

Inspection of St Bede's Catholic High School, Lytham

Talbot Road, Lytham, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire FY8 4JL

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

St Bede's has high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils achieve well in a range of academic and vocational subjects. The vast majority of pupils go on to education, training and employment when they leave Year 11.

The school is a welcoming and caring community. The school fosters positive relationships with pupils. This helps pupils to develop their self-esteem. Pupils feel happy and safe here. Typically, pupils behave well in class and around the school. They show respect for each other and staff. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and engage thoughtfully in their learning.

Pupils have many opportunities to shine and showcase their talents within the school and the wider community. Examples include whole-school drama productions and sports. Pupils engage enthusiastically in the wide variety of clubs on offer, such as badminton, volleyball, choir and chess. This helps them to develop their self-confidence. They look forward to reward trips to places, such as a beach, bowling alley and ice-skating rink.

Pupils benefit from trips overseas, which enhance their learning. They value the opportunity to take on leadership roles, including reading leaders, house captains, ambassadors and members of the school council. Pupils contribute to fundraising for charities and play an active part in shaping the work of the school.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils benefit from a broad and enriched curriculum. The proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is increasing. Subject curriculums identify the knowledge that pupils will learn in a logical order. This helps pupils to progress well through the curriculum.

The school has supported staff to improve the delivery of the curriculum. Staff, including those in the early stages of their career, value the training opportunities that they receive. Typically, staff revisit prior learning and select engaging activities that build pupils' understanding. In the main, staff check pupils' learning and address any errors or misconceptions well. However, in some subjects, the information gained from these checks is not used as effectively as it could be, to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. This makes it more difficult for some pupils to learn new content.

The school has prioritised reading. Pupils who find reading difficult receive effective support from well-trained staff. This helps to build their reading skills and for them to catch up. The school has invested in a wide range of high-quality texts, which have enhanced pupils' opportunities to read for pleasure. This helps them to develop their confidence and fluency in reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified quickly. The school has improved the level of information it provides about these pupils to staff. The school ensures that staff have the knowledge and expertise to use this

information to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. However, sometimes, some staff do not use this information effectively to support pupils with SEND. This means that a small number of pupils with SEND sometimes do not learn as well as they could in some subjects.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Clear routines and staff's consistent approach contribute to a calm and orderly atmosphere. Staff feel well supported in managing pupils' behaviour. Most pupils socialise well together at breaktimes. The school monitors and reviews pupils' attendance carefully. It uses a range of effective strategies, including rewards, for pupils to improve their attendance rates. Pupils attend regularly.

The school places a strong focus on pupils' personal development. The school supports pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils learn age-appropriate information about relationships and they understand key fundamental British values, including democracy. They explore different religions and cultures. This helps pupils to develop respect and tolerance for others. The school is continuing to work to ensure that there are opportunities for pupils to express their views.

Pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance, including about apprenticeships. They profit from valuable work experience placements and employers visiting the school. These widen pupils' horizons and prepare them well for their next steps.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They appreciate the efforts made to reduce their workload and to prioritise their well-being. Governors understand the strengths of the school and know what needs to improve. They provide both support and constructive challenge to enable continued improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, in some subjects, the methods for checking pupils' knowledge are not used as well as they could be, to help pupils learn. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that information from these checks is used effectively, to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge before introducing new content.
- Occasionally, the information about the needs of some pupils with SEND is not used as well as it could be. This hinders the progress that these pupils make. The school should continue to ensure that staff use information effectively for pupils with SEND so that these pupils achieve as well as they should.

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	119788
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10337674
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	830
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Damian Horton
Headteacher	Paul Marsden
Website	www.stbedeslytham.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic secondary school in the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2023. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in the 2027/28 academic year.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to leadership and staffing. This includes the appointment of two new assistant headteachers. In addition, a new chair of the governing body has been appointed.
- The school uses three registered providers of alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- 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 Covid-19 pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority and with a representative of the Diocese of Lancaster. An inspector spoke with a representative of an alternative provider that the school uses.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences in school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes. A very small number of responses were received to Ofsted's pupil survey, so it was not possible to make any meaningful evaluation of these.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: art and design, English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lesley Nixon	His Majesty's Inspector
Aly Spencer	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Greenough	Ofsted Inspector
Scott Maclean	Ofsted Inspector

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