

Christ The King Voluntary Academy

Darlton Drive, Arnold, Nottingham, NG5 7JZ

Inspection dates 24–25 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- From their different starting points, students make good progress. Leaders have taken effective action to address the decline in attainment in 2013, and this has now risen to be in line with national averages.
- A relentless drive to improve the quality of teaching has led to teaching that is mostly good, and some that is outstanding.
- The academy provides a safe, caring and calm environment where all are valued, and learning can flourish. Students attend well and are proud of their welcoming and inclusive community. Those new to the school are made to feel especially welcome.
- The Principal sets a clear vision and direction for the school, and is ably supported by an effective and cohesive leadership team. Their combined efforts and continued determination to improve standards ensure that all are committed to the school's mission statement to 'provide the best experience we can for all in our care in a living faith community'.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Relationships are characterised by high levels of respect and tolerance. Students are encouraged to take on leadership roles, both within school and in their local communities. These experiences ensure that they are given a good grounding for life in a multi-cultural, multi-faith democracy.
- The sixth form is good. As a result of good teaching, students make good progress, and are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers plan work which is accurately matched to the needs of different groups of learners. As a result a small proportion of students do not make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Subject leaders do not all check that assessment is used consistently well by teachers to support students' learning and progress.
- The feedback that teachers give to students to help them improve is not consistently as effective as it could be.
- There are not enough opportunities for teachers to share good practice across subjects.

Information about this inspection

- No notice was given for this inspection.
- Inspectors visited 29 lessons, seven were jointly observed with members of the leadership team. The school’s independent study room was also visited, as was a lunchtime reading club.
- Inspectors spoke to four groups of students, representing Years 7–13. Inspectors also had informal discussions with students at break and lunchtimes, and between lessons.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also spoke with governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and with a headteacher from one of the partner schools in the multi-academy trust.
- Telephone calls were made to managers of alternative provision settings, and to the Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 114 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, ParentView, and of the 169 responses to a parental survey that had been carried out by the school.
- Sixty eight responses to the staff questionnaire were also taken into account.
- Inspectors took careful account of internal and external student progress and attainment data, comparing predicted versus actual results. A sample of students’ work from Years 7–13 was reviewed.
- They observed the work of the school, and looked at a number of documents, including the school’s policy on how it manages and improves teaching and rewards good performance. Academy improvement plans, and the school’s own view of its performance, were taken into account. Policies and procedures relating to attendance, behaviour, child protection and safeguarding were reviewed, and inspectors also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Deirdre Duignan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Phil Harrison

Seconded Inspector

Lynn Stanbridge

Additional Inspector

Pamela Hemphill

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Christ the King Voluntary Academy converted to an academy on 1 October 2012. When its predecessor, Christ the King School, was last inspected, it was judged to be good.
- The academy is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported by the Pupil Premium (government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, or in the care of the local authority), is in line with the national average. The academy also receives Year 7 catch-up funding for students who did not achieve a level 4 in reading and/or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- While the majority of students are of White British heritage, a higher-than-average number come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Just over 10% of students are of Polish heritage, many of whom are in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The academy accesses part-time alternative provision in a range of vocational subjects for a small number of students in Years 10 and 11.
- Along with four primary schools, Christ The King Voluntary Academy forms part of the Pax Christi Multi-Academy Trust. The academy is also part of the Redhill Teaching School Alliance, and has collaborative links with a number of other schools.
- Leaders provide training in middle leadership to a number of other schools.
- The academy holds the Career Mark accreditation.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for students' achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching by ensuring that:
 - all teachers use information from assessment to plan learning that is sufficiently challenging for different groups of learners
 - feedback is always effective in helping students to improve their work.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership by ensuring that:
 - all subject leaders check that teachers use information from assessment consistently well to further accelerate the progress that students make and raise attainment
 - all teachers are given opportunities to learn from the very best practice in the school, and improve their own teaching as a result.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal, supported by senior leaders and governors, sets a clear vision for the academy that is shared by staff and students. The spiritual development of staff and students is at the heart of improvement planning, and this is a notable strength of the academy. Staff feel supported and valued, while being continually challenged to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- Effective leadership has led to better teaching, as shown by the good progress that students typically make over time. Teachers and leaders make best use of links with partner schools in the multi-academy trust, the teaching school alliance and other networks to learn from good practice elsewhere. There are opportunities for teachers to share ideas and learn from each other within school, but this is not done consistently well within all departments.
- Leaders have accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and have taken effective action to address underperformance. Teachers are held to account for the progress of their students, and pay increases are closely related to the effectiveness of teaching. Governors check these arrangements carefully.
- The academy is moving towards full implementation of its preferred approach to assessment following the removal of National Curriculum levels, and is dealing effectively with the challenges that this brings.
- Most subject leaders are vigilant in checking and monitoring the quality of teaching in their departments. However, not all of them consistently ensure that teachers use assessment information carefully enough to plan next steps in learning.
- Leaders have been determined in their efforts to ensure that all students make good progress, and have taken steps to remedy the underachievement of some groups. A newly appointed senior leader has undertaken a full review of how pupil premium funding was being spent, and has taken action to ensure that it is used effectively to raise the achievement of disadvantaged students. As a result, these students are now making better progress.
- The range of subjects on offer is good. There is a sensible balance between academic and vocational learning that meets the needs of all learners. Leaders have recently reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it meets the new national guidelines and allows all students to develop their potential. As a result, they have changed the science curriculum to ensure that more-able students are offered a more challenging course. Students appreciate the wide programme of additional cultural and sporting activities. There is off-site provision for a small number of students, and this is monitored carefully by a member of the senior leadership team to make sure they attend well, are safe and make good progress.
- Pastoral care for students is a strength of the academy. One parent wrote to inspectors and described the academy as 'welcoming, supportive, inclusive and pastorally aware. Teachers are genuinely concerned for their pupils, and have a good relationship with them'.
- Leaders take time to listen and respond to the views of parents. A parental forum makes a valuable contribution to improvement planning, while a dedicated link teacher provides support to Polish-speaking parents.
- Opportunities to broaden students' perspectives, and to promote equal opportunities, are fully utilised. Students spoke movingly of their recent visit to the Holocaust Museum and the impact that this had had on them. They took a full part in planning and delivering activities for Black History month. Older students who accompany sick and disabled people on the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes told inspectors of the benefits they derive from helping others.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Students are taught to be caring, reflective and responsible young people with a keen interest in social justice and the world around them. Many of them have been trained in community leadership, and have worked with

