

Inspection of Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 1RX

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this happy and welcoming school. They feel valued by leaders. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), rise well to these expectations. They enjoy learning and they achieve well.

Staff foster positive and encouraging relationships with pupils. Pupils feel well supported and cared for by their teachers. This helps pupils to feel safe. They know that staff will resolve any issues, should they arise. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying swiftly and effectively.

Pupils do their best to live out the school's core values in their day-to-day interactions with each other and with staff. Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful. Pupils socialise happily together at breaktimes and lunchtimes. During lessons, pupils show a keen interest in their learning and they work hard.

Pupils benefit from a wealth of opportunities to extend their learning beyond the taught curriculum. These include activities such as dancemania, science and sports clubs.

Pupils enjoy taking part in many excursions and visits, including a trip to Iceland and a 'horror walk' around London. Pupils relish the opportunity to take on different responsibilities such as representing their peers on the school council, being a prefect or a librarian.

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

Leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with SEND, and want them to do well. To this end, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that they want pupils to learn and when pupils should learn it. This ensures that pupils' learning builds on what they already know. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 11, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teachers use their subject knowledge well to explain concepts and deepen pupils' learning of subject content over time. Staff appreciate the training that they receive to improve further their knowledge of how to teach aspects of the curriculum. This is helping them to reflect on and refine how they deliver subject curriculums over time.

In most subjects, pupils have sufficient opportunities to revisit and recap their prior learning. For the most part, staff use assessment systems well. This helps them to identify what pupils know and can do. However, in some subjects, from time to time, teachers do not use assessment strategies as effectively. They do not pinpoint the gaps in pupils' knowledge or adapt how they deliver next steps in pupils' learning.

This means that there are times when some pupils do not learn aspects of curriculums as well as they should.

Leaders are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders provide teachers with suitably detailed information about this group of pupils. Mostly, teachers use this information effectively to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support. This helps pupils with SEND to learn well as they move through the school.

Leaders are acutely aware of the impact that the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has had on pupils' learning, particularly in terms of their reading knowledge. Those pupils who find reading difficult are supported well by highly skilled staff. This helps these pupils to catch up with reading quickly. Pupils become confident and fluent readers. They enjoy reading a breadth of fiction and non-fiction texts. Pupils' love of reading helps to develop their comprehension skills and broadens their knowledge of the world.

Pupils from different backgrounds get on well together. The school has a calm and orderly atmosphere. Pupils follow clear and established routines in lessons. Learning is seldom disrupted by poor behaviour.

Pupils enjoy learning about different religions and cultures, and they show respect for difference. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy relationships and consent. They receive high-quality careers information, advice and guidance, and they benefit from a range of opportunities to help to inform their decisions about next steps. For example, pupils value work experience placements with local employers.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that leaders consider their workload and well-being. Governors are highly committed to the school. They challenge and support leaders effectively. Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and those aspects that require further development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are trained well in how to use leaders' safeguarding procedures. Staff know how to identify the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm and what to do if they have any concerns.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies, including the local authority, to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive appropriate and timely support.

Leaders are knowledgeable about the safeguarding risks that pupils may face in the

local area. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in the wider community and when working online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, there are occasions when teachers' use of assessment strategies is not effective enough in identifying pupils' misconceptions or pinpointing the gaps in their knowledge. This hinders pupils in building on what they know already and learning the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment strategies effectively so that pupils know and remember more of what they are taught.

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](#)' 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	111456
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10241016
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	817
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Johnson
Headteacher	Joanne Langstaff
Website	www.cardinal-newman.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic school and is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2022.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider 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.

Information about this inspection

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and governors. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Shrewsbury.
- 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 breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, governors, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from an alternative provider.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with heads of department, 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 to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the responses to staff surveys and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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