

# Christ's College, Guildford

Larch Avenue, Guildford, Surrey GU1 1JY

## Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes have declined since the previous full, Section 5 inspection in 2013. The progress of disadvantaged pupils and middle-ability pupils is well below average across a broad range of subjects.
- The quality of teaching is too variable across the school. Overall, teaching does not suitably challenge pupils from their different starting points.
- Middle and senior leadership teams are relatively new. The changes they are making are starting to make a positive difference to behaviour, teaching and pupils' outcomes, but are not yet embedded throughout the school.
- Pupils' attendance is well below average. Although attendance is improving, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- In some classes, pupils' behaviour disrupts learning. Staff do not apply the new expectations for pupils' behaviour consistently.
- Most parents and carers agree that pupils are safe and happy in school. A minority of parents hold mixed views of the school.
- Some staff do not feel well supported when changes are made to procedures and practices in school, particularly in managing pupils' behaviour.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new, skilled principal shows great determination. She has a clear vision for school improvement and has already made significant improvements.
- School staff, leaders and governors are dedicated to making improvements to the school.
- There are strong destinations for students leaving the sixth form.
- Most pupils behave well, and are polite and friendly. They enjoy school.
- Typically, positive relationships between staff and pupils support pupils' learning and development well. Staff know pupils very well and consequently pupils feel safe.
- Some teaching is very effective. In these classes, pupils make good progress.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - further developing the skills of middle and senior leaders so that they help to secure consistently good teaching, learning, behaviour and attendance
  - ensuring that effective provision is in place, and regularly evaluated, to secure good progress for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
  - embedding new accountability procedures and practice, including those responsible for governance, so that leaders at all levels are consistently and effectively held to account
  - improving communication with stakeholders.
- Improve teaching, and secure good outcomes for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and middle-ability pupils, by:
  - ensuring that lessons are sufficiently challenging for pupils irrespective of their different starting points
  - embedding teachers' use of assessment to plan for pupils' next steps in learning.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and attendance by:
  - supporting staff to implement consistently effective strategies to support good behaviour so that incidents of poor behaviour and disruption to learning are rare
  - embedding systems to promote pupils' attendance so that it is in line with or above the national average, including for pupils with SEND, and disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensure that the administration of safeguarding matches the strong safeguarding practice evident in school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the last full inspection in 2013, there has been a decline in the school's performance. Over time, leaders at all levels, including those responsible for governance, have not ensured that pupils across the school make the progress they are capable of. This is especially the case for middle-ability and disadvantaged pupils across a broad range of subjects. Those responsible for governance have taken steps to address the school's decline, including through sourcing new, experienced senior leaders tasked with acting urgently to improve the school.
- Since joining the school in June 2018, the principal has worked tirelessly to reverse the decline and to improve all aspects of provision. Assisted by a reorganised team of senior leaders, she has made important changes which are starting to have a positive impact. The systems that she has put in place are providing a solid foundation on which to build further improvements, for example to the quality of leadership, teaching and behaviour.
- Leaders' accurate assessment of the school's effectiveness has enabled them to start to make the right changes. Senior and middle leadership has been reorganised so that all are clear on their individual roles and responsibilities. Leaders are being supported effectively in their new roles, including through training and mentoring provided by the trust.
- Leaders are now held strongly to account for their work. They typically approach their work with enthusiasm. They have made significant initial changes to the school and are now working hard to ensure that new processes are followed consistently throughout the school. Collectively, they are starting to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.
- A minority of staff noted concerns about how the process of change is being managed, in particular about how leaders and trustees communicate the need for change and how effectively leaders support some staff in managing pupils' behaviour. Nevertheless, most staff recognise that the school is improving. Several staff noted how the principal's vision for the school is inspiring them: 'She has a clear vision. She knows what she wants and how we are going to get there. If we do what she is asking, we will get there.'
- Leaders have rightly raised their expectations of the quality of teaching. Staff have received useful training and advice in the school's expectations, including in the importance of planning learning to meet the needs of different groups of pupils. Middle and senior leaders' monitoring allows them to identify where further support is required. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving.
- Teachers new to the profession feel very well supported in developing their skills through a thorough programme of induction and mentoring.
- Leaders' use of funding for pupils with SEND and for disadvantaged pupils has begun to be more effective. New leaders are rightly prioritising the importance of ensuring that funding is used effectively to address pupils' individual barriers to learning. In the past, leaders had not fully evaluated the impact of such funding, but this has improved this year and funding is now more closely targeted to individual needs. As a result,

provision for these groups of pupils is much better and starting to make a positive difference to their outcomes, including academically, and in their more regular attendance.

