

The Archbishop's School

St Stephen's Hill, Canterbury, Kent CT27AP

Inspection dates 27–28 January 2016 and 1 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and his senior team lead the school well. They are driving improvements in all aspects of its work effectively, including in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects because of the strong culture of learning and good teaching.
- Gaps between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and others are closing quickly.
- Teachers know pupils well and are thoughtful and sensitive to their needs. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority and those pupils who have special educational needs or disability are particularly well supported.
- Pupils behave well around the school and in lessons. Disruption to learning is rare. Many pupils are keen to learn. Attendance is above average.
- Careers education helps pupils to look ahead and make realistic choices right from Year 7. Voluntary work in the school and local community has a high profile and offers valuable experiences for pupils.
- Governors are well informed about the school's work and they are determined to tackle any signs of underachievement.
- The sixth form has flourished under new leadership and is now good. Learners are enthusiastic, teaching is good and results have improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Boys' progress is not improving as quickly as that of girls.
- More-able pupils are not challenged strongly enough in some subjects to drive outstanding progress.
- Improvements in mathematics are not as rapid as in some other subjects.
- Staff training is not always linked directly enough with leaders' priorities for improvement. Sometimes it is unclear what differences the training will make to teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teachers in all subjects, but particularly in mathematics, promote pupils' very rapid and secure learning, especially for more-able pupils and boys.
- Take steps to ensure that the school's priorities are supported unambiguously and effectively in all training and support for staff, by:
 - defining clearly the specific improvements in teaching and learning required as a result of training
 - building in more opportunities to share best practice across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and his relatively new senior team have overseen many improvements in the work of the school since the previous inspection. Improvements in outcomes, pupils' behaviour and in the quality of teaching are all directly attributable to this effective leadership.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching accurately. They rightly provide training to support its continual improvement. Leaders' improvement plans drive this training well but sometimes links between school priorities and training are not as solid as they could be. At times, the differences leaders intend training to make to teaching are unclear.
- Middle leaders make a good contribution to improving standards and supporting pupils' good learning. Art, the humanities, science, special educational needs and sports are particularly well led and pupils do very well in these aspects. Sometimes these strengths in middle leadership and in some of the very best teaching in the school are not fully harnessed to support similarly rapid improvements in other subjects.
- The quality of assessment has improved significantly since the previous inspection. As a result, information about pupils' progress is reliable and is used very effectively by teachers to set targets and steer interventions. For example, the emphasis given to girls' progress in the light of such analyses resulted in their very strong performance in examinations in 2015. The school now values the progress made by every pupil equally; a previous tendency to prioritise certain grade boundaries, particularly in mathematics, has been replaced with a distinct accent on better progress for all.
- The pupil premium (additional government funding to support disadvantaged pupils) is used effectively. Leaders closely monitor the difference their actions are making and adjust priorities to maximise their impact. This approach has supported the improved progress of disadvantaged pupils, and gaps between their achievements and those of others are closing as a result.
- The curriculum focuses on pupils' future learning needs and their employability. It includes more work-related courses than before and this has suited pupils' talents and interests very well. The curriculum is under constant review: option subjects are discontinued if leaders feel they no longer suit pupils' needs. A good range of music, sport and interesting clubs help pupils to enjoy school life. A high number of trips and visits further expand pupils' horizons. The personal, social, health and education (PSHE) course and the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development both contribute well to pupils' personal development and progress. For example, Year 10 pupils learn about mental health and staying physically healthy in the context of working hard at school and managing the stress of taking examinations. Some pupils who inspectors spoke to felt that they have not discussed British values in depth in PSHE lessons. However, all recognised that some major news items are usefully discussed in assemblies and all could speak confidently about what they had learned. Overall, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and teachers promote equality of opportunity well and send a clear message that discrimination on the grounds of actual or perceived differences is not tolerated in the school. Good guidance is offered on how different beliefs and cultures should be valued in practical ways. The PSHE programme, tutor times and assemblies are all used well to deliver clear and strong messages about equalities and diversity. Pupils are proud that they are part of an inclusive school.
- The school has good links with its parents. Several comments from parents described the improvements evident during the last two years. A high proportion who responded to the online questionnaire said they felt that the school is led well. Many of the staff who completed the questionnaire commented on how much had changed since the previous inspection. One wrote that: 'While there have been many changes, all for the better, we have not lost the heart of The Archbishop's.'
- Leaders work closely with the local authority, which monitors the impact of the school's work diligently. Although leaders have not drawn on much specific support in recent years because they are fully able to improve the school themselves, they are aware of the expertise that is available.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body brings a highly relevant range of expertise and experience to its work. Governors are enthusiastic and determined to see the school move forward rapidly. They receive good-quality information from the school to analyse and discuss, including on the effectiveness of teaching. The Chair of the Governing Body leads with dedication and attention to detail. Governors check that pupil premium funds are spent wisely and that the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others continues