other faith and community leaders to improve safety in their neighbourhoods. Such activities give them an excellent grounding for life in a multi-cultural, multi-faith democracy.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are instrumental in setting the strategic direction for the academy, and make a valid and valued contribution to improvement planning and self-evaluation. They work effectively with partners in the Pax Christi Multi-Academy Trust to ensure that a strong focus on outcomes for children and young people in all partner schools informs decision making, and that improvement priorities are shared amongst partner schools.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the academy's strengths and weaknesses, and use this information to provide an appropriate balance of support and challenge to leaders. They use a range of information, including examination results, to monitor how well different departments perform, and hold subject leaders to account. Performance management, including that of the Principal, is rigorous.
- Governors know how the Pupil Premium funding is spent, and have rightly challenged leaders on the impact it has had in the past on eligible students. Governor training is well managed, and as a result, governors bring a good range of skills and experience to strengthen the leadership of the academy. They ensure financial probity, and carry out their statutory safeguarding duties with diligence.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. They are polite, friendly and very welcoming. They behave well in lessons and around school. Staff model the behaviours and values they expect of students and as a result, relationships are characterised by high levels of harmony and mutual respect.
- Attitudes to learning are positive. Where there are instances of low-level disruption, these are dealt with effectively by staff.
- Attendance is good and improving, and there are no differences in the attendance rates of different groups of students. This is the result of careful monitoring, and a whole school push to increase the attendance of all students.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions is reducing. This is because school leaders have put in place successful strategies to manage and improve behaviour, and there is increasingly consistent application of the academy's behaviour policy. Older students in particular paid tribute to the improvements in behaviour brought about by current leaders.
- Academy records show that bullying is rare, and is dealt with effectively when it occurs. This is a view supported by students and parents. Students have good awareness of different types of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying. They are taught to use language respectfully, and to treat others with tolerance. Consequently, they make a significant contribution to the caring and inclusive ethos of the academy.
- Students respect their learning environment and take care of the building and equipment. They take pride in their appearance, and are good ambassadors for the academy.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is good. E-safety issues are addressed regularly, and students have a good understanding of what the dangers are and how to keep themselves safe online.
- Procedures for appointing new staff are robust and rigorous. Risk assessments for activities, and for visitors to the site, are in place and adhered to. All staff have access to appropriate safeguarding training. Vulnerable students in particular enjoy an enhanced level of support and this has a positive impact on their enjoyment and achievement.
- The academy's independent study room, the ISR, is used well to support students experiencing

behavioural difficulties. Evidence in school confirms that students are quickly and successfully re-integrated into lessons.

