

Churchdown School

Address: Winston Road, Churchdown, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL3 2RB

Unique reference number (URN): 137634

Inspection report: 17 March 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 ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Most pupils achieve highly. At key stage 4, pupils' performance in examinations is well above the national average. For example, pupils consistently achieve significantly above the national average in examinations for English and mathematics. This is also the case for many other subjects across a range of academic and vocational qualifications. As a result, pupils are prepared well for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Disadvantaged pupils achieve significantly better than their peers nationally. They progress well through the curriculum and secure the qualifications that they need for their next steps.

At key stage 5, students typically achieve in line with national averages in most qualifications. This is reflected in the quality of students' work and responses, which demonstrate that students gain appropriate knowledge and skills across the subjects that they study. Students achieve particularly well in vocational subjects.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils, including those who face barriers to learning and/or well-being, have high attendance. This reflects leaders' high expectations and the school's positive environment. Pupils enjoy school. Their success in learning, and the many wider opportunities on offer, motivate them to attend. As a result, rates of absence are consistently significantly below the national average.

Pupils' conduct is excellent. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils live up to these consistently. Pupils are kind, respectful and dedicated to their learning. They cooperate well and demonstrate self-discipline inside and outside the classroom. As a result, pupils rarely disrupt each other's learning and need few reminders to behave well. Older pupils are positive role models, demonstrating the school's values such as integrity and friendship.

Staff build warm relationships with pupils. They provide the care and encouragement that pupils need to thrive. Leaders take effective action to support pupils who need to increase their attendance or improve their behaviour. Effective tailored adaptations and interventions remove barriers for pupils.

Pupils have a clear understanding that discrimination and harassment are unacceptable. Although it seldom occurs, leaders deal quickly and effectively with any form of bullying or abuse.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders identify barriers to pupils' learning and/or wellbeing in a timely and accurate way. This ensures that leaders and staff know pupils' individual needs well. Leaders put in place effective strategies and support. They keep the impact of these under close review. For

example, they assess the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and check that interventions have the intended impact.

The effectiveness of the school's inclusive work is highly evident for disadvantaged pupils, who attend highly and achieve very well. Pupils known to social care thrive in school, reflected in their high attendance and participation in wider activities.

Leaders use pupil premium funding effectively to reduce barriers to pupils' learning and participation. For example, leaders take a forensic approach to ensure that disadvantaged pupils benefit from trips and wider experiences. Leaders monitor disadvantaged pupils' progress precisely and assess the impact of interventions and support strategies.

Leaders provide effective training to staff. This develops their understanding of how to reduce barriers to learning, such as through strongly embedded learning routines.

Leaders engage well with families and external agencies. Alternative provision is used appropriately to support pupils' learning and personal development.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development. They take deliberate and determined action to bring about improvements, with rapid impact. For example, leaders gain detailed insights into the school's performance in different curriculum subjects and strengthen teaching accordingly.

Leaders at all levels make a consistently positive contribution to the school's priorities. This is reflected in pupils' high attendance and the impact of the personal development programme, for example. Leaders ensure that all staff benefit from a high-quality professional learning programme. Consequently, teachers, including those newest to teaching, build their expertise.

Trustees use their knowledge and expertise to provide consistent support and challenge to leaders. As a result, trustees hold leaders strongly to account and ensure that resources are well managed. Trustees ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties and that leaders act in the best interests of pupils. For example, they maintain strong oversight of the pupil premium strategy to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve and thrive.

Trustees and leaders take effective action to manage staff wellbeing and workload. Leaders have high expectations and set a strong example in their warm relationships with pupils and their professionalism.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The school's personal development programme is extensive. It has a strong impact on pupils' wider knowledge and skills. For example, pupils develop their confidence, resilience and teamwork. Pupils are reflective and behave with integrity. They know that tenacity is important to realise their ambitions.

Leaders ensure that the personal development programme is an entitlement for every pupil. For example, leaders monitor rigorously the uptake of trip by pupils. They identify and put in place strategies to ensure that all pupils benefit. Across the personal development programme, leaders remove barriers to participation for disadvantaged pupils. This ensures that it makes a sustained difference to all pupils.

Through the relationship education curriculum, pupils gain the knowledge and understanding that they need now, and in the future. For example, pupils learn about healthy and unhealthy relationships, and how to keep safe online. The school's 'headstrong' programme teaches pupils how to care for their mental health and well-being. Across all key stages, pupils develop detailed knowledge across the personal, social and health education programme.

Pupils actively participate in sports, musical and many other extra-curricular opportunities. They recognise the benefits that these social activities bring to them. Many pupils take on meaningful leadership roles, such as in the school parliament. They are very proud to represent the school and their peers. By modelling positive behaviours and leading initiatives, older pupils set a strong example to younger pupils.

Pupils receive high-quality careers information, education, advice and guidance. They have a wide range of opportunities to learn about their options after school. Leaders ensure that pupils have meaningful encounters with employers in the local area and further afield.

