

Inspection of a good school: Bishop Challoner Catholic Secondary School

St Michael's Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 6SR

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being at this inclusive school, which has very high standards and expectations. Pupils are greeted with warmth and care. Relationships between pupils and teachers are exceptional. The aspirational curriculum includes a wide range of subjects that meet the interests of all, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils achieve well and the high standard of careers provision ensures they make informed decisions about their future.

The school celebrates the contributions and potential of all pupils. Pupils are encouraged to do 'ordinary things extraordinarily well'. Pupils overwhelmingly appreciate the 'life lessons' that prepare them to be responsible and successful citizens. This is seen in their exemplary behaviour. Pupils feel safe and know that they can talk to staff, who will listen and support them.

Pupils value the extra-curricular clubs, which are well-attended. Pupils can talk about how much they have learned from these experiences. The school ensures that those who might not be able to attend are able to do so. Parents are very positive about the school. One parent said this is 'a fantastic school, with supportive and caring staff who value my child's education and spiritual growth'.

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

The curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that all pupils are inspired to succeed. Academic and vocational qualifications are available to meet the needs and interests of all. Staff plan thoroughly and teach enthusiastically. Pupils are encouraged to develop greater understanding, and their enjoyment for learning is evident. Teachers use relevant examples that pupils can identify with, which helps them to know and remember more.

Teachers keep a close eye on how well pupils understand and remember their learning. They skilfully adapt activities to help pupils secure new learning or strengthen previous knowledge. Pupils demonstrate exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning and ask complex questions. They make the most of every lesson and respond with enthusiasm to tasks. Pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged are very well supported. Teachers know their pupils well and make sure that any pupil who needs extra help receives it. For example, some pupils with SEND have extra sessions where staff pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts and create opportunities for pupils to revise their learning. Most pupils achieve very well, but a small number of pupils who do not attend regularly enough do not do as well as they could.

Reading has a high priority across the curriculum. Pupils are given dedicated reading time and take part in inter-tutor reading competitions. Pupils who struggle with reading are identified in Year 7 and are given extra help to improve their confidence and fluency.

Assemblies are thought provoking. They look at current issues and celebrate ceremonies from other religions. The 'life lessons' incorporate relationships, health and sex education, financial management and ways to look after yourself and prepare for exams. Pupils are well prepared for adult life. Pupils appreciate the extra support that teachers provide after school and in the Saturday classes. There is a very comprehensive programme of careers information and guidance that includes visits from other providers, one-to-one careers sessions, and mock interviews.

Pupils learn in a rich and diverse community where there are many opportunities to help nurture their character and develop a vocation in life. The wide-ranging extra-curricular activities include many sports, drama and music groups and rosary and food clubs. Through these opportunities, pupils develop their interests, meet challenges, and take on leadership roles.

Leaders are ambitious for the school community and have the confidence of parents. The staff enjoy working at the school and are appreciative of the care and consideration they receive. Leaders consider the workload of staff, consult, and adjust events when necessary. Staff appreciate the opportunities for their own professional development and learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 good in May 2018.

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	116478
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287906
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	884
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kieran Sidley
Headteacher	John Paul Wright
Website	www.bcs.hants.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-aided Catholic school, within the Diocese of Portsmouth.
- The most recent section 48 inspection took place in Nov 2019.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 met with the headteacher and other senior leaders throughout the inspection.

- The lead inspector met representatives from the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, history, food technology, and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited tutor time and attended an assembly.
- 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 talked to groups of pupils, both formally and informally, at break and lunchtimes.
- Staff views were sought through discussions and the staff survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Julie Summerfield, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul James

Ofsted Inspector

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