to narrow. They also ensure that teachers do not receive pay awards unless pupils' outcomes merit them. Governors all have specific roles, for example overseeing provision for pupils with special educational needs or the sixth form. They visit the school to discuss leaders' work. They hold regular 'challenge meetings' to explore particular issues. They are rightly proud of the school's support for refugee children.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet all statutory requirements. In addition to regular child protection training, all staff have received 'Prevent' training in order to be alert to the signs of radicalisation and extremism. Leaders keep in touch with parents whenever they have any concerns about a pupil or groups of pupils to help ensure all pupils are safe, secure and happy in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is strong and supports pupils' good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers take into account pupils' previous achievement to set work that challenges pupils well. Tasks are therefore generally well matched to pupils' abilities and needs. Teachers' clear understanding of the need to provide carefully targeted extra support for disadvantaged pupils ensures that this group is catching up. Sometimes more intellectual challenge is needed in order for the most able to achieve at the very highest levels.
- In many lessons, teachers have positive and constructive working relationships with pupils. The atmosphere is usually purposeful and focused on learning. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their work and to share their ideas and approaches; this develops confidence and offers useful chances for pupils to challenge their own grasp of key ideas and their classmates' understanding.
- Many teachers pose questions that make pupils think hard, often matching questions skilfully to pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding. Only a very few teachers stick to overly simple questions.
- Subject-specific words are usefully displayed in many classrooms, reflecting the school's enhanced focus on improving pupils' literacy since the previous inspection. There is a helpful emphasis on literacy in many lessons. However, sometimes too few errors in pupils' spelling and grammar are addressed. On occasions, teachers accept poorly presented work and do not require pupils to improve it.
- Teaching in art, science, humanities, sports, music and modern foreign languages is particularly good. In these lessons, pupils are attentive because the work is stimulating, interesting and well structured. Pupils know what progress they are making and how they need to improve. In one music lesson observed, all pupils were performing together and were learning a great deal about technique and ensemble work in the process. They were also clearly experiencing the sheer joy of making music!
- Pupils told inspectors that they value the information they get from teachers about how their work can be improved. While this takes different forms across subjects, pupils use it well to determine exactly how to do better.
- Around four out of five of those parents who responded to the online questionnaire felt that their child makes good progress and is taught well. Parents particularly value the quality of the reports they receive about their child's progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school does much to develop pupils' self-confidence so that their understanding of how to learn well can grow. A member of staff said, 'It is clear the students are happy, secure and nurtured'. This view is reflected in the majority of pupils' comments to the online questionnaire and in their conversations with inspectors.
- Leaders make sure that vulnerable pupils, looked after children and those who have special educational needs or disability receive the right emotional and practical guidance and support. This enables these pupils to participate fully in all the school offers and to make good progress.
- Visually impaired pupils who attend the resource base are very well supported. For example, they are provided with the latest technology so that they can tackle work on their own. Such provision is matched with skilful guidance from learning support assistants. Looked after children are involved in useful and

well-managed meetings about their progress and needs; they feel secure and confident at school.