- Leaders have altered the content of the curriculum to ensure that pupils are able to study a broad and balanced curriculum throughout their time in the school. For example, pupils now begin studying for GCSE qualifications in Year 10. Much higher proportions now study a modern foreign language so that they are able to gain the English Baccalaureate qualification and are well prepared for their next stages.
- Pupils are able to participate in a range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are rightly proud of their successes nationally, for example reaching the final in a national handball competition, and winning the University of Manchester's Alan Turing cryptography competition. The school has a strong history of performing arts, with recent performances including an Easter passion play, and the 'School of Rock' show. Clubs such as dance club and participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme also allow pupils to develop a broader range of skills and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The Christian ethos at the heart of the school ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, as well as their understanding of British values, are promoted well, throughout the curriculum and as part of the school's citizenship education. Pupils have also benefited from other opportunities, going on trips, for example, such as to Auschwitz and to the Houses of Parliament.
- Leaders' work to improve behaviour has been effective for the majority of pupils. Incidents of disruptive behaviour have reduced. Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance is in its early stages but shows positive signs; in particular the attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved.
- Leaders use Year 7 catch-up funding well to improve pupils' progress in mathematics and English. A range of extra teaching and support is helping pupils who join the school with attainment that is typically behind other pupils nationally to catch up quickly, well prepared to access the key stage 3 curriculum.
- Parents have mixed views about the school. A minority would not recommend the school, feel that it is not well led and that behaviour is not well managed. Nevertheless, the large majority of parents feel that their children are happy, safe and well looked after in school.

## **Governance of the school**

- Since the last full inspection, the local governing committee and trustees recognised that the school was starting to decline. They took action to address this, including through seconding experienced senior leaders into the school. They have also added an additional layer of strategic oversight in the form of an 'executive strategy group', which monitors closely the school's improvement. These actions were not in place swiftly enough to address the initial decline of the school. However, this year all levels of governance have been acting urgently and effectively to improve the school, and consequently the school is improving.
- Governors possess a wide range of useful expertise and skills which they are using to

hold leaders to account more effectively than in the past. Records show that governors ask probing questions, for example on pupils' attendance and the relative strengths and weaknesses of teaching.

- Until recently, governors have not challenged leaders effectively enough about the difference that the use of pupil premium funding has on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, over time the progress of this group of pupils has been significantly lower than that of other pupils nationally.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders place a high priority on safeguarding and child protection. All staff have received training in the latest statutory guidance on how to keep pupils safe. They recognise the signs that might indicate that a pupil needs help. Staff understand the importance of reporting even seemingly minor concerns, and do so vigilantly.
- The safeguarding team acts promptly when a concern is raised. It liaises effectively and in a timely manner with parents and outside agencies who support pupils' welfare. Team members communicate regularly with each other. They are tenacious in following up on any concerns should they feel that outside agencies are not responding quickly or effectively enough to keep vulnerable pupils safe. However, sometimes the administration of safeguarding does not reflect the strong practice evident in school.
- Pupils know who to speak to if they have any concerns, and know that they will be listened to. The curriculum provides opportunities for them to learn how to stay safe in their community. For example, recently the local police led an assembly on the dangers of getting involved in 'county lines' gangs. As a result of leaders' effective work, pupils feel safe and secure in school, and parents, typically, agree.
- Leaders have had training in safer recruitment, and there are robust procedures in place to ensure that the staff working in the school are suitably trained and checked.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Recent improvements to the overall quality of teaching are evident throughout the school. Some teaching seen during the inspection was very strong, for example in mathematics and geography. However, over time, teaching is not consistently good. As a result, not enough pupils are making good progress.
- Where teaching is stronger, positive, professional working relationships are evident in the classroom. School rules and routines are embedded so that pupils are clear on what is expected of their behaviour and approach to learning. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They use their expert subject knowledge to plan tasks which engage pupils in their learning. Teachers ask pertinent questions which help them to judge how best to move pupils' learning and understanding on. Where this approach is used consistently well, pupils take pride in their work and make stronger progress.
- Where teaching is weaker, lessons are not sufficiently challenging, particularly for middle-ability pupils. Teachers do not consider well enough what pupils can already do,

and so do not increase the level of challenge for pupils over time. This results in lessons becoming too easy. There are not consistent opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and deepen their thinking. Consequently, middle-ability pupils make less progress compared to pupils nationally, principally in English, mathematics and science.

