

Bellerive FCJ Catholic College

Address: 1 Aigburth Drive, Sefton Park, Liverpool, Merseyside, L17 3AA

Unique reference number (URN): 138183

Inspection report: 3 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Typically, pupils progress securely through the curriculum and learn well. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, generally achieve close to national averages in examinations. Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as similar pupils nationally in many of their qualifications at GCSE.

Where some pupils have not achieved the high grades that are in line with leaders' expectations, leaders have prioritised and addressed this as an area for improvement. For example, where this occurred in mathematics, leaders meticulously monitored the effectiveness of their actions.

In the sixth form, students achieve close to the national average in applied general courses. However, leaders recognise that students' attainment in A-level qualifications is a priority for improvement. Leaders' actions are having a positive impact. Students leave school well prepared for their next steps in education, training or employment.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

School leaders and governors hold a clear commitment to securing excellent attendance for every pupil. Leaders have taken determined action to improve overall attendance and to reduce persistent absence, especially among those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The current attendance of pupils is in line with national averages and improving for pupils with SEND. When barriers to attendance arise, leaders work creatively with pupils and their families. For example, daily check-ins, 'soft landings' and wraparound support from family workers help these pupils so that their attendance improves.

Leaders have created a culture that is kind, compassionate and respectful. Pupils readily meet the school's high expectations for their conduct. Bullying and discriminatory language are not tolerated. Leaders respond swiftly and appropriately to any incident, including if these occur online. Relationships between staff and pupils are polite and warm. Social times are a hive of activity, and pupils enjoy spending time with their friends and engaging in the array of activities on offer. Students in the sixth form support each other well in lessons and enjoy their studies.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have a precise understanding of the strengths of the curriculum, which is broad and ambitious. They regularly review how well the curriculum is taught and make timely improvements when required. For example, leaders' targeted improvements to the curriculum and teaching have strengthened learning in mathematics and in the sixth form.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum incorporates the knowledge, skills and experiences that pupils at the school need. Careful thought has been given to what pupils are taught and the

order in which pupils should build their knowledge. Staff generally adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs, although on some occasions this varies in effectiveness.

Teachers use their detailed subject knowledge to design activities that help pupils to learn curriculum content well. They check pupils' understanding to spot misconceptions and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. However, there remains some variability in the consistency and impact with which this is done. This means that some pupils do not learn the curriculum as deeply as they could.

Leaders identify pupils who have not secured the knowledge they need in mathematics, reading and writing. They know that some pupils need further support, particularly in their reading, and have put additional help in place. This is having some impact, but the precise nature of this support could be further considered.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school's ethos and vision are firmly rooted in inclusion. Each pupil is recognised and appreciated as an individual.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are promptly identified when they join the school. Pupils with SEND or other vulnerabilities are well-prepared for the move to secondary school through a carefully planned transition programme. Leaders' close working with external partners ensures continuity of support. This helps these pupils get off to a flying start.

Staff are provided with the training and information they need about individual pupils. Teachers typically ensure that pupils with SEND can access their learning. However, at times, the adjustments or adaptations that pupils need are not as skilfully enacted as they could be. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders are strengthening their monitoring systems to track pupils' progress and ensure that effective strategies are put in place more consistently.

Leaders have a thorough knowledge of their disadvantaged pupils and the barriers they face. Pupil premium funding is used effectively to enable these pupils to engage fully with the curriculum and benefit from the wider opportunities the school provides. The school's use of alternative provision is carefully considered and appropriate to the needs of pupils who attend it.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors have acted determinedly to raise expectations of what all pupils and students can achieve. Their decisions reflect a clear vision for higher standards. While many staff have risen to this, more work is needed to ensure that teaching consistently reflects high ambition for all pupils. This includes ensuring that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve highly.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have enacted well-considered plans to harness these improvements. These are making a positive impact on the curriculum design and attendance of pupils.

Governors use their expertise and experience well to support leaders. They provide valuable support and challenge. This has helped the school to improve quickly in areas where leaders have identified priorities.

Staff, including teachers new to the profession, believe that leaders are considerate of their workload and ready to listen to their views. Staff training is designed to further develop their expertise. This includes early career teachers, who benefit fully from the school's evidence-informed professional learning. Staff value the care leaders offer for their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing. They are proud to work at the school.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders have thought carefully about how best to foster a sense of belonging among pupils. They have placed the school's ethos of creating a caring community at the heart of the personal development and wellbeing programme. Through community and charity events, pupils learn to become thoughtful, active individuals who contribute positively to their school and wider community. Leaders have grown opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests through extra-curricular activities.

Through the planned personal, social, health and economic education curriculum and 'drop-down' days, teachers cultivate pupils' understanding of important topics. These include healthy relationships, financial planning, democracy and equality. Pupils and students value being part of the school's diverse community and are proud of belonging to a school that welcomes people of all backgrounds. They readily celebrate different cultures, faiths and perspectives through events such as 'diversity day' and cultural fashion shows. Pupils are well prepared for growing up in modern Britain.