- The school is planning to introduce a school council as some pupils feel there are currently few ways for them to express their views.
- Pupils are very clear about e-safety issues. They feel bullying is rare and that staff take any hint of it very seriously. They believe that respect and equality for all, regardless of faith, lifestyles or sexual orientation, is one of the school's key messages that they value. Pupils discuss many sensitive topics in PSHE lessons, which they describe as comprehensive, and in religious education lessons. Some form tutors use the time before assembly to watch and discuss the news. A parent wrote that 'The school instils old-fashioned moral values'.
- One teacher summed it up by saying, 'There is a community feel within the school which helps everyone to feel well supported'. Whole-school assemblies, the house system and sixth formers supporting younger pupils all contribute well to this community feeling, which strengthens pupils' self-confidence and their enjoyment of school life.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are usually enthusiastic and focused in lessons and are keen to answer questions and speak up if they need to. For example, when a teacher gave pupils an extra question in response to a piece of completed work in one lesson observed, pupils responded positively and understood afterwards exactly how it had accelerated their learning.
- Attendance remains above average and the number of persistent absentees is well below that seen nationally. However, pupils eligible for the pupil premium do not yet attend quite as well as others.
- Fixed-term exclusions have fallen. The use of internal exclusions has increased but this is associated with a steady ratcheting-up of leaders' expectations about pupils' behaviour. Leaders are rightly focused on reducing the number of disadvantaged pupils who return to the inclusion room on a number of occasions.
- Those pupils attending either of Canterbury City and Coastal College's two sites improve their behaviour, learn to work sensibly with others and to control their emotions and consider other people's views. A senior leader who is closely involved with this facility regularly monitors their progress. Attendance is usually impressive, at or near 100%.
- Occasionally, a very small minority of pupils chat too much in lessons and stop others from making progress. On rare occasions, learning is slowed because teachers do not clamp down on such behaviour quickly. A few pupils do not take enough care over the presentation of their work.
- A high proportion of parents who responded to the online questionnaire said that behaviour is good.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Many pupils join the school with standards in English and mathematics that are below average. They make good progress in many subjects and achieve outcomes that are at least in line with national averages.
- In 2015 there was a healthy proportion of good grades, particularly in science, art, foreign languages, sports studies and the humanities. However, there were fewer A*/A grades achieved because more-able pupils did not make quite as much progress as they should have in some subjects.
- The progress made by girls by the end of Key Stage 4 in 2015 was impressive. This was due to a careful analysis of factors that were holding girls back and a concerted effort by the school to address them. Boys' progress is improving but is not yet as strong.
- Pupils' achievements in English have improved significantly since the previous inspection and outcomes are now good. Expectations are high and pupils are currently making rapid and secure progress. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well across the school. Many pupils enjoy reading and regularly borrow books from the library.
- Standards in mathematics have improved but not as much as in English. The proportion of pupils currently making the progress expected of them compares well with national averages throughout the school. The proportion making very rapid progress is good in Key Stage 3; it is improving but is not yet as strong in Key Stage 4. While pupils learn important mathematical techniques and acquire a good knowledge of the subject, some are not yet developing fluency or developing their skills of mathematical reasoning strongly.

