

Christ's College Finchley

East End Road, East Finchley, London N2 0SE

Inspection dates	24–25 May 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 has very high ambitions for the pupils and a relentless determination to provide them with the highest quality of education. Since joining the school, he has created a culture of high expectations and established a learning environment where pupils thrive.
- Senior leaders, the governing body and staff share the headteacher's determination. Since the previous inspection, they have worked tirelessly to tackle the issues that were identified. Improvements, particularly in teaching and learning, have been rapid and sustained.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan interesting activities and give pupils helpful advice on how they can improve their work.
- Consequently, the majority of pupils now make good progress from their starting points across nearly all subjects.
- The sixth form is good. Students have high aspirations, work very hard and conduct themselves in an exemplary way. Many make good progress. The majority go on to chosen universities, apprenticeships or work.
- School leaders actively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils respect each other's beliefs, faiths and cultures in this diverse learning community. The school promotes British values actively.
- Pupils mix well, are courteous and are polite towards each other and staff. They enthusiastically participate in extra-curricular activities and are proud of their school.
- Governors are experienced and knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas needing further development. The governing body has ensured that improvements have been made, in a time of financial austerity.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students in the sixth form do not make the progress of which they are capable in some subjects.
- Teaching does not challenge some pupils, particularly the most able, to make the progress of which they are capable.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all students in the sixth form make the progress they are capable of by:
 - developing a sustained programme of high-quality advice and guidance to students so that they choose post-16 courses that they have the ability to succeed on
 - making sure that teaching in all subjects is of the highest quality
 - providing students with timely and appropriate support should they begin to underachieve
 - creating a strategic plan to develop 16–19 study programmes further and ensure that the provision meets the needs of all students.

- Focus on developing teachers' skills and expertise further to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, are stretched and challenged to achieve their best.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has very high aspirations for the pupils and a clear vision for the quality of education he wants the school to provide. Since joining the school, he has worked diligently to tackle the issues that were identified at the previous inspection. In particular, he has made improving teaching and learning, and raising expectations of the conduct of pupils, the two main priorities for the school. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved, pupils make good progress, and behaviour around the school is good.
- Senior leaders share the headteacher's vision and drive. They have ensured that actions have been timely, appropriate and rapid. Working closely with the middle leadership team, they have established a culture where staff feel supported and valued. Consequently, all have worked relentlessly to bring about necessary improvements. School leaders carefully check that actions are having the desired impact on pupils' progress and, should this not be the case, they intervene quickly.
- Middle leaders work closely as a team to establish effective learning partnerships in their subjects. They meet fortnightly with their line managers to discuss the progress of pupils at risk of underachievement and check that interventions are having the desired effect.
- The headteacher, other senior leaders and middle leaders make regular visits to lessons to check on the quality of teaching and learning. They talk with pupils and look at their work. Leaders analyse information provided on the progress of individual pupils and a range of groups of pupils. This ensures that they know where teaching is strong and where they need to offer teachers further support.
- An extensive professional development programme is in place. It encourages staff to share their expertise and skills and to attend regular training, and provides bespoke support to those that need specific help. This programme ensures that the focus on high-quality teaching and learning is kept as a whole-school priority.
- Teachers new to the profession value highly the support they receive from school leaders and their mentors. They have received relevant training and have quickly settled into school life. They consistently apply the school's expectations about behaviour, classroom management and giving feedback to pupils.
- The curriculum provides a range of opportunities, both in class and after school. Pupils study a wide range of subjects to achieve the English Baccalaureate. While the school has a science specialism and progress in mathematics is particularly strong, pupils also enjoy sport, music, drama, robotics, art and food technology.
- A range of extra-curricular activities ensure that pupils' experiences are broad. Sport is particularly popular. The boys are particularly proud of their achievements in basketball and cricket across the borough and beyond. Approximately 60 boys in Years 8 to 11 are active members of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF). The CCF provides a wide range of activities and plentiful opportunities for the older boys to take on leadership responsibilities.
- The school promotes British values actively and includes them across the curriculum. Democratically elected prefects and student leaders act as role models throughout the school, supporting younger pupils, organising events and acting as mentors. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate their differences and learn about other cultures and faiths. A week devoted to exploring what it means to be British is programmed into the autumn term.
- Pupils are given a range of information, advice and guidance through timetabled 'My zone' activities, assemblies and tutor times. Staff encourage them to be active and healthy and to volunteer for community projects and charity work, which many do readily.
- School leaders work hard to involve parents, carers and the wider community, and encourage them to give their views of the school. The accessible website, weekly bulletins, regular parents' meetings, emails and calls all help to keep parents informed. Parents spoken with during the inspection were glowing in terms of the support the school had offered them and their children and the quality of the education provided.
- Leaders scrupulously check the progress of disadvantaged pupils to see what impact their spending of pupil premium funds has had. They identify those requiring help with their literacy or numeracy skills and quickly provide extra support. For instance, a literacy programme for those entering the school with reading ages below what is expected for their age has been particularly successful. Initiatives to improve self-esteem, attendance or attitudes to learning have also proved effective. As a result of targeted intervention, disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with other pupils at the school and above this group nationally.

