

All Saints Catholic High School

Roughwood Drive, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside L33 8XF

Inspection dates

17–18 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although outcomes for pupils improved in 2017, too many pupils do not make enough progress in too many subjects.
- Rates of progress made by most-able pupils are improving. However, the most able pupils still make less progress than other pupils at the school.
- Leaders are not using assessment information effectively at key stage 3 to further accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Despite improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, there is still variation across classrooms.
- Some teachers do not provide opportunities for the most able pupils to apply their knowledge and stretch their thinking.
- Some teachers do not use accurate assessment information to plan learning. As a result, some pupils, particularly boys, lose interest in their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has transformed the culture and the ethos of the school, with the support of the chair of governors.
- Standards at the school continue to improve. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and they understand the importance of a good education.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of what still needs to be done. Their plans to improve the school further are sharp and precise.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the curriculum. Leaders' changes to the curriculum are having a positive effect on pupil outcomes.
- Leaders have created a haven where pupils feel safe. The school is a calm and serene environment where pupils are able to learn.
- Middle leaders continue to secure developments in their areas. Subject leaders are developing the quality of teaching effectively. Pastoral leaders ensure that pupils' welfare is at the heart of everything the school does.
- The relationships between pupils and staff are respectful and supportive.
- Students in the sixth form benefit from well-designed study programmes. Effective teaching in the sixth form allows students to make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils across the school, particularly for the most able pupils and boys.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across subjects and year groups by:
 - ensuring that leaders evaluate key stage 3 assessment information effectively to accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that teachers use accurate assessment information to plan learning that allows pupils to make good progress from their starting points and takes into account gaps in pupils' knowledge
 - ensuring that teachers provide the most able pupils with opportunities to apply their knowledge and stretch their thinking.
 - sharing the good practice already evident, in order to minimise the variation in the quality of teaching across the school

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is the catalyst for the change in the school's ethos. He has a strong sense of moral purpose and he is passionate and committed to improving the life chances of young people in the local area. His approach to securing improvement continues to inspire staff and pupils alike. He has led by example to create a culture of high aspirations where pupils, parents and carers understand the importance of a good education.
- Standards at the school are on an upward trajectory. The headteacher has transformed the atmosphere in the school. There have been considerable improvements in the behaviour and the attendance of pupils. The overwhelming majority of pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils explained to inspectors how the behaviour of others seldom disrupts their learning.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They view their school as a sanctuary where they are free to learn. Ongoing improvements in standards mean that increasing numbers of pupils are seeking a place at the school in Year 7. Nonetheless, leaders and governors acknowledge that there is still work to do in order to improve pupils' performance at key stage 4.
- Leaders and governors are acutely aware about what aspects they still need to address. Senior leaders are confident in their ability to improve the school further. This is because of the improvements they have already secured. Their plans to improve the school are sharp, detailed and accurate. There are clear lines of accountability alongside measurable targets to ensure that the improvements already seen are sustained. For example, rates of pupil attendance continue to improve towards the national average.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching across subject areas. This is securing ongoing advancements as well as securing higher levels of consistency. Leaders' observations of learning inform effective training for staff. Staff are able to benefit from bespoke support that matches their needs. Staff value the training that they receive. They feel well supported by leaders and, as a result, they are highly motivated to ensure standards remain on an ascending path.
- The senior leadership team have recently introduced a new system to assess the progress that pupils are making at key stage 3. This provides leaders with an accurate understanding of the progress that pupils are making. However, leaders are not yet using this information effectively to accelerate the pace at which teaching and learning is improving. As a result, differences in the rates of progress made by groups of pupils remain. This is a particular concern for boys and the most able pupils.
- Leaders at all levels are developing the confidence to progress in their careers. The quality of middle leadership continues to develop. The use of effective strategies by a number of new middle leaders is securing ongoing improvements in pupils' outcomes. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics. Middle leaders are committed, passionate and enthusiastic about driving forward improvements in the quality of teaching. They share the headteacher's desire to improve the life chances of young people in the local area.

