

Inspection of Saint Paul's Catholic High School

Firbank Road, Newall Green, Manchester M23 2YS

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Saint Paul's is a welcoming and supportive community. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident that staff will help them if they have any concerns or worries. When a few pupils fall short of staff's high expectations, such as the need to attend school regularly, they receive help to improve.

Pupils behave well in lessons. They take pride in their work. Sometimes, issues occur between pupils at social times. Leaders deal effectively with the occasional issues that happen during social times. Most pupils feel that bullying is dealt with well.

Pupils enjoy various leadership experiences in school. Some pupils are elected to the school council and apply to be part of the diversity council. Here, pupils have a say on school issues and take ownership of school developments. Pupils benefit from a range of visits and experiences that help them to become active citizens. For example, pupils visited the Yorkshire Sculpture Park to gain an appreciation for their own art studies.

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

Leaders, including governors, are ambitious for pupils. Working closely with staff, they have improved the quality of education that pupils receive. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is designed and delivered well. Subject leaders have considered the learning that pupils may have missed out on because of the COVID-19 pandemic and have adapted the curriculum accordingly. This is helping pupils to catch up on any missed or forgotten learning.

Leaders have reviewed and improved subject curriculums at key stage 3. Leaders have made sure that, in most subjects, teachers are clear about the key knowledge that pupils will learn. Pupils learn this knowledge in a logical order. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to revisit their learning. This helps them to build on previous knowledge and remember the curriculum over time. However, in a very small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers deliver the subject content as well as they should. This can hamper the learning of some pupils.

Leaders prioritise improving pupils' reading knowledge. Staff use highly effective strategies to support pupils' reading development. For example, skilled mentors help pupils to develop their reading skills. Leaders check pupils' reading knowledge often. Any pupils who have fallen behind receive effective support from well-trained staff. This ensures that most pupils become fluent and confident readers.

Leaders ensure that the school is calm and orderly. Most pupils behave well at social times and in lessons. This means that poor behaviour does not disrupt lessons.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND accurately and in a timely way. They provide these pupils, and those who are part of the specially resourced provision for SEND (specially resourced provision), with effective support. Mostly, staff ensure that pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. However, at times, some staff do not provide pupils with the best possible support to meet their individual needs. Consequently, this slows the progress that these pupils make.

Leaders provide pupils with a comprehensive personal development curriculum. This includes a carefully considered careers education programme. Pupils, including those who are part of the specially resourced provision, are well prepared to take the next steps beyond school.

Leaders ensure that pupils can attend a range of extra-curricular activities. However, a number of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not engage in these activities. This limits their wider development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are alert to the risks that pupils may face and ensure that training for staff covers a wide range of important safeguarding concerns. This includes sexual harassment, gang-related crime, online safety and county lines drug issues.

Leaders liaise effectively with a range of external agencies to make sure vulnerable pupils get the help that they need. Staff know how to report concerns quickly.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about staying safe. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe when they are playing or working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A significant minority of pupils do not make use of the additional opportunities to promote their personal development. This limits their wider development. Leaders should increase the breadth of enrichment activities so that more pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make the most of what is on offer.
- Teachers do not deliver the curriculum sufficiently well in a small number of subjects. This prevents pupils from gaining the intended subject knowledge. Leaders should ensure that they support teachers to deliver the curriculum as intended so that pupils know and remember more.
- Some staff do not use the information that they have about pupils with SEND to meet pupils' individual needs as well as they should. Leaders should improve

teachers' knowledge of SEND so that these staff can better support this group of pupils across the curriculum.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139456
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10216076
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	911
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nicholas Johnson
Headteacher	Alex Hren
Website	www.st-paulshigh.net
Date of previous inspection	30 March 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a Catholic ethos. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2016.
- Leaders make use of two registered alternative provisions for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school is a member of the Wythenshawe Catholic Academy Trust.
- The school hosts local authority funded specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. At the time of the inspection, there were 12 pupils on roll. All these pupils have an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the deputy headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, curriculum leaders, the local authority, the Diocese of Shrewsbury, trust representatives and a group of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: science, mathematics, English, history 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 some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in the school. An inspector held telephone calls with representatives of two alternative provisions.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's information on behaviour, bullying and attendance. Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records and spoke with governors, leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Dawn Platt, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jean Tarry	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Long	Ofsted Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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