- Senior leaders check carefully that the small number of pupils attending alternative provision are making progress in line with other pupils at the school. They receive weekly reports and regularly visit pupils to ensure that their attendance and behaviour are of the same high quality. Pupils study appropriate courses leading to accredited qualifications.
- School leaders work collaboratively within the local authority. They have established links with two local schools, Copthall School and Ashmole Academy. The local authority's secondary learning network inspector provides support and guidance, and leaders have been keen to participate in borough-wide events.
- Since the previous inspection, school leaders have identified a number of priority areas as requiring rapid improvement. These include raising the quality of teaching and learning and narrowing the gaps in attainment between certain groups of pupils, including disadvantaged, Black African and Black Caribbean pupils. Having successfully tackled these issues, they have now prioritised the progress of the most able pupils. While many make excellent progress, some still do not achieve the highest grades in some subjects. These pupils are quickly identified, their progress, like that of other pupils, is systematically tracked and interventions are put in place for those at risk of underachieving.
- The 'smashing the glass ceiling' group requires the most able pupils to undertake collaborative projects that encourage deeper understanding of complex concepts, issues and ideas. Staff have established links with universities and organise a range of trips, lectures and visits to raise pupils' aspirations and broaden their experiences. School leaders have prioritised improving the amount of 'stretch and challenge' activities given to all pupils, with a focus on the most able. Teachers are encouraged to share their ideas and plan appropriate activities. This is already having an impact on pupils' progress throughout the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governors form an experienced and stable group, with a range of professional skills and experiences. They share the school leaders' vision for the school.
 - The governing body has been instrumental in continuing to support improvements, while experiencing a time of financial austerity. Through careful management of school funds, it has supported necessary staff changes, built a new sixth-form block and avoided unnecessary cuts.
 - Governors have clear roles and responsibilities. Link governors meet regularly with subject leaders, visit lessons and talk to pupils. The chair of governors ensures that the headteacher's targets are challenging and regularly checks that actions identified by school leaders are carried out.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders, including the governing body, have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are in line with statutory requirements. They have created a culture and ethos of keeping children safe. Checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school are rigorous and well recorded. The way the school records details of staff who have received relevant safeguarding training are not as robust, however, and this issue was quickly resolved during the inspection. Governors have received training on safer recruitment and plans are in place for them to undertake training on the recently introduced 'Prevent' duty.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan interesting and engaging activities that encourage pupils to deepen their understanding, practise new skills and explore new ideas and concepts. They routinely ask open-ended questions that require pupils to think carefully and use subject-specific vocabulary in their responses.
- The school's system for checking pupils' progress is accessible and widely used by teachers. Teachers are clear about pupils' starting points and, consequently, planned activities are pitched at the right level. This is particularly true for less-able and middle-ability pupils who make very good progress across a range of subjects. Teachers undertake regular assessments, so that they can track pupils' progress and intervene quickly should any pupils be at risk of underachieving.
- The whole-school system for giving pupils feedback about their work is consistently applied. Pupils are clear about the use of coloured pens to identify who makes comments. They actively and effectively engage in self-assessment and assessing the work of other pupils. They are keen to make improvements to their work and routinely do so. Pupils know their targets and what they need to do to achieve them.
- Teachers are committed to ensuring that pupils are fully prepared for external examinations. During the inspection, extra 'master classes' had been timetabled for pupils in the current Year 11, to ensure that

they received the very best advice on how to secure their target GCSE grades. These sessions were well attended, highly focused and helpful. Pupils commented on the reassurance and support they had received by attending these sessions.