Pupils are very well prepared for life beyond school. They understand fundamental British values and develop a strong sense of right and wrong. Pupils learn the importance of civic duty.

Expected standard

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Pupils follow a broad and ambitious curriculum. As a result of effective teaching, most pupils achieve highly and are prepared well for their next steps in education. Disadvantaged pupils receive the teaching and adaptations that they need to succeed in their learning.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of curriculum and teaching. Through effective monitoring and evaluation, they identify where improvements need to be made. For example, they have recently implemented improvements to strengthen pupils' spoken and written language.

Leaders provide high-quality training to staff. This enhances their subject and teaching expertise. Staff generally make effective choices about how to meet pupils' needs. On occasions, however, teaching does not match well enough to pupils' starting points.

Leaders have established an effective programme for pupils who need to secure their basic reading skills. Staff have the expertise that they need to implement this programme. As a result, pupils progress well in reading and gain the foundations that they need to learn the rest of the curriculum.

Leaders and staff know the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff typically implement effective adaptations for these pupils.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a post-16 study programme which meets the aspirations and needs of students. There is a suitable range of academic and vocational courses, carefully tailored to the school's context. Students generally achieve well, with achievement in most examinations in line with national averages. Achievement is particularly strong in vocational subjects.

Post-16 teaching builds students' knowledge and develops their skills. Teachers generally make suitable changes to teaching based on accurate assessment. This means that students build on what they already know and can do. However, teaching sometimes does not deepen students' understanding as well as it could.

Students are well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training. They receive high-quality careers information, education advice and guidance. For example, they participate in work experience and attend useful careers fairs. As a result, students are well-informed about their options.

Through the post-16 enrichment programme, students benefit from a range of wider opportunities. They are keen to take on leadership roles, and make a positive difference to the school and wider community. For example, they lead 'house' events and campaigns to raise money for charity.

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

Pupils enjoy learning and benefit from effective teaching. Those with barriers to learning and/or well-being progress well through the curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils achieve very well, often outperforming their peers in national examinations.

At key stage 4, pupils typically achieve highly. For example, pupils consistently secure the solid foundations that they need in English and mathematics. Across a wide variety of subjects, pupils achieve above the national average in examinations. At key stage 5, students typically achieve at least in line with national averages. As a result, pupils of all ages are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging to Churchdown. They are proud to attend the school and enjoy warm, respectful relationships with staff. Pupils cooperate very well with each other, developing strong teamwork and social skills.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of wider opportunities. They are determined to gain the school's 'Edge' rewards to reflect their participation and achievement.

Pupils develop their broader knowledge and skills through experiences such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. They learn about potential future careers by attending a 'business

breakfast', for example. Pupils learn about democracy and representation through the school's 'parliament'.

Pupils behave impeccably. They follow routines willingly and appreciate the clear expectations that leaders and staff have of them. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that bullying or harassment is dealt with seriously and effectively. This is rarely required, however.

Pupils have high attendance. This reflects how well they thrive in school and the care that staff provide. Staff work effectively and with clarity to remove barriers to pupils' attendance and achievement. This ensures that all pupils have positive experience.

Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. They contribute positively to the school and wider community and behave with respect and integrity.

Next steps

- Leaders should strengthen further the quality of teaching, so that all pupils, including post-16 students, achieve highly.

About this inspection

The school is part of a single academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gemina Davie.

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 school leaders, teachers, pupils and trustees during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

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 school makes use of two alternative provisions, including one which is unregistered.

Headteacher: David Potter

Lead inspector:

James Oldham, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Matthew Collins, Ofsted Inspector

Mike Thomas, Ofsted Inspector

Jo Butler, Ofsted Inspector

Simon Horner, Ofsted Inspector

Tom Hill, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,447

Above 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

1,332

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)

15.95%

Below 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

3.52%

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

11.68%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Well 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)	53.8%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	55.7%	45.9%	Above
2022/23 (final)	49.6%	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)	51.5	46.0	Above
2023/24 (final)	54.3	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	51.6	46.3	Above

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)	0.93	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.67	-0.03	Above

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)	21.9%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.1%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	34.4%	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)	41.2	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	49.8	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	44.5	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)	0.92	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.30	-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)	21.9%	53.1%	-31.3 pp
2023/24 (final)	38.1%	53.1%	-15.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	34.4%	52.4%	-18.1 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)	41.2	50.4	-9.2
2023/24 (final)	49.8	50.0	-0.2
2022/23 (final)	44.5	50.3	-5.8

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)	0.92	0.16	0.76
2022/23 (final)	0.30	0.17	0.13

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)	95%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	96%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	95%	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)	36.00	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	35.71	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	31.71	34.16	Close to average

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)	-0.2	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)	5.5%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.1%	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)	14.4%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	17.5%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	17.0%	26.5%	Below

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright