

Inspection of The Holy Family Catholic School, a Voluntary Academy

Spring Gardens Lane, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 6LH

Inspection dates:	2 and 3 April 2025
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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Sharon Mather. This school is part of Blessed Christopher Wharton Catholic Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chris Hanson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sarah Martin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils mix well at the school irrespective of their backgrounds. They appreciate the respect and support they receive from staff. Pupils are safe at school. Most pupils are happy at school.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. These expectations are not reflected in published outcomes. Pupils' achievement at the end of key stage 4 and key stage 5 is significantly below national averages in most subjects. Pupils receive a varied quality of education at the school.

Pupils' conduct in most lessons is positive. Most classrooms are calm and purposeful learning environments. However, during lesson changeover a small number of pupils display boisterous behaviour. This sometimes includes the use of inappropriate language. As a result, some pupils feel uncomfortable at these times.

Pupils are well supported with their mental health. They learn how to stay mentally healthy in their personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons. Pupils value the support of the pastoral team. Pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular clubs, such as retro games, crafts and science research. This offers them the opportunity to develop their talents and interests in these areas.

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

In September 2023, the discovery of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) in the school led to the enforced closure of a significant area of its building. Managing the challenges of having RAAC in the building is an ongoing consideration for the school.

In some areas of the curriculum, the school has not identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn. Additionally, the school does not always check pupils' understanding or identify gaps in their knowledge. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should. In other areas of the curriculum, the school has identified this important knowledge and set it out in a clear order for pupils to learn. In these subjects, pupils' work shows that they have a better understanding of the curriculum.

Reading is a priority at the school. A high number of pupils enter the school with lower reading ages than their chronological age. The school effectively identifies the weakest readers. Pupils access support, including phonics, fluency support and one-to-one reading. This support is effective in helping these pupils catch up with their peers.

The school identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. A small number of pupils access the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision). Teachers are adept at adapting their lessons so that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum offer. As a result, pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, are well supported at the school.

In the sixth form, students' conduct and attitudes are positive. They are proud to attend the sixth form. Students describe a strong sense of community. Students supplement their academic qualifications with a life skills programme. This helps to prepare them for their next steps by improving skills, such as presenting and communication. Most students in the sixth form move on to positive destinations.

A recently updated behaviour policy ensures that pupils are clear about the school's expectations. A small number of staff do not apply this policy consistently. Occasionally, low-level disruption occurs in lessons, particularly at key stage 3. Rates of absence are high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, some pupils miss out on important learning. The school has a clear system in place to improve attendance. As a result, the number of pupils who are persistently absent has decreased this year.

Pupils access a clearly designed personal development offer. However, the school does not always effectively develop character traits such as respect, responsibility and self-regulation. The PSHE curriculum helps pupils to understand the potential risks in the community. For example, how to stay safe on the roads and to avoid harmful substances, such as vaping. This helps pupils understand how to stay safe in the community. Pupils access careers information through the PSHE curriculum. All pupils in Year 10 take part in work experience. This helps prepare pupils to make informed decisions about their next steps.

The school does not use all the information available to monitor the impact of new strategies on the quality of education it provides. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. The trust has appointed a highly experienced trust improvement board (TIB) to support the governance of the school. The TIB has a strong oversight of the school, including its strengths and areas still to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, the school has not identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, some pupils do not learn the key knowledge needed to achieve well in these subjects. The school should ensure that in all subjects, important knowledge is identified and sequenced coherently.
- In some lessons, the school does not check pupils' understanding and identify gaps in knowledge sufficiently well. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge which remain unaddressed. The school should ensure that teachers use effective strategies to check what pupils know and adapt their teaching to address any knowledge gaps as they arise.

- Rates of pupil absence, particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged, are high. As a result, some pupils miss out on important learning. This impacts on how well they achieve. The school should ensure that the attendance policy is consistently applied to ensure that pupils' attendance, particularly for those who are disadvantaged, improves.
- The school does not always effectively develop character traits such as respect, responsibility and self-regulation. As a result, some pupils display boisterous behaviour and use poor language during lesson changeover. The school should make sure that pupils know how to behave with respect and to self-regulate when they are unsupervised.
- The school does not use all the information available to monitor the impact of new strategies on the quality of education it provides. As a result, the impact of staff training and adaptations to the curriculum are not always fully understood. The school should ensure that leaders have a full understanding of the impact of any new strategies that are implemented and make any necessary improvements.

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.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked-after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	149299
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10346828
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	706
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	31
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sarah Martin
CEO of the trust	Chris Hanson
Headteacher	Sharon Mather
Website	www.holyfamilyschool.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Holy Family Catholic School, a Voluntary Academy converted to become an academy in August 2022. When its predecessor school, The Holy Family Catholic School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness. The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND for up to 20 pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school plans to close the sixth-form provision in August 2025. There are currently only Year 13 students enrolled in the provision.
- The school uses three unregistered and one registered alternative provisions.

- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector discussed any ongoing impact of RAAC with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with the CEO of the trust, members of the trust board including the chair of the trust, and members of the TIB, including the chair of the board.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the quality of education in some other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at social times, at transitions and in lessons. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and carers and staff through discussions and reviewing responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector

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His Majesty's Inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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