

Inspection of The Archbishop's School

St Stephens Hill, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7AP

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

In recent years, pupils have not achieved well enough. Actions taken by leaders are leading to improvements. However, these improvements are not yet secure in all subjects and for all pupils.

Leaders and staff want the best for their pupils. They recognise parents' and carers' concerns about the high staff turnover and the impact on pupils' learning. Leaders are making changes to ensure that pupils have a wide choice of subjects to learn. They are supporting staff well to improve teaching. Previously, pupils did not learn well enough. This is starting to change as teachers ask more of pupils in their learning.

Generally, pupils feel happy and safe in the school. They know that their teachers are there to help and guide. If there is an issue, such as an incident of bullying, the vast majority of pupils trust staff to put things right. Pupils take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities which broaden their learning experiences.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are improving. Poor behaviour is not tolerated. However, a minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others. Leaders' actions are improving behaviour. Some pupils do not attend the school often enough to help them learn well.

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

The headteacher, supported by teachers and governors, has made a significant impact in turning the school around since his appointment. Leaders' recent actions are reversing the significant decline in pupils' learning. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are improving.

Leaders were too slow in creating curriculum plans. They did not identify the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in each subject. Leaders are now addressing these shortfalls. They have plans in place that will enable pupils to learn more. The local authority and diocese have provided effective support to teachers. As a result, teachers are able to plan the sequencing of learning better.

Some department plans are further advanced than others. Where subject leaders plan well, teachers build on pupils' existing knowledge, for example in science, history, photography and physical education. In other subjects, teachers' planning has not been as effective. In these cases, lessons do not follow in a logical order. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not remember previous learning well enough.

Up until now, leaders have not ensured that pupils continue to study the range of subjects that cover the breadth of the English Baccalaureate. Neither have pupils been able to study some creative subjects, such as design and technology. Current

leaders are changing the curriculum. They intend for all pupils to have a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils will choose from a broader range of subjects.

Teachers' support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is inconsistent. As a result, pupils with SEND cannot always take part fully in lessons and achieve well. Staff in the specialist centre for visual impairment support pupils with SEND well.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Changes to systems for managing behaviour are beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils behave better in lessons. Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are improving. They show increasing pride in their achievements. However, there remains a minority of pupils who do not behave well enough. As a result, some lessons are disrupted. Pupils' attendance is improving but remains too low. Not all pupils wear their uniform with pride.

Leaders and governors are committed to supporting pupils' personal development in accordance with the Christian values of the school. Pupils experience a strong spiritual and moral programme through worship. One parent commented: 'The approach at Archbishop's has always been very nurturing, encouraging and positive.' Leaders have planned a personal development programme well, but teachers do not deliver it in a consistent way. On the whole, there are positive relationships between pupils. On occasions, they do use unkind and offensive language towards each other.

Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They challenge leaders well. They are resolute in their determination to ensure that the school improves. Governors and school leaders are considerate of teachers' workload. Staff feel well supported.

Sixth-form students are successful in gaining places in further education. However, their curriculum remains narrow. Their learning is too often hindered by a lack of prior knowledge. Students are unhappy with the high staff turnover. Leaders are aware of the weaknesses in provision. They are making changes to the curriculum to improve the students' learning experience.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are well informed, and safeguarding is a high priority. Leaders take their responsibilities for pupils' safety very seriously. They carefully check the suitability of adults working at the school. All staff receive appropriate training. They have a good awareness of pupils' individual needs. Staff look out for pupils' welfare. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and detailed. Staff and pupils know who to inform if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not planned well enough to build on what pupils already know. Subject plans do not always provide teachers with enough detail about what pupils need to learn and when. Curriculum leaders need to ensure that plans for their subjects make it clear how learning should be sequenced. They should check that plans are consistently implemented well to help pupils to learn more and remember more.
- Some pupils do not behave well enough in some lessons. Leaders need to ensure that the new behaviour policy is implemented consistently and effectively to ensure that all pupils are able to learn well.
- The attendance of pupils remains well below the national average, including for vulnerable pupils. In spite of leaders' tenacious actions to improve attendance, the systems are not impacting well enough yet. Leaders need to build on their work to bring about a significant and sustained improvement in attendance.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	118898
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10133155
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	675
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kim Stoner
Headteacher	David Elliott
Website	http://www.archbishops-school.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	27 January–1 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An interim headteacher has been in place since July 2019. A number of the leadership team have been seconded to the school from other schools.
- The local authority issued the school with a notice to improve in 2019.
- The membership of the governing body has undergone significant changes in the last 12 months.
- The school has a resource-based unit for pupils with dyslexia and pupils with visual impairment. It is funded by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. We also met with a large range of teachers.
- We did deep dives in: English, mathematics, science and history. We discussed curriculum design with leaders, visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers about the curriculum from the lessons visited.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. We reviewed the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- We met with six members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- We considered the views of 38 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire.
- We took account of the 88 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.
- We met with groups of pupils and sixth-form students to discuss their views on the school and talked to pupils informally about the school.

Inspection team

Christopher Lee, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Phillips	Ofsted Inspector
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