- In many lessons, for instance food technology and art, pupils welcome the opportunity to undertake practical assignments and be creative, and do so in a mature and sensible way. However, some teaching did not provide opportunities for pupils to practise key skills or explore new ideas in a practical way.
- At times, the level of challenge for the most able pupils is not as high as it should be. Consequently, some most able pupils lack opportunities to deepen and broaden their skills and expertise. School leaders are fully aware of this and have introduced a whole-school focus on stretching all pupils, but particularly the most able.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. School leaders have fostered a calm and caring ethos, where pupils are known well by their teachers and feel safe.
- The site is secure, well kept and appropriately supervised. Leaders have taken appropriate action to ensure the security of the site, such as installing electronic gates at the front of the drive, and ensure that adults moving through the site to drop off younger pupils wear security badges.
- Safeguarding is a high priority. The headteacher and two senior leaders are the designated child protection officers and their identities are displayed on all staff and visitors' lanyards. Teaching and some support staff have had relevant training on how to keep children safe in education, including dealing with gangs, child sexual exploitation, internet safety and the 'Prevent' duty. Safeguarding training is currently being rolled out to a wider group at the school, including members of the governing body and site staff.
- Referrals of pupils to external agencies are timely and school leaders ensure that actions are routinely followed up. Staff know pupils very well. One parent explained how staff had put together a bespoke learning package to ensure that her son stayed on track academically and emotionally, while his medical condition was being diagnosed outside of school.
- The personal, social, health and economics education and citizenship programme is taught as a subject itself and also within other subjects. Pupils are encouraged to celebrate their differences, and learn about each other's beliefs, cultures and faiths. As a consequence, they mix well and show tolerance and respect in this diverse learning environment.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying, its consequences and how it can be avoided. Pupils are given useful information on how to keep themselves safe and spoke confidently of how any minor incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently by staff. Staff, pupils and parents endorsed this view.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are keen to do well in their studies and work hard. They are genuinely interested in the subjects they are studying, keen to please and work well collaboratively.
- Excellent relationships between pupils and staff throughout the school ensure that the atmosphere is calm and purposeful, both in and out of lessons. At break and lunchtimes, pupils eat together, supervised by the respected prefects, tidy away their litter and participate in a range of lunchtime activities. Pupils are well mannered, greet each other politely and hold doors open for visitors. They are well dressed, have pride in their appearance and conduct themselves appropriately.
- School leaders have created a zero-tolerance ethos around any form of inappropriate behaviour. Sanctions are quick and severe. As a result, minor disputes or disruptions to learning are extremely rare. School leaders acted quickly and appropriately to a recent, more serious incident, taking advice from the local authority and meticulously followed procedures and protocols.
- Pupils benefit from a clear rewards programme that celebrates positive conduct and behaviour around the school site. Staff consistently apply the school's 'consequences' system, though most recorded incidents are minor, usually relating to violations of the strict uniform code.
- School leaders identified that the attendance of some groups of pupils was below average. They have actively targeted these groups and now attendance overall, and that of groups of pupils, is in line with national averages. The attendance of those pupils studying at alternative provision is in line with that of other pupils at the school.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils enter the school with attainment that is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who achieved five or more GCSE grades C or above, including in English and mathematics, was just above the national average in 2015. Attainment at grades A* to C in mathematics is much higher than the national average and in English is similar to the national average.
- Pupils in Year 11 made excellent progress across a range of subjects in 2015. School leaders' detailed analysis of information relating to pupils' current progress, and work seen in books, indicates that this is set to continue across year groups and subjects.
- In 2015, progress in English was just below the national average. School leaders quickly identified this subject as a priority. New leadership, a review of schemes of work and a focus on improving teaching and learning have resulted in rapid improvements. A range of interesting trips and activities engage and motivate pupils in English. Pupils in all year groups now make good progress in English.
- Disadvantaged pupils make the same good progress as other pupils at the school in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects. The school's data indicates this is set to continue.
- In 2015, pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, or receiving extra support from the school, made better progress than these pupils nationally in English and mathematics. Equally, pupils who were less able on entry made very good progress compared with this group nationally.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make better progress than other pupils at the school and this group nationally.
- Improving literacy has been a priority. A focus on improving the reading ages of pupils in key stage 3, through a planned reading programme, has resulted in rapid improvement. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure both at home and in registration time, and much use is made of the well-stocked and vibrant library. Staff focus on the quality of pupils' written expression to ensure that they are writing in full standard English and their writing is grammatically correct. A whole-school focus on encouraging extended writing has been introduced, so that pupils can practise writing across all subjects.
- The most able pupils made better progress than this group nationally, but not as well as other pupils in the school. This was particularly true in English in 2015. In mathematics, however, the most able made much better progress than this group nationally in 2015. School leaders have rightly prioritised the performance of this group in certain subjects, and recent initiatives, such as the 'smashing the glass ceiling group', are already proving very successful.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Sixth-form students have high aspirations for their future education, training and employment and they work very hard. They are clear about the opportunities open to them in this inclusive sixth form. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, mature and articulate, organising their study time to ensure that they use it wisely.
- A range of academic courses are available and, more recently, level 3 BTEC sport and level 2 creative and media have been introduced to provide a vocational option. The most popular courses are those relating to mathematics, sciences, psychology, business and economics. Teachers know students well, provide extra support to those who need it and plan interesting and engaging activities.
- Extra-curricular opportunities are wide and varied. Students are encouraged to participate in charity work, undertake work placements and involve themselves in the full life of the school. Approximately 30 students read regularly with younger pupils. Students teach computer skills to older, local people and other students support a local primary school. 'My zone' weekly sessions are dedicated to a range of topics, including completing UCAS applications, apprenticeship opportunities and cooking on a budget. Participation in school sport is encouraged and many students are proud of the success of their teams, both locally and nationally. In particular, the Christ's College Finchley Basketball Academy, run in association with Barnet Bulldogs, encourages students to study while receiving professional coaching. Participation in the National Citizenship Programme is high.
- 'Russell Group' activities are directed towards approximately a third of students. The aim is to give them a range of information, talks, visits and opportunities to raise aspirations and ensure that they are fully prepared to apply to oversubscribed and competitive universities. Many attend summer schools. Of those