- Leaders have introduced a new system for tracking pupils' progress. They have also undertaken useful work to ensure that assessment information is more accurate, including through moderating their English, mathematics and science work with local schools. Initial indications are that these new processes are helping teachers to plan appropriately for pupils' next steps in learning. However, not all staff are using these systems effectively, which limits pupils' progress.
- Recent improvements to how teachers plan to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils are starting to have a positive impact. Teachers have a better understanding of the different barriers to learning that disadvantaged pupils face. In the best lessons, teachers actively use this information to support pupils in overcoming their barriers and plan learning that will challenge these pupils to make strong progress. As a result, current disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than in the past, particularly in key stage 3. However, their progress remains lower than other pupils nationally.
- Leaders of provision for pupils with SEND have worked hard to ensure that support for pupils with SEND is increasingly effective. Typically, teachers and teaching assistants understand pupils' needs and plan effectively to meet these, especially for pupils who have education, health and care (EHC) plans. However, where teaching is weaker, teachers either do not plan effectively to meet the literacy needs of pupils with SEND, or pupils are unclear about how to approach tasks. Consequently, some pupils struggle to complete their work and do not make enough progress.
- School systems for providing pupils with useful feedback on how to improve their work are not used consistently well across the school. This results in some pupils being unsure about how to progress their learning. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work showed that the inconsistent approach to the use of feedback is impacting negatively on the progress of disadvantaged pupils in particular.
- Where work is not well matched to pupils' abilities, or where teachers' expectations of the class are inconsistent, some pupils' behaviour can deteriorate. When this happens, pupils cease to pay attention to the teacher, and can disrupt others' learning. Pupils told inspectors that such disruption can be frequent in some low-ability and middle-ability classes.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils know that they will be listened to by any member of staff if they have any problems. Pupils particularly value the help and advice they receive from pastoral leaders and the school chaplains, who show dedication in supporting pupils' emotional well-being. Pastoral staff are quick to act when a pupil raises a concern, including by involving external agencies when additional support is required.

- Pupils are safe in school and say that they feel safe. Positive relationships between staff and pupils mean that there is a culture and ethos of reporting any issues. Although some parents felt that bullying is an issue in school, this view was not reflected by pupils, who told inspectors that bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with well.
- Leaders ensure that pupils learn about keeping themselves safe and managing risks through a programme of assemblies and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. For example, pupils understand the importance of not giving out their personal information online.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how they can contribute to life in modern society and demonstrate British values. For example, they are currently raising money to provide learning equipment for pupils in Africa. The school council is researching which charity will best represent their aims.
- Leaders communicate effectively with providers of alternative provision to make sure that pupils' needs are met and that pupils are safe. Pupils follow a bespoke curriculum which supports their different emotional and academic needs well and reflects pupils' interests.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Typically, pupils conduct themselves very well around the school, moving along corridors purposefully and using communal spaces in a calm and polite manner. At break and lunchtimes the environment is friendly, both inside and outside. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those new to the school told inspectors that there is a welcoming atmosphere in the school and that everyone respects each other's differences.
- Inspectors found the vast majority of pupils to be mature and respectful, communicating with each other and with adults well. However, in some lessons, some pupils do not maintain their concentration levels well enough. They become distracted and can distract others. This is typically when teaching is weaker and not planned well enough to meet pupils' different needs, particularly where pupils have low starting points.
- Pupils welcome the new behaviour policy, which they say is fairer and easier to follow than previous policies. The new policy is contributing strongly to improved behaviour in lessons. However, this policy is not used consistently well enough across the school. Where it is not used well, behaviour in some classes is not yet good. Some staff do not feel sufficiently well supported by others in managing the behaviour in their classrooms. Leaders recognise this and know they have further improvements to make.
- Behaviour logs show that the introduction of a new behaviour system in 2016 led to a significant rise in the use of fixed-term exclusions. This year, a new system has been introduced which provides a clear structure for managing behaviour. As this system has become more embedded, exclusion rates have reduced substantially. Fewer boys than previously are excluded. However, the proportion of pupils excluded, including those with SEND, those who are disadvantaged, and for pupils in Year 8, remains too high.

