

Archbishop Beck Catholic College

Address: 55 Long Lane, Fazakerley, Liverpool, Merseyside, L9 7BF

Unique reference number (URN): 104717

Inspection report: 20 January 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.

Strong standard ●

Post 16 provision

Strong standard ●

Leaders have established a highly inclusive post-16 provision where students thrive. Published data does not reflect the range of pathways that are on offer to pupils. Nor does it show how well students, especially those with low attainment on entry, make progress and achieve. Students following an A-level pathway achieve grades that are at or above the national average. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access a curriculum that is tailored to their interests and aspirations. Most students move on to positive destinations, including advanced levels of study and apprenticeships, when they leave in Year 13.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is taught consistently well across all 16 to 19 study programmes. They analyse its impact and make astute changes where they are needed. Teachers are skilled at helping students to achieve very well. They have expert knowledge of the subjects they teach and link curriculum learning to career pathways. Students, including those with SEND, develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and produce high-quality work that demonstrates their depth of understanding.

Students benefit from an impressive programme of opportunities to enrich their learning beyond academic study. The structured careers education programme provides tailored support so that all groups of students make informed decisions about their next steps.

Expected standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard ●

Leaders promote the importance of regular attendance. They analyse attendance information closely to identify patterns and trends, using this analysis well to intervene early and remove many barriers to pupils' attendance. Staff work proactively to keep a close eye on pupils at risk of persistent and severe absence. Leaders take a highly supportive approach towards helping pupils to overcome complex challenges. The work that staff do to support vulnerable pupils and their families has been largely successful. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance overall are broadly in line with national averages and continue to improve. This is equally the case for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Persistent absence, though high, is falling.

Leaders have established high expectations for behaviour, built on positive relationships and on clear rules and routines that staff and pupils understand. Pupils conduct themselves well across the school. They are respectful and polite, and they enjoy highly positive relationships with staff and each other at this caring school. Classrooms are calm places where pupils can focus on their learning. Bullying and discrimination are not tolerated. Pupils are proud to be members of the school community.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders prioritise the needs of pupils who face barriers to their learning. They identify pupils' varied needs quickly and accurately. Staff recognise the range of challenges that pupils may encounter and respond swiftly and effectively to their emerging needs.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Typically, the support they provide reduces most barriers to learning and wellbeing successfully. Staff receive suitable training to adapt learning effectively for pupils who need it. This training also helps staff to skilfully provide support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. The school's 'nurture' curriculum supports pupils who have fallen behind in reading, handwriting or number to catch up to their peers.

Leaders work together to make a tangible difference for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders have a secure understanding of disadvantaged pupils' needs and use evidence-based approaches to inform their pupil premium strategy. This helps staff to meet these pupils' needs well on the whole. Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of their approaches to ensure that they have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Alternative provision is used sparingly and in pupils' best interests. Leaders make sure that any alternative placements meet the same high standards as they expect in school.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They lead with a clear moral purpose and have established an aspirational culture at the school. Leaders are role models of high expectations and professionalism, always acting in the best interests of pupils.

Leaders understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They have a clear rationale for their improvement priorities and largely take appropriate action to drive improvement across all areas of the school's work. They identify and celebrate the school's strengths and quickly and accurately identify aspects of provision that need improvement. For example, leaders recognise that the school has some work to do in the areas of curriculum and teaching and achievement to fully secure its aspirations for pupils. Effective quality assurance processes feed into training for staff, which helps them to improve aspects of their practice that will make the biggest difference.

Governors ensure that the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined and take account of local context. They make sure that resources are used effectively. Governors understand their statutory duties and meet them effectively. They typically support and challenge leaders appropriately, giving due regard to leaders' workload. Staff feel valued, and they appreciate the care that leaders take to support their lives both in and out of school. Leaders forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with organisations and professionals to ensure that pupils thrive.

Leaders have ensured that the personal development programme is broad, coherently planned and well matched to the school's context. The programme extends across the taught curriculum. It includes many opportunities and experiences for pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them and their place in it. Pupils' positive conduct around the school reflects the focus that leaders have on developing character.

Pupils benefit from an age-appropriate relationships and sex education programme. This is taught well. It develops pupils' knowledge effectively and prepares them well as they grow towards adulthood. Leaders have addressed previous gaps in health education teaching. Pupils are taught to recognise online and offline risks to their wellbeing and learn how to keep themselves safe and healthy, including how to look after their mental health. Well-trained pastoral staff provide effective support for pupils, including sensitive counselling for those who are managing difficult personal circumstances.

Pupils develop their understanding of, and respect for, fundamental British values and cultural diversity. They are ready to take their place in modern Britain. Pupils treat each other with respect and appreciate individual differences.

Pupils access a range of opportunities that broaden their experiences and enable them to develop their talents, interests and leadership skills. Leaders ensure that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, can participate in and benefit from all that the school offers. Pupils are positive about the way that this helps them. As peer and academic mentors, older pupils provide younger pupils with guidance to help them succeed. The school's careers education prepares pupils effectively for future education, employment or training.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils' attainment and progress are uneven across year groups and subjects. Achievement in national examinations has not been sustained at a level in line with national averages over time. Pupils in key stage 3 generally make positive progress through the curriculum as they benefit from the school's refined approach to teaching. Younger pupils benefit from the school's work to address gaps in their knowledge, particularly in mathematics.

