

Inspection of Archbishop Holgate's School, A Church of England Academy

Hull Road, York, North Yorkshire, YO10 5ZA

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Archbishop Holgate's School is an exceptional place for pupils to learn. The school's values of justice, compassion, forgiveness and trust are at the heart of every aspect of school life.

Leaders have established a culture of respect, dignity and inclusivity that allows every pupil to thrive. Leaders place a significant emphasis on the development of pupils' personal qualities. Pupils benefit hugely from the extensive opportunities to learn in and out of the classroom. They value this cultural enrichment.

All staff have very high expectations of pupils. Lessons provide opportunities for pupils to be curious and to reflect on what they have been taught. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils who require additional support receive it promptly. The school environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils are confident and articulate and produce consistently high-quality work. Their ability to recall key content from the curriculum is noteworthy.

Pupils enjoy attending this school. They are safe here. They are resilient and support each other to do well. They get help when they need it from staff. Parents rate the school highly. Staff are also incredibly proud to work here.

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

The curriculum at this school is exemplary. Leaders have thought very carefully about pupils' experiences at the school. All pupils benefit greatly from lessons in a wide range of subjects, alongside a set of extensive enrichment opportunities. This curriculum is constantly evolving. Leaders have recently reflected on the disruption to pupils' learning caused by the pandemic. As a result, they have made sensible changes to the Year 9 curriculum to ensure it remains broad and balanced. The sixth-form curriculum is exceptionally strong. Leaders ensure the curriculum is highly ambitious and meets the needs of all pupils.

Subject leaders have meticulous curriculum plans in place for all subjects, across all year groups. Leaders have carefully sequenced every topic, setting out the crucial knowledge and skills that pupils must know and remember. Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They deliver lessons with passion. As a result of high-quality training, teachers use a range of strategies to ensure pupils remember what they have been taught.

The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exceptionally strong. Teachers receive high-quality guidance on how to support these pupils and this is consistently followed. Well trained and knowledgeable teaching assistants play an active role in supporting pupils with SEND. Leaders are fully committed to eradicating any barriers to learning for these pupils. As a result, all pupils achieve highly.

A deep-rooted culture of reading permeates throughout the school. Pupils in younger years have regular opportunities for reading. Older pupils are challenged to read a range of classic texts in and out of lessons. Pupils who are at the earlier stages of reading receive effective support from well-qualified staff. Several sixth-form students have also received training in the school's phonics programme to help them provide additional support to younger pupils who are less confident readers.

The school's personal development programme is comprehensive. Pupils have access to an extensive range of extra-curricular clubs. Leaders obtain regular feedback from pupils to ensure enrichment activities continue to meet their needs. Pupils experience a range of trips and visits to broaden their cultural horizons. Leaders ensure that every pupil benefits from these rich opportunities.

Pupils in all year groups, including those in the sixth form, are provided with many opportunities to prepare for life after school. Important topics, such as maintaining healthy relationships, preparing for the world of work, and developing leadership skills, are planned and taught exceptionally well. There is also considerable strength in the school's wider provision of careers information and guidance for pupils of all ages.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. At all times, pupils are calm, orderly, and respectful. Bullying is not tolerated. Leaders have recently introduced new ways for pupils to report bullying, or any other concerns they have. Additional staff have been recruited to provide mental health and well-being support for pupils. As a result, pupils feel exceptionally well supported by the school's pastoral team.

All staff feel valued. They refer to being part of a special community. Leaders proactively consider the workload and well-being of their staff. Close links exist between the school and the wider community. One parent told us: 'The staff live and breathe the school values, and that is passed on to the pupils. There is a unique and indefinable sense of welcoming at the school, no matter which member of staff you speak to.' The inspection team agrees with this comment.

There is no complacency from leaders or governors. Governors hold leaders strongly to account. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties. Governors and leaders are constantly seeking to adapt and improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are tenacious in their efforts to keep pupils safe. As well as responding rapidly to any concerns, leaders ensure pupils are taught about the local risks they may face. By expanding the pastoral and pupil well-being team, leaders have provided pupils with more places to get help within school. Leaders also work effectively with external agencies where appropriate. Necessary checks are carried out when new members of staff are appointed to ensure that they are safe to work

with pupils. The safeguarding training all staff receive is of the highest quality. This training helps staff to keep pupils safe.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	136617
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10199350
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1,801
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	326
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Hattam
Headteacher	Andrew Daly
Website	http://www.archbishopholgates.academy
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Archbishop Holgate's School opened as an academy in April 2011. It became part of the Pathfinder Multi Academy Trust in August 2016.
- When the predecessor school was inspected by Ofsted in 2007, it was judged to be outstanding. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, most recently in October 2017.
- Archbishop Holgate's School is the designated teaching school hub for the Ryedale, Scarborough and York region.
- Through its structured careers programme the school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide students in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and several other senior leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. The lead inspector also met with those responsible for governance, including a representative from the Diocese of York. A telephone conversation was held with the local authority's school improvement partner.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors did deep dives in English, mathematics, history, geography and art. Inspectors spoke to curriculum leaders and groups of teachers. Inspectors talked to pupils about their work, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with leaders responsible for the school's wider curriculum offer. Inspectors observed extra-curricular activities, form time sessions and an assembly. Inspectors reviewed the school's reading curriculum and listened to pupils reading to their mentors. Inspectors held discussions with sixth-form pupils, in and out of their lessons, as well as meeting sixth-form leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed the systems that the school has in place to keep pupils safe. We spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single gender groups, to listen to their experiences of school life. Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding records to ensure appropriate actions are being taken to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors met with the school's special educational needs coordinator, to check the systems that the school has in place to support vulnerable pupils and those with additional needs.
- The inspection team considered the views of 151 members of staff and 232 pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys. Inspectors also took into account the 274 responses to Ofsted's parent survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

James Duncan, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Melanie Kane	Ofsted Inspector
Angela White	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Wren	Her Majesty's Inspector

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