- Students are keen to take on roles of responsibility. For example, they have established a lunchtime reading club, 'the readerholics', which they organise and run themselves.
- Students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is enhanced by the academy's positive, welcoming and inclusive ethos. Opportunities for prayer and reflection are plentiful and help to ensure a calm environment where learning can flourish. Students enjoy many opportunities to learn about, and celebrate, different cultures.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers set high expectations, and intervene effectively when these are not met. This ensures that students are interested in their learning and can learn effectively.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to question students' effectively to probe and deepen their understanding. Opportunities to reflect on learning are well used to support students who may need additional help, or to move the learning on. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson on Macbeth, students were asked to explain their misconceptions. They were probed to provide fuller explanations of their answers. This helped to ensure that all students improved their understanding of the use of language in the extract being studied. In a Year 12 physical education lesson, the teacher intervened at key points in a discussion on muscular contractions to ensure that all had fully understood, and to challenge more-able students to explain their answers more fully.
- Most teachers use formal assessment well to support students' learning and progress. However, some do not use all the information the academy provides to plan lessons that challenge students of different abilities. Consequently, not all students make the rapid progress they are capable of.
- Where marking is most effective, it gives clear and precise feedback to students, which students reflect on and apply to their next piece of work.
- Teachers of all subjects are committed to improving students' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills. For example, in a physical education lesson, the teacher's insistence on the correct use of technical language meant that students were able to describe different vaulting techniques accurately and confidently. Students' communication skills are well developed in lessons, because they listen respectfully to each other, and respond to and develop each other's answers. Teachers regularly correct students' spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Students who are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional language receive good support. The use of subject-specific terms is helping these and all students to improve their spelling and develop their understanding. For example, in a religious studies lesson, students were given key words in both English and Polish. This improved their understanding of the meaning and importance of these terms.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use homework well to deepen students' knowledge and understanding.
- Students say they appreciate the high level of support they receive from their teachers. They described their teachers to inspectors as 'dedicated, energetic and passionate about their subjects'.
- The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View felt that their children are taught well.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Improved teaching is raising achievement; students currently in the academy make good progress over

time from their different starting points

- Students who sat examinations in 2013 entered the academy with attainment that was well below average. These students did not achieve as well as the previous cohort, and there was a significant fall in the proportions achieving five or more GCSEs at grade C or higher, including English and mathematics. Success rates have increased in the most recent examination results, and the academy's own records confirm a strong and continuing trend of rising attainment. The numbers of students attaining well in both English and mathematics has risen, and evidence in school confirms it is on track to increase further.
- Forecast data show that current progress across year groups, in a wide range of subjects, is consistently good. This contrasts with the most recent published data which reflect a period when not enough students were making expected or more than expected progress, particularly in English. Previous turbulence in staffing in English has now been resolved, resulting in better teaching in this subject.
- Academy leaders recognise that a range of issues contributed to the dip in achievement, and have taken concerted action to redress these. This has included checking the accuracy of assessment information within departments and with partner schools. Work seen in students' books and in lessons confirms the good progress that students are making.
- In 2013, students eligible for the pupil premium achieved, on average, almost two grades less than their peers in English, and over a grade and half below their peers in mathematics. Current information shows that these students are making better progress than previously, with the difference reducing to about a half a grade in both subjects for students in the current Year 11.
- In Years 7–10, the progress of students eligible for the pupil premium is tracked rigorously to ensure that dips in progress are not allowed to continue. They are making at least as good progress as their peers.
- In 2013, the most-able students made good progress in languages and additional science. In subjects where they did not do as well, the trend is now upward. The numbers achieving the highest grades at GCSE has increased, and the academy's current tracking data show that more of the most-able students are making rapid progress as a result of improved teaching.
- Students who speak English as an additional language, and those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make similar rates of progress to their peers as a result of the good support they receive.
- Academy leaders have introduced a number of successful initiatives to improve students' reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across different subjects skills. All teachers have a performance target related to improving students' literacy. As a result, students' reading, writing and communication skills are developing well. Year 7 catch-up funding is being used to support early intervention reading work, and this is having a good impact on improving the reading ages of eligible students.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers. This is because of a well-planned programme of catch-up and intervention strategies, and good teaching.
- Arrangements for alternative provision are effective. The attendance and progress of students on these courses is carefully monitored. As a result, they achieve well in their chosen courses and continue into education or training.
- Students are well prepared for the next stage of their learning. A comprehensive programme of careers information and guidance ensures that students are well-informed about their choices. Students in the sixth form felt they had received good advice from their teachers.
- The academy does not currently enter students early for examinations.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View, and to the academy's own parental survey, consider that their children make good progress.

The sixth form provision**is good**

- As a result of good teaching, achievement in the sixth form is good for all groups of students. In the majority of subjects, students achieve at least as well as the national average, and this is improving. There are no significant gaps in the achievement of those students supported by the Pupil Premium and those who are not. Students who did not receive a GCSE grade C in English and/or mathematics are given good support to do so.
- The requirements of the 16-19 study programme are fully met. Students' personal, social and employability skills are exceptionally well developed through a carefully planned programme of careers information and guidance, work-related learning, and opportunities for students to take on leadership and volunteering roles. Sixth-form students take a lead in organising charity activities and mentoring younger students; they are excellent role models, and enjoy the opportunities they have in mixed tutorial sessions to offer younger students advice and guidance.
- While the curriculum at Key Stage 5 is mainly academic, there are limited opportunities for students to study vocational subjects. Leaders have made changes to the subjects on offer based on information about the quality of teaching, and there are regular reviews to ensure that all teaching is of good quality and that students make good progress. Intervention strategies are in place for students who fall behind with work or are not making expected progress. The academy's current data show an increase in the numbers of students achieving their target grades.
- Almost all students progress from Year 12 into Year 13. The very small number who did not do so last year were supported into apprenticeships and employment. In Year 13, all students go on to study at university. Students are given good advice to keep themselves safe, including online.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138810
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	449225

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	809
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Wilson
Headteacher	Carlo Cuomo
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0115 9556262
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