

Archbishop Tenison's CofE High School

Address: Selborne Road, Croydon, Surrey, CR0 5JQ

Unique reference number (URN): 101811

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Pupils acquire knowledge and skills across a range of subjects and broadly make suitable progress from their starting points. Those pupils that need additional help in reading, writing and mathematics are supported well and are able to catch up quickly. Overall, pupils typically achieve well in their GCSE examinations, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Disadvantaged pupils achieve particularly well in English, creative subjects and humanities subjects. However, in a few subjects, those pupils with higher starting points do not make enough progress through the curriculum to support them to attain the highest grades. Post-16 students achieve results that are broadly in line with national averages. The small number of sixth-form students, who study vocational courses, generally achieve very well. Pupils receive personalised guidance to support their next steps. As a result, pupils, including those in the post-16 provision, are well prepared overall for the next stage of their education, employment or training.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. They have a firm understanding of the strengths of the curriculum as well as the areas for development. Pupils can choose options that go beyond the national curriculum, such as the opportunity to study 2 modern foreign languages. Leaders have ensured that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are able to study the full range of subjects. Leaders also make sure that teachers have the information they need to adapt lessons so these pupils gain and apply knowledge across subjects. For example, in some lessons, pupils are given additional prompts to enable them to produce high-quality work that shows their understanding. The curriculum is well sequenced so that typically pupils build upon their knowledge over time.

Teaching is generally effective. Teachers provide pupils with clear explanations and with opportunities to practise and develop their skills. Teaching places emphasis on pupils learning the appropriate subject-related vocabulary. For example, in practical subjects, pupils are encouraged to use technical language to describe what they are doing or what they are learning about. Typically, this approach is effective in developing pupils' understanding. Occasionally, in some subjects, teaching sets activities that are not fully effective in building upon what pupils know. This limits the depth of pupils' learning.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders have effective systems in place to swiftly identify the needs of all pupils. They provide additional support for those who need help to achieve and thrive at school. Leaders are proactive in seeking help from external professionals, when needed, and are diligent in ensuring their support for pupils is informed by specialist advice. Staff have been given training to support these pupils with their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are supported with a range of tailored approaches. This includes accessing the 'Haven' provision, which offers specialist help to pupils who find it difficult to attend school.

Within the school, leaders have set up systems of internal support that have been effective in helping pupils with emotional needs. Targeted use of additional funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils participate well in the out-of-lesson activities that the school provides. Leaders have established a culture where all pupils are warmly welcomed into and included in the school community. Nevertheless, there are times when the school is not monitoring the outcomes of particular support strategies as closely as it should. As a result, some vulnerable pupils are not as well supported to make progress in their learning as they could be.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders at all levels know the school's context well and promote a culture of high expectations and inclusion. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, including the effectiveness of the post-16 provision and the school's wider offer. As a result, they have identified appropriate priorities and developed plans for improvements in key areas. For example, in the sixth form, they have adapted the curriculum in response to students' aspirations and use their accurate view of students' performance to understand the areas where further improvement is required. However, at times, targets for improvement in different areas are not sufficiently precise or checked closely enough. This means that leaders' actions are not as effective as they could be in raising attendance or further improving teaching.

Leaders provide staff with a planned programme of professional learning, including, for example, subject-specific development. This programme is informed by the school's priorities and helps staff to develop their practice and pursue their professional aspirations. While this work has been effective in a number of areas, it is not fully embedded across the school. For example, in some teaching, activities are not well matched to what pupils already know.

Leaders take appropriate steps to ensure that the workload and wellbeing of staff are taken into account when implementing changes. As a result, staff feel valued and supported. Relationships with parents and carers and external partners are positive. Governors know the school well. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have provided all pupils with a coherent programme of activities to support their wider development. The programme includes structured learning about how to maintain and develop healthy relationships and how to keep safe while online. Pupils also receive effective advice and guidance on careers and potential pathways after they leave school. The careers programme is delivered to each year group and includes a comprehensive range of topics. Nevertheless, the personal development programme is not as extensive as it could be in supporting pupils' aspirations and next steps. For instance, in the post-16 provision, opportunities for students to learn in more depth about topics, such as budgeting and finance, are underdeveloped. Some post-16 students make a positive contribution to school life, such as working with younger pupils or arranging presentations for assemblies.

However, in some other year groups, opportunities for pupils to take on similar leadership roles are more limited.

Pupils learn to be resilient and develop wider interests by participating in additional school activities. These include activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award and the gospel choir. The school makes sure that these activities are inclusive, with disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities being well represented. Together with the school's effective pastoral care, these opportunities help pupils to build their confidence.

The school is a diverse community. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds learn and socialise well with each other. Pupils understand the importance of being kind and considerate to others and how to demonstrate this, for example, in the way those new to school are made to feel welcome. Pupils are clear that discrimination is not only wrong, but that it does not align with the school's ethos and values. They can explain clearly why derogatory language can be harmful. Pupils demonstrate maturity, when discussing issues relating to relationships and consent. Pupils describe the school as a 'close knit community'. They articulate the difference between right and wrong well. Leaders have ensured that pupils leave the school typically well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have an accurate understanding of what is working well and which areas to target for improvement. They have refined the curriculum to meet the needs of students. For example, recently introduced vocational options have proved to be popular, with students clear about their progress and with how well they are doing.

