **Inspection team**

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sanjay Patel

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024