- Leaders have a clear rationale for the curriculum. They have evaluated the impact of the curriculum on pupil outcomes and they have made the changes necessary. They are committed to ensuring that pupils have the skills they need to progress to the next stage of their education. Pupils value the advice and guidance they receive on careers as part of the curriculum. The proportion of pupils moving onto further education or employment has improved considerably since 2016. It is now above the national average.
- Senior leaders' effective use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has already secured improvements in the standards that pupils achieve at key stage 4 and in pupils' attendance and behaviour. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils in 2017, albeit from a lower base line, increased at a faster pace than other groups of pupils at the school. The differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing. This is particularly the case at key stage 3.
- Leaders' ongoing commitment to improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills ensures their spending of the Year 7 catch-up funding is effective. As a result, the pupils who benefit from this entitlement are making faster progress in English and mathematics.
- Although leaders have put in place a number of strategies to improve pupils' literacy, they recognise that there are a high proportion of pupils, particularly at key stage 4, who have large gaps in their knowledge due to weak teaching in the past. The recently appointed head of English is forensic in her approach to ensuring that pupils are able to overcome these barriers. As a result, school assessment information and work in pupils' books show that pupils' rates of progress in English are improving.
- There is a range of strategies in place to support pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The strong Catholic ethos of the school means that pupils feel well cared for by staff. There are visits to develop pupils spiritually and culturally. For example, Year 7 pupils have recently visited a synagogue. As part of the performing arts curriculum, pupils sang with an orchestra and pupils who study dance watched a contemporary dance company perform set examination pieces. Pupils value the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer such as boccia, football, athletics, dance and drama.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are able to benefit from a range of opportunities in order to raise pupils' hopes and aspirations for the future. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. For example, increasing numbers of pupils value the opportunities they receive through the 'scholars programme'. Leaders provide pupils with relevant work experience opportunities. For example, some pupils in Year 11 recently enjoyed a career placement working alongside the Metro Mayor. Through a recent visit to a hospital, Year 10 pupils learned about the career opportunities available to them in the National Health Service. Leaders continue to show pupils how achieving well at school can provide them with better employment opportunities.

Governance of the school

- The chair of governors shares the passion and commitment of the headteacher in ensuring that pupils aim high and achieve well. Governors and leaders have worked together to transform the culture and the ethos of the school community.
- Governors are proud of the rate at which the headteacher, alongside senior leaders,

has secured improvements in the standards at the school. To ensure that this rate of development is sustained, the governing body have worked closely with the local authority and the archdiocese. This allows leaders to benefit from external advice and support from school improvement advisers.

- Governors have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are in no doubt that pupil outcomes are still not good enough. The governing body understand what aspects of the school require improvement. They ask challenging questions of leaders to ensure that these improvements are realised.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The systems to check that adults in the school are safe to work with children are robust. Staff receive frequent safeguarding training. For example, staff have recently received training updates on cyber bullying and radicalisation. This ensures that staff can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Leaders' records of work with external agencies are well organised. They have developed strong links with parents and carers as well as a number of organisations, in order for pupils to get the help and support that they need. The work of all staff to keep pupils safe from harm is exemplary, particularly the pastoral team.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers' high expectations of pupils' attitudes and their conduct during learning continue to secure improvements in the progress that pupils make across the school. Pupils follow teachers' instructions. Low-level disruption during learning is rare. As a result, teachers focus on pupils' learning.
- Strong supportive relationships between teachers and pupils mean that pupils are confident to ask teachers for help. Pupils value the help and support they receive from staff. This is having a positive effect on rates of pupil progress across the curriculum.
- Improvements in how effectively teachers use assessment information is allowing them to identify gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, pupils receive the support that they need to help them to catch up with their peers. This is particularly the case in mathematics. This is having a positive effect on pupils' progress at key stage 4 where teachers work to remedy the effects of a legacy of weak teaching. Despite considerable improvements, there is still variation in how well teachers use assessment information to plan learning across subjects.
- A whole-school focus on developing the quality of questioning is securing improvements in this area. When teaching is most effective, teachers use their secure subject knowledge alongside accurate assessment information to challenge pupils. This allows pupils to apply their knowledge and make good progress.
- Over time, there is strong evidence in pupils' work that leaders are taking effective action to improve teaching across the school. Leaders' ongoing commitment to staff training means that the quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Nonetheless, there is some less effective teaching across subjects

and year groups.