However, gaps in language and communication skills remain for some older pupils. These gaps limit these pupils' achievement. Pupils do not consistently develop the knowledge and skills they need in spelling, punctuation and grammar, which hinders their ability to produce written work of a high quality. While leaders are taking appropriate action to address this, it is too soon to see the impact of their work on pupils' achievement. At present, some pupils do achieve well and are ready for the next stage of their education, employment or training, while others lag behind because the school has not successfully addressed their missed or forgotten knowledge.

Pupils' experiences of teaching are not consistent across the school. Although teachers generally present new information clearly, at times, they do not check how well pupils have understood. This means that some pupils' misconceptions persist over time, leading to gaps in their knowledge. Added to this, when staff notice errors in pupils' written work, they do not consistently provide opportunities to address them. In turn, this compounds some misconceptions. Leaders have begun to take action to remedy these weaker practices. For instance, pupils in key stage 3 now benefit more from the school's work to address gaps in their prior learning. However, overall, it is too soon to see the impact of this work on how well older pupils are learning.

Leaders have set out an ambitious, well-designed curriculum. Staff mostly use the school's consistent lesson structure to present learning activities effectively. Teachers use their subject knowledge to explain concepts clearly and to help pupils build knowledge. This includes making changes to the way learning is presented for pupils who may need extra support. This has been particularly successful in terms of building younger pupils' reading and number knowledge, enabling future learning.

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

Pupils feel safe and valued at this school. They know who to go to if they have anxieties or worries. They trust adults to deal with any issues effectively. Staff build highly positive relationships with pupils, who feel welcome and respected. The school ensures that new pupils settle in well. Pupils arriving with barriers to their learning typically have these reduced successfully during their time at school.

Pupils enjoy their learning and demonstrate positive attitudes in lessons. They appreciate the support they receive from staff, including extra help in and sometimes beyond lessons. Older pupils value the guidance they receive to prepare them for examinations. However, some pupils in key stage 4 do not achieve as well as they should. Gaps in language and communication skills, and inconsistencies in the use of information about their prior learning, limit some pupils' achievement. Pupils' attainment and progress in national examinations are uneven across subjects.

Pupils behave well and conduct themselves with maturity. They are respectful and polite. Relationships between pupils and staff show kindness and courtesy. Pupils are proud to be members of the school and follow its established routines. The school provides a civilised, calm environment. Pupils understand the importance of regular attendance and are keen to come to school.

Pupils have a strong sense of community. They feel safe from discrimination and understand that they can be themselves at this school. Any incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive programme of opportunities to develop their interests, leadership skills and character. Pupils build their understanding of fundamental British values. They learn about different cultures and types of families, ready to take their place in a diverse society.

In the sixth form, students achieve very well and are fully prepared for their next steps. They progress to highly appropriate education, employment or training.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment information effectively to identify and address gaps, errors and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge.
 - Leaders should ensure that pupils develop secure foundational knowledge and skills in language and communication across the curriculum.
 - Leaders should further develop and sustain a culture where the importance of high attendance is promoted and celebrated to ensure high attendance is achieved for all.
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About this inspection

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Mick Daley.

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

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior and curriculum leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative from 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 Catholic religious character. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2024.

The school makes use of 5 registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Paul Stirling

Lead inspector:

Andy Cunningham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Barbara Dutton, Ofsted Inspector

Linda Griffiths, Ofsted Inspector

Stephen Ruddy, Ofsted Inspector

Ian Young, Ofsted 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 20 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

1,159

Close to 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

1,186

Close to 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)

37.93%

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

4.06%

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

19.76%

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

Above 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 (provisional)	35.0%	45.2%	Below
2023/24 (final)	39.6%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	38.3%	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 (provisional)	41.4	45.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39.0	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	44.3	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)	-0.83	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.46	-0.03	Below

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 (provisional)	24.3%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	16.1%	25.8%	Below
2022/23 (final)	17.0%	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 (provisional)	33.9	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	30.5	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	35.6	35.0	Close to average

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)	-1.38	-0.57	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.86	-0.57	Below

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 (provisional)	24.3%	52.8%	-28.5 pp
2023/24 (final)	16.1%	53.1%	-37.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	17.0%	52.4%	-35.4 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 (provisional)	33.9	50.3	-16.4

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	30.5	50.0	-19.5
2022/23 (final)	35.6	50.3	-14.7

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)	-1.38	0.16	-1.54
2022/23 (final)	-0.86	0.17	-1.03

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)	89%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	91%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	92%	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)	33.67	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	31.86	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	29.26	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)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	0.3	0.0	Above

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)	8.5%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	11.9%	8.9%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	10.9%	9.0%	Above

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)	26.4%	21.9%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	36.7%	25.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	34.4%	26.5%	Above

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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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