- The gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and others nationally have narrowed since the previous inspection. Current gaps are continuing to reduce because of leaders' assertive focus on ensuring that these pupils receive extra help and support, sometimes in small, but nevertheless important, ways.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make the same good progress as others. Pupils in the resource base did particularly well in 2015 examinations. Pupils who need to catch up in Years 7 and 8, for example those with low reading ages or numeracy skills, are supported effectively through small-group work and other well-planned interventions.
- Pupils attending one of Canterbury City and Coastal College's two sites make good progress, improving their basic skills and following courses that match their interests and aptitudes. This prepares them well for their future studies and reflects the school's determination that all pupils will proceed to further education, training or employment. All pupils did so in 2015, having received good careers advice.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- In 2015, nearly all learners attained the grades they needed to be accepted by their first choice higher education institution or to move on to employment or apprenticeships. Those following A-level courses attained an average of a grade C, one whole grade higher than in 2014. This performance matched the national average and was very close to the school's ambitious targets.
- The progress made by learners has improved since the previous inspection. No subject had rates of progress below the national average in 2015 and several were above average. Progress was particularly good in art. Current learners in Years 12 and 13 are making good progress with no particular groups achieving better or worse than others. The vast majority complete the courses that they have started.
- Achievement in work-related courses is as good as that in academic ones with many learners attaining distinctions. Practical work in food and nutrition or hospitality and catering is followed up by research tasks matching different levels of study. Pupils enjoy the high expectations and the style of the work. Again, course completion rates are very high.
- Teaching is good, having improved significantly since the previous inspection. Regular consideration of examination questions develops learners' understanding and confidence about putting their knowledge and skills into practice. Learners feel that their depth of understanding of what they must do to improve varies between subjects but is particularly strong in geography, art, and in hospitality and catering.
- The recently appointed sixth form leader has much experience in careers guidance and places considerable emphasis on post-education employability. Sixth form careers guidance is excellent, right from the choice of learners' study programmes to their next steps beyond the sixth form. Learners regularly hear presentations and take part in workshops led by visitors, some of whom lead major companies and organisations. All learners undertake voluntary work in the school or in the local community. Some organise clubs for the sixth form or for younger pupils and all participate in work experience. Interest in careers in medicine is increasing, with large numbers of Year 12 learners studying biology and another science subject.
- Learners are encouraged to participate in sport and keep healthy. Trips and visits locally and overseas usefully extend learners' range of experiences. A parent observed that her son had visited Borneo, Italy, Belgium and France during his years at school, which had given him valuable insights into different cultures.
- Beyond their formal studies, learners are as well prepared for their futures as they are in the main school. One observed that there is 'a good balance between academic and life skills'. Potentially difficult issues are addressed usefully in tutor group discussions. No learners have encountered radicalisation or extremism but, interestingly, everyone spoken to felt they would speak out against the ideology rather than an individual who espoused it.
- Learners who have recently arrived in the United Kingdom learn about British values and integration and receive specialist help to learn English. The sixth form also welcomes up to 12 pupils from northern Europe to study for one year and take one or more AS subjects, along with improving their English if appropriate. Learners who need to retake GCSEs in English or mathematics are taught well and practically all of them achieve pass grades in Year 12.
- Attendance has improved dramatically since the previous inspection because learners want to be at school. Lateness is not tolerated and the sixth form leader's mantra is 'busy learners are successful

students'. Learners' behaviour is extremely good and they support, and are valuable role models for, younger pupils.

- An increasing number of Year 11 pupils and external applicants (some from grammar schools) choose the school for their sixth form studies. A combination of determined and successful leadership, higher expectations and good teaching have combined to make the sixth form more and more popular.

School details

Unique reference number	118898
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10002346

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	816
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Wells
Headteacher	Michael Liddicoat
Telephone number	01227 765805
Website	www.archbishop-school.co.uk
Email address	admin@archbishops.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 October 2013

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized 11–18 school. It has a designated religious character and its work is overseen by the Diocese of Canterbury.
- There is a small sixth form which is increasingly popular so there are more learners in Year 12 than in Year 13.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium (funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for looked after children) is below average.
- Well over four out of five pupils are White British. This is an above-average proportion. Many other ethnic heritages are represented by a small number of pupils and learners.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for disability and special educational needs is well below average but the proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above average. The school has a resource base for visually impaired pupils.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average. Only a few of them are at the early stages of learning English.
- A small number of pupils attend full-time alternative educational provision at City Canterbury Coastal College at Grosvenor House for Key Stage 3 and Phoenix House for Key Stage 4.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- The school was inspected on 27–28 January 2016. This inspection was deemed incomplete by Ofsted and a second team of inspectors visited on 1 March 2016.
- On the first visit inspectors observed 51 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. The second visit involved 20 shorter visits to lessons. In nearly all lessons inspectors looked at pupils' written work. A selection of pupils' mathematics books was scrutinised separately on the first visit.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils on both visits including those with disability or special educational needs and looked after children. They talked to other pupils informally during breaktimes. Discussions were held with staff, including pastoral and academic senior and middle leaders. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body and eight other governors.
- Inspectors took account of 86 parents' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and parents' written comments. Inspectors also considered responses to online questionnaires completed by 82 pupils and 27 members of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and action plans for 2015–2016, information about outcomes for pupils, behaviour and attendance records and a range of policies.

Inspection team

Clare Gillies, lead inspector (27–28 January 2016)	Ofsted Inspector
Jennifer Bray (27–28 January 2016)	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Eades (27–28 January 2016)	Ofsted Inspector
Harry Kutty (27–28 January 2016)	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Willman (27–28 January 2016)	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Taylor-Bennett, lead inspector (1 March 2016)	Her Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Haynes (1 March 2016)	Her Majesty's Inspector

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