that applied to Russell Group universities this year, two thirds have received an offer, subject to their examination results this summer.

- The most able achieve highly in the sixth form. The majority achieve the highest grades and go on to first-choice, Russell Group universities.
- A small number of students continue to study GCSE English or mathematics courses and resit the examinations. The majority achieve at least a grade C by the end of Year 12.
- The Extended Project Qualification was introduced last year and has proved so successful that participation has been expanded this year.
- Leaders in the sixth form carefully check the progress of individual students and a programme of intervention is put into place for those at risk of underachieving.
- Attendance is also carefully checked and, prior to the recent exam-leave period, was above average.
- There has been an improvement in the progress students make in the majority of subject areas, but there is still too much variation. In some subjects, students do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Some subject areas, notably English and English literature, attract very few students.
- While the school works hard to ensure that students start appropriate courses, some do not have the academic ability or interest to make the progress they should in some subject areas.

School details

Unique reference number	137388
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10002022

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	871
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Bowra
Headteacher	Samson Olusanya
Telephone number	020 8349 3581
Website	www.christscollegefinchley.org.uk/
Email address	info@ccfplus.com
Date of previous inspection	3–4 December 2013

Information about this school

- Christ's College Finchley is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Pupils in the main school are all boys. A small number of girls attend the sixth form.
- Almost half of the pupils are supported through the pupil premium, which is an above-average proportion. This government funding is used to support disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of pupils who are Indian, Pakistani, Black African, any other White background and any other ethnic group.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is lower than the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Barnet and Southgate College and Barnet Pupil Referral Unit.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets the 16–19 minimum standards.
- The school meets requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment in 32 lessons across a range of year groups and subjects. Some observations were carried out jointly with school leaders.
- Discussions were held with the chair of the governing body, other governors, the headteacher, deputy headteachers, senior and middle leaders, groups of pupils, students in the sixth form, a range of staff including newly qualified teachers and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 93 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the results of staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation which included records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings and information on the progress made by pupils. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and information about the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures, including checks done on the suitability of staff.

Inspection team

Helen Matthews, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
David Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Joan McVittie	Ofsted Inspector

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