- There are times when teachers do not provide sufficient opportunity for the most able pupils to apply their knowledge in order to deepen pupils' understanding. On occasion, teachers focus on pupils' completion of tasks in order to progress quickly through curriculum content. As a result, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are increasing. Although there are teachers who are skilled at challenging pupils, some teachers do not plan learning that takes into account pupils' starting points. As a result, there are occasions when learning lacks challenge. Pupils complete activities that do not stretch their thinking. As a result, time is not used effectively during learning.
- There are times when teachers do not consider the gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that pupils are unable to access learning and, as a result, they lose interest and do not use their time productively. This is particularly the case for boys.
- Leaders' efforts to improve pupils' reading, writing and communication skills across the school are securing improvements in pupils' literacy skills. Pupils are reading more widely and often following a number of initiatives to promote reading. However, some teachers are not yet applying the school's literacy policy effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Leaders and staff have worked together to create a haven for pupils where they feel safe and happy. Staff understand the needs of pupils. As a result, they support pupils well. Pupils feel that they are well cared for.
- Pupils are highly appreciative of leaders' work in changing the culture of the school. Pupils are proud of their school and the improvements that leaders have secured in the pupils' and parents' attitudes to education. Pupils explained to inspectors how they want to do well at school.
- Pupils report that staff know them well. Pupils appreciate the care and support they receive. Pupils are particularly positive about the ongoing work of the pastoral team. The work of the pastoral team is a strength of the school.
- Pupils report that incidents of bullying are rare and that staff deal effectively with any incidents. Pupils and staff alike do not tolerate racist or homophobic behaviour. The whole school community takes any rare incidents very seriously. Leaders promote pupils' understanding of British values. For example, during the inspection, pupils learned about the importance of mutual respect during an assembly about the Commonwealth Games.
- Pupils demonstrate respect and tolerance for different faiths, cultures, backgrounds and families. Members of the lesbian, gay, transgender and bisexual community feel that they can be open about their sexual identity.
- Leaders have ensured that there are appropriate arrangements in place to monitor the personal development and welfare of those pupils who attend alternative provision. For

example, there are strong procedures in place to check on pupils who are absent.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The entire school community highly value the substantial improvements that leaders have secured in pupils' behaviour.
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils report that low-level disruption is rare. They understand that any incidents of poor behaviour are not tolerated and they value the rewards they receive for positive behaviour. As a result, the overwhelming majority of pupils have positive attitudes that support their learning.
- Pupils are friendly and courteous. They show respect towards each other, leaders and staff. This is particularly evident at social times where pupils move around the school calmly. Leaders have created an environment that is orderly and serene.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded for a fixed period has continued to reduce since the previous inspection. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. This is because of leaders' ongoing, highly effective work to improve pupils' behaviour across the school.
- Pupils' attendance, including the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, continues to improve towards the national average. The number of pupils who are regularly absent from school has also reduced. This is because the vast majority of pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils are punctual to their lessons and they arrive ready to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Require improvement

- In 2016 and 2017, the school did not meet the government's floor standards. The improvements seen in pupil performance in 2015 did not continue in 2016. This is because of low standards and weak teaching in the past.
- Rates of pupil progress and levels of attainment in 2017 improved. This is because pupils were able to benefit from an increasing proportion of effective teaching over a longer period. Nonetheless, the school's performance in 2017 remained significantly below the national average.
- Outcomes for pupils are on a trajectory of improvement. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics. Current pupils make faster rates of progress. This is particularly the case at key stage 3 where pupils have been able to benefit from secured improvements in standards of behaviour, teachers' higher expectations and ongoing developments in the quality of teaching.
- Leaders are under no illusion that outcomes for pupils are still not good enough. They have clear, accurate and detailed plans in place to secure better outcomes for pupils. Improved rates of pupil progress are particularly evident in pupils' work in English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. In these subjects, improvements in the quality of teaching are securing quickening rates of pupil progress.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving. Improvements in progress for these pupils in 2017 exceeded the advances in progress for other pupils within school. This is because of leaders' effective use of additional funding. The differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are

diminishing. School assessment information and work in pupils' books shows that disadvantaged pupils are making more rapid progress at key stage 3.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have made considerably better progress in 2017. The differences between the progress of current pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupils nationally are diminishing. This is because of improvements in teaching and leaders' use of additional funding to secure increasingly effective support from staff.
- Where improvements in the rates of pupils' progress are moving more quickly, for example, in English and mathematics, leaders are forensic in identifying gaps in pupils' learning. This allows staff to refine their teaching and put appropriate support in place for pupils. As a result, pupils are catching up at a faster pace. Where teachers do not use accurate assessment information to plan learning, pupils make slower rates of progress.
- Despite considerable improvements in pupils' achievement, rates of progress made by the most able pupils and boys remain an area of concern. In some subjects, leaders do not use teachers' assessment information to inform ongoing improvements in the quality of teaching. This means that the progress made by these groups is not improving as rapidly as it should.
- There are a small number of subjects where improvements in pupils' outcomes are slow. This is particularly the case in geography and computer science. Leaders demonstrate an accurate understanding of the reasons for this and they have already taken appropriate action to address these issues.
- Leaders and staff are fervent and committed to improving the life chances of pupils. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of careers education for pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils receive independent and impartial careers guidance through a wide range of opportunities. The proportion of pupils who move to further education or training is above the national average. Nonetheless, some pupils do not continue onto the most appropriate course, because they are not yet making enough progress at key stage 4.
- Leaders monitor the quality of education that pupils who attend alternative provision receive. Pupils benefit from appropriate curriculums that focus on preparing pupils for the next stage of their education.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students value highly the opportunities that the sixth form offers. The school's sixth form is no different to the rest of the school in terms of its increasingly improving positive culture of high aspirations.
- Leaders monitor students' rates of attendance. As a result, rates of attendance continue to improve year on year. Students have consistently positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers plan learning that allows students to make good progress from their starting points. Students report that teachers know them well and they receive appropriate help and support with their learning. This ensures that students do not fall behind.

- Students who do not achieve a standard pass in English or mathematics at key stage 4 receive help and support from teachers as part of their individual study programmes. The proportion of students who achieve a standard pass in English or mathematics in the sixth form is better than the national average.
- Leaders have created a sixth form curriculum that caters to individual student's needs. School assessment information shows that sixth form students who follow the small number of academic courses on offer are making good progress. This is because students are on appropriate pathways and teaching is effective.
- Programmes of study are well-designed. Leaders have placed a strong emphasis on students' development of employability skills. This permeates the sixth form and students are excited about their future. Leaders have established strong links with a number of companies as part of the 'Careers Academy'.
- Leaders have taken action to strengthen the opportunities for students to engage in independent research. For example, they have recently introduced the extended project qualification.
- The information and advice that students receive about careers in the sixth form is a strength. Students have access to a well-qualified adviser and an array of enrichment opportunities. This has had a positive impact on the proportion of students who continue onto higher education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	135479
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10045916

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	917
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	69
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Thornhill
Headteacher	Tony McGuinness
Telephone number	01514 778740
Website	allsaintschs.org.uk
Email address	info@allsaintschs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	28–29 June 2016

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well below the national average.
- At the time of inspection, 30 pupils follow alternative education provision off the school site at the following providers: Everton Free School, NexGen Academy, New Horizons

School, MV Training, Skills-base, Educate, Evolve Merseyside and Meadow Park School.

- In 2017, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- In 2017, the school met the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 4 academic performance results in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across a range of subjects and year groups. These observations included joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors carried out work scrutiny in mathematics, English, modern foreign languages and humanities. Some of these were done alongside leaders.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including a group of sixth formers. Inspectors also spoke with other pupils informally at social times, as well as at the beginning and the end of the school day. Discussions took place with senior and middle leaders, classroom teachers and a group of newly and recently qualified teachers. A meeting was held with the chair of governors, two representatives from the local authority and a representative from the archdiocese.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including leaders' self-evaluation and development plan, a selection of school policies, information about the school's performance, attendance information and documents relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took into account 80 staff survey responses, 30 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 7 written responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text facility. Inspectors also considered 23 pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

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Annette Patterson	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Bailey	Ofsted Inspector

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