- A lower-than-average proportion of pupils is permanently excluded. Where permanent exclusion has been used, this is for legitimate reasons.
- Attendance is below average. Leaders are working effectively to raise the profile of attendance. Pupils are starting to respond positively. They told inspectors that leaders talk about attendance 'all the time' and that they are especially excited by the prospect of a 'rewards trip' for the best attenders.
- Persistent absence is above average. Leaders are working well with outside agencies and with parents to reduce this. They are responding well to some individual pupils' circumstances and needs. Consequently, this year there has been a large improvement in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, as well as more regular attendance from pupils with SEND. Although current figures remain too high, persistent absence is starting to reduce as a result of the recent, effective work of the school, supported by the local authority.
- Pupils behave well when attending alternative provision. Their attendance is better than when they were in school.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- For the past three years, pupils have not made enough progress across a broad range of subjects, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils of middle ability. Pupils' overall attainment has also declined over three years. While some improvement for current pupils is evident, this has not been rapid enough or achieved consistently well across a wide range of subjects to be consistently good.
- Previous performance information indicates that last year, pupils' progress in mathematics and humanities was broadly average. It was just below average in English, and below average in science and languages. The progress of current pupils is starting to rise, particularly at key stage 3 and in English. This is as a result of leaders' focus on improving the quality of teaching and middle leadership across the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils in particular have not made enough progress by the end of key stage 4, particularly in English, science and humanities. This year, leaders' focus on improving the quality of provision for disadvantaged pupils is starting to make a positive difference, particularly for pupils in Year 8. However, in most year groups disadvantaged pupils' progress is not consistently good.
- Pupils with SEND are now making better progress. This is because teachers know the needs of these pupils more precisely than they have in the past, and are starting to adapt their teaching to meet these needs effectively.
- Leaders have identified that the profile of reading has not been high enough. Consequently, the library is being revamped, to include a wider range of books, and some books suitable for older pupils who need extra support to read fluently. Pupils now use the library as part of their curriculum provision, read for pleasure as part of their weekly tutor activities, and read texts and information as part of their learning across the curriculum. This is helping to improve their literacy skills.
- Most-able pupils make average progress over time. They achieve particularly well in languages and humanities subjects. However, this group of pupils has not been challenged to achieve as highly as it should. Recent changes to raise levels of challenge

in some subjects are appreciated by pupils.

- Previous performance information indicates that pupils made particularly poor progress in the progress measure used by the Department for Education. Leaders identified that this was in part because the religious education (RE) qualification studied by all pupils does not count towards this progress measure. In addition, some vocational qualifications taken by pupils do not contribute to this measure. Consequently, leaders have adapted the curriculum offer for current pupils, including by teaching a new RE qualification, so that pupils entering into key stage 4 are now studying a broad range of qualifying subjects suited to their needs and abilities.
- Leaders have increased the proportion of current pupils who study the English Baccalaureate group of subjects. In particular, an above-average proportion of pupils now choose to study a language at key stage 4.
- Pupils are well supported when choosing their next stages in education. Pupils have access to a broad range of independent careers advice and guidance, including information about local apprenticeships and visits from local sixth-form colleges. Consequently, above-average proportions secure destinations in education, employment and training.
- A few pupils attend an alternative provision. Placements are carefully chosen to allow pupils to experience success, for example through regular attendance or improved behaviour. These pupils achieve well, because the courses they study are carefully matched to their interests and level of ability.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## Requires improvement

- The sixth form provides a small range of academic and vocational courses. A very small number of students choose to continue their studies into the sixth form at Christ's College. This is often because they welcome the familiarity of knowing the teaching staff and environment, rather than having to travel further away to other, possibly larger, provisions.
- There are variations in the quality of teaching in the sixth form. In some subjects, students are challenged to learn to the best of their ability through lessons and activities which are well planned to meet their individual needs. However, this is not consistent, and over time students are not challenged sufficiently to achieve as well as they should. Consequently, over time students make below-average progress in both vocational and academic subjects.
- Leaders have recently improved attendance through revised expectations of how students use their time when not in lessons. However, while improving, attendance in the sixth form is not strong enough. This hinders the progress of some students, and over time has contributed to their below-average outcomes.
- A very few students who enter the sixth form do not have a good pass grade in English and mathematics. Those who need help are supported to improve their understanding. As a result, some students improve their grade when resitting the examination in these subjects.
- The proportion of students remaining on their course in the sixth form is, over time, broadly in line with national averages. Students receive appropriate advice and

guidance prior to entering the sixth form, although governors reflect that in the past they did not get the balance of vocational and academic subjects quite right for some students. This has improved, with leaders tailoring courses to students' needs more successfully. The small numbers in the sixth form mean that the school cannot always offer the range of courses that students would like, and students, increasingly, have chosen to study at other, larger provisions.

