

Inspection of Christ Church, Church of England Secondary Academy

6 Dale View Road, Birmingham, West Midlands B14 4HN

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Joy Langley. This school is part of Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Christopher Mansell, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Smith.

What is it like to attend this school?

Despite a period of turbulence when it first opened, this school has been on an exciting journey in recent times. Newly appointed leaders have worked hard to create a warm and welcoming school. They have made significant improvements. Pupils say they have 'revolutionised the school and want the best for us.' The school has high expectations for its pupils. However, these high expectations are yet to be fully realised.

Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around school. Most relationships between them reflect the school's values of courage and compassion. Pupils say behaviour is improving and bullying is dealt with effectively. They value the support and guidance the school provides. Pupils are safe and feel safe. They have trusted adults in school, who they can talk to if ever they have any concerns.

The school promotes equality and diversity well. Pupils say they enjoy the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme. Pupils are able to articulate well the protected characteristics and what it means to be in a diverse school. In terms of their wider development, pupils relish choosing from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme and pupil leadership roles. They also have access to high-quality support for their future career.

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

The key stage 3 curriculum is broad and ambitious. The school has ensured that it is accessible to all pupils. In the majority of subjects, the curriculum is thoughtfully planned and sequenced to help pupils build their knowledge and understanding effectively over time. However, in a small number of subjects, this is not the case.

The school has appointed subject specialists to teach the curriculum. In lessons generally, teachers explain new knowledge and concepts well. They check pupils' understanding regularly and provide a range of activities to help pupils learn. The majority of pupils engage well in lessons and value their education. However, the quality of pupils' work is inconsistent. Pupils sometimes struggle to remember the learning from the work they do because it is disorganised or inaccurate.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has been strengthened with new staff appointments and training. Teachers are now providing better support in lessons to help these pupils with their learning.

Recognising that reading is a priority here, the school has implemented a comprehensive reading strategy. All pupils get the opportunity to read in form time.

When pupils struggle with reading, staff provide effective additional help. Consequently, pupils are making significant improvements in reading.

The school provides support to enable pupils to manage their emotions and behaviour. Suspensions are reducing. However, the school acknowledges there is still more work to do to improve the behaviour of a minority of pupils. Attendance is improving too but is not yet good enough. The school has implemented the right strategies to improve attendance. However, these strategies need more time to embed.

Pupils follow a well-structured PHSE programme. It is taught by a team of specialist teachers. There is also a comprehensive careers programme in place. For example, Year 9 pupils have one-to-one interviews with an external careers adviser in preparation for choosing their GCSE option subjects.

In the past, the school has not been successful in engaging with parents. Some have expressed concerns that expectations of pupils' behaviour, welfare and achievement are not as high as they should be. The school has prioritised these areas. For example, the school has established specialist pastoral teams for each year group. These teams support pupils' welfare. Parents have also expressed concerns about the quality of communication from school. The school is addressing this problem in various ways, including setting up a parents' forum.

The trustees and governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Along with trust leaders, they have rightly focused on providing the school with appropriate support and resources. Although their efforts have contributed to rapid improvements, they are fully aware that further developments are necessary to continue to improve the school. Most staff appreciate and value the support that the school provides them. They recognise their well-being and workload are considerations when improvements are made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, there is not a well-sequenced curriculum in place. This means that pupils are not able to learn and remember as much in these subjects as they need to. For these subjects, leaders should ensure that the curriculum, and its implementation, is improved so that pupils achieve as well as they are able to.

- Some teachers do not have consistently high expectations of the quality of pupils' work. This means that often work in books is inaccurate or disorganised. This limits the extent to which pupils learn and retain important knowledge. The school should ensure that there are consistently high expectations of pupils so that their work helps them to learn more and remember more.
- While behaviour is improving, the implementation of the behaviour policy is inconsistent. This causes pupils to become confused or feel that systems are unfair. The school should refine the behaviour policy and make its implementation consistent so that pupils and staff understand it fully.

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	148589
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10294727
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	578
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Smith
Headteacher	Joy Langley
Website	www.christchurchsecondary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's religious character is Church of England.
- As the school is designated as having religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. It is yet to be inspected under section 48.
- The current headteacher has been in post since June 2023.
- The school opened in September 2021 as the only secondary school in the Birmingham Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8-13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses 10 alternative providers. All are registered providers.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, 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 a sample of lessons in other subjects on the second day of inspection.
- The lead inspector met with trustees and members of the local academy board and the executive governing board.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the diocese.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and other trust staff.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors met with the leader in charge of the personal, social, health and economic curriculum and pupils' personal development.
- An inspector met with the leader responsible for the pupil premium strategy.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. She also took into consideration the responses to the surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Nicola Walters, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Graeme Rudland

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