Students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve broadly in line with national averages for most A-level subjects. Their work typically demonstrates that the curriculum and teaching enable them to learn and demonstrate knowledge securely, albeit in a few subjects, students' learning is not promoted as effectively as it is in others.

Students are well supported for their next steps when leaving school. Leaders have ensured that all students receive expert advice on apprenticeship and university applications. As a result, many pupils go on to secure their first choice institution for further or higher education. Students take part in activities to support their wider development but the breadth of what is on offer is not as rich as it could be. For instance, some students would like more opportunities to become involved with or lead on school-wide developments.

While many students attend well, a small number do not attend school often enough. While leaders have set clear expectations about attendance to support these students, at times, there are inconsistencies in how these expectations are applied. This means that the school's work to secure rapid improvement for those students with the lowest attendance is not as embedded as it should be.

Needs attention ●

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention ●

In all year groups, there are some pupils who do not attend school regularly enough. As a result, these pupils miss important learning as well as opportunities to take part in school activities that build confidence and resilience. Leaders have established expectations for attendance. Information is shared to help develop attendance improvement plans for those who are persistently absent. These plans include a staged approach to improving attendance. However, these actions have not been, at present, effective in improving pupils' attendance rapidly enough.

Leaders have established high expectations for how all members of the school community should behave. These expectations are understood and applied across the school. Pupils typically meet these expectations. Classrooms are calm and purposeful, creating a positive environment in which pupils are ready and supported to learn. Most pupils are attentive and fully engaged in their work. Low-level disruption is rare. Pupils move from lesson to lesson in an orderly manner. Pupils are safe and well looked after in school. During social times, pupils talk to each other respectfully and organise games and activities for each other. Staff are vigilant in spotting signs of bullying. Pupils understand that bullying and discrimination are wrong. They are confident that any incidents that they report will be dealt with swiftly by staff.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to be members of the school and are known as individuals by staff. As a result of the school's welcoming and inclusive approach, pupils express a sense of safety and belonging. Pupils describe the school as being 'like a family'. The school's values are embedded in daily practice. However, for some pupils, the school has not made sure that they attend school regularly enough. This also includes a small number of students in the sixth form.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are generally taught well. They enjoy lessons and they typically achieve well. Across lessons, pupils demonstrate their firm understanding of the school's routines. This supports pupils to move smoothly from one activity to another throughout the school day.

Pupils are kind to each other and they behave well in lessons. Around the school, pupils from different backgrounds enjoy socialising with each other. For example, pupils organise their own games in the sports court and playground. They are well supervised by staff. Pupils understand the importance of reporting any bullying and are clear that any forms of bullying or discrimination are not tolerated.

Pupils are well prepared for life after school. Staff know pupils very well and this helps them identify what each pupil needs to know and understand for future success. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others healthy and safe, especially when working online.

Pupils are also given specific guidance that helps them to keep safe in the local area. Younger pupils have a range of additional activities that help them to become more confident and resilient. This includes national programmes, such as working towards the Duke of Edinburgh award. However, for some post-16 students, the range of opportunities to contribute positively to the wider school community are not as developed as they could be.

Next steps

- Leaders must raise pupils' attendance more rapidly, particularly for those who are persistently or severely absent, by acting swiftly and effectively to tackle the most important barriers.
 - Leaders should sharpen the monitoring and evaluation of their actions to improve key aspects of the school, ensuring that what they do has as much impact as possible, including further developing teaching so that pupils achieve more highly.
 - Leaders should extend the school's programme of personal development and increase the range of wider opportunities available to older pupils and students, including opportunities for enrichment and leadership development, so that pupils can further develop their interests and aspirations.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mrs Eileen Chapman.

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

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with leaders, including those responsible for governance, staff and pupils. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority.

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.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. It is in the Diocese of Southwark. The school's last section 48 inspection was in February 2018.

The school makes use of 3 alternative provisions, including 1 that is unregistered.

At the time of the inspection, there were 839 pupils on roll.

Headteacher: Richard Parrish

Lead inspector:

Duncan Kamyra, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Nigel Clemens, Ofsted Inspector

Una Buckley, His Majesty's Inspector

Nathan Cole, Ofsted Inspector

Emily Leonard, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

784

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

800

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

37.29%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.83%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

19.39%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	38.7%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	40.8%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	40.8%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	45.3	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45.9	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	47.1	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.18	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.01	-0.03	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	25.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.6%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.6%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	41.3	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	41.6	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	43.3	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.42	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.20	-0.57	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	25.6%	53.1%	-27.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	30.6%	53.1%	-22.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	31.6%	52.4%	-20.9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	41.3	50.4	-9.1
2023/24 (final)	41.6	50.0	-8.5
2022/23 (final)	43.3	50.3	-7.0

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.42	0.16	-0.58
2022/23 (final)	-0.20	0.17	-0.37

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	94%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	95%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	98%	94%	Average

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	30.05	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	25.68	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	24.64	34.16	Below

A-level value added

A score showing students’ progress between the end of key stage 4 and the end of their academic qualification studies.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.0	0.0	Close to average

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	9.7%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.7%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.6%	9.0%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	28.9%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	25.5%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	22.8%	26.5%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard ●

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard ●

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention ●

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement ●

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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