- Those who complete their studies receive useful careers advice and guidance so that above-average proportions progress to university, employment or further training. However, this year some students would have appreciated more help when completing their university applications.
- Students in the sixth form are well behaved, well cared for and safe. Their academic studies are augmented with a range of non-qualification activities such as physical education, volunteering and opportunities to undertake work experience. They receive useful PSHE education through daily tutor times and whole-school assemblies. Some students told inspectors that they felt that, sometimes, adults' attention was taken away from the sixth form due to its small size compared with the rest of the school. While they understand this on a practical level, some reflected that they felt 'a little isolated' from the rest of the school.
- Leaders are undertaking a thorough review of the provision over the coming year. They recognise that the provision is not as effective currently as it should be. They are determined that the provision should work well for the benefit of the local community, particularly through offering a nurturing environment for students who otherwise might not continue on with their education. While they are reviewing what they can offer in the sixth form, leaders are continuing to provide education for current Year 12 students going into Year 13, but are not taking on students into Year 12 in September.

## School details

Unique reference number	142490
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10081820

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

Type of school	Secondary Modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	746
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	33
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Simon Walker
Principal	Sarah Hatch
Telephone number	01483 537 373
Website	<a href="http://www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk/">www.christscollege.surrey.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@christscollege.surrey.sch.uk">info@christscollege.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	5–6 February 2013

## Information about this school

- Christ's College is a smaller-than-average-sized secondary school with a very small sixth form. It is a Church of England school. It became part of The Good Shepherd Trust in December 2015.
- Since the last Section 5 inspection in 2013, there has been significant turbulence in leadership. The principal in post at the last inspection left the school in 2016, and a subsequent principal has also since left, along with two vice-principals. The current principal was seconded to the school in June 2018 and was made substantive principal this year. The vice-principal is an interim appointment for this year. Some assistant principals have also been seconded into the school or are in new positions. A full

restructure of leadership positions has taken place in the last year, with the newly formatted and permanent team in place for a September 2019 start.

- The scheme of delegation of the trust is currently under review. Governance of the school is provided through a local governance committee, and through an executive strategy group made up of the principal, local governors and representatives of the trust.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds and others come from a range of different ethnic backgrounds. A below-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average. Very few have an education, health and care plan.
- The school uses alternative provision for a very small number of pupils. This is provided by The Well Project, Access to Education, and Steps, all located in and around Guildford.
- The sixth form currently has 23 students in Year 13, and 10 in Year 12. Those in Year 12 are able to continue into Year 13. The school will not be taking in any students into Year 12 while leaders carry out a review of the provision.
- The school's last section 48 inspection took place in July 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across all three key stages. They made additional short visits to lessons as part of learning walks. Most lessons were visited with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior and middle leaders, and groups of teachers. The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust, and spoke on the telephone to the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors observed pupils during assembly, in class, and at informal times such as during lunchtimes and as they moved around the school.
- Pupils' views were considered through speaking to pupils informally during the inspection, and through meeting more formally with groups of pupils. Inspectors also considered the information provided from Ofsted's student survey and a letter sent to Ofsted by a pupil.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised during lessons, during meetings with subject leaders and in a broader work scrutiny with senior leaders.
- Inspectors considered the views of 141 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 97 free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 57 staff who completed Ofsted's confidential staff survey, as well as those provided during meetings with staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school's performance, school improvement plans, information relating to the quality of teaching, information about pupils' progress, school policies and procedures, attendance and behaviour records, and the school's arrangements for safeguarding.
- Year 11 pupils and Year 13 students were taking exams and/or on study leave during the inspection. They were able to contribute to the inspection through the pupil survey. An inspector observed one revision session with a Year 13 pupil.

## Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Conway	Ofsted Inspector
Taj Bhambra	Ofsted Inspector
James Rouse	Ofsted Inspector

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