Pupils relish taking on leadership roles that contribute to the life of the school. As event coordinators, school councillors and form captains, pupils and students play an active role in shaping school decisions. For example, they helped introduce new water fountains in the canteen and contributed to changes to the school uniform.

Leaders have put in place a suitable careers programme. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive carefully planned support. This allows pupils to make informed decisions about their next steps in education or training. The impact of this support is exemplified by the positive destinations of pupils.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Since the previous inspection, the sixth form has been through a period of change. Leaders have acted swiftly and decisively following a period of low academic outcomes. For example, the curriculum has been redesigned to include a broader offer of subjects so that it suitably meets the needs and interests of the students.

Leaders' oversight of student progress is sharp and focused. They ensure that teachers are trained effectively and that the curriculum is taught well. Teachers have strengthened and refined how they check students' understanding. They provide meaningful and timely feedback to enable students to progress confidently through their programmes of study. The

most recently published information shows that students achieve close to the national average in applied studies. Although published A-level results remain below national averages, students' work shows that they are building knowledge and skills securely.

Leaders ensure that students facing barriers to their learning receive personalised academic support. Disadvantaged students, or those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are also provided with effective pastoral care, should they require it. This helps students to progress well from their starting points and have high aspirations.

Students relish being part of the vibrant sixth-form community. They value the range of enrichment activities and school clubs available to them. They participate in performances, choir, band practice and international trips. Students receive quality careers information, education, advice and guidance. Many students secure ambitious destinations that reflect their aspirations and interests.

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

Pupils are happy and enjoy attending Bellerive FCJ Catholic College. They quickly become part of the school community in this welcoming school. Pupils describe the school as a friendly place where they feel they have a voice and belong. They value their friendships and the positive relationships that they have with staff. Pupils feel safe and know that there is someone there to help them if they have any worries.

The school has raised its expectations of what all pupils at the school can achieve. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, benefit from an ambitious and varied curriculum. Largely, pupils achieve in line with national averages, although leaders know there is more to do to raise outcomes further.

The school identifies any barriers pupils may have to their learning. Staff help them overcome these barriers with increasing success. Classrooms are calm and harmonious. In lessons, pupils listen carefully to teachers' instructions and do their best to work hard. Pupils enjoy learning and are motivated to be successful in their studies. They are well prepared for the next stages of their education, employment or training.

Pupils attend school regularly and behave consistently well. They respect each other and show a kindness and gentleness, underpinned by the school's values, to their peers and staff. Students in the sixth form are excellent role models to younger pupils. Bullying is not an issue at the school. If it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by staff.

Beyond their studies, pupils benefit from a plethora of opportunities that help them flourish. They take part in sports teams, music and drama productions and an array of trips that broaden pupils' horizons. Clubs, such as 'debate mate' and the British sign language club, build pupils' communication skills for real-world use. Leaders make sure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities can join in.

Next steps

- Leaders should build upon their work so that pupils' misconceptions and gaps in knowledge are addressed quickly and effectively across subjects.
 - Leaders should check that the adaptations and adjustments that pupils need are more consistently used across the curriculum so that pupils flourish.
 - Leaders should ensure that the high expectations for what all pupils can achieve are firmly embedded across the school.
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About this inspection

The school is part of the Bellerive FCJ Catholic College academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is a single academy trust overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Sister Brenda Wallace. The school is also part of the Gaudete Trust and FCJ Educational Trust. These organisations do not have responsibility for the running of the school.

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 the headteacher and other senior leaders during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the diocese, the headteacher of the virtual school, a local governor and the chair of the board of trustees, who is also the chair of governors.

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 one registered alternative provision, for a very small number of pupils.

The school is a standalone academy.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection took place in April 2024.

Headteacher: Peter Forsey

Lead inspector:

Kate Bowker, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

David Roberts, Ofsted Inspector

Alyson Middlemass, Ofsted Inspector

John Cowper, Ofsted Inspector

Helen Fowler, 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 3 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

931

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

900

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)

37.92%

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

1.72%

Below 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

15.36%

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

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 (revised)	42.3%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	51.3%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42.9%	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)	47.3	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	47.4	45.9	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	45.8	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)	-0.37	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.17	-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)	40.0%	25.8%	Above
2022/23 (final)	27.5%	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)	40.1	34.9	Above
2023/24 (final)	40.3	34.6	Above
2022/23 (final)	39.8	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)	-0.47	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.66	-0.57	Close to average

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)	40.0%	53.1%	-13.1 pp
2022/23 (final)	27.5%	52.4%	-25.0 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)	40.1	50.4	-10.4
2023/24 (final)	40.3	50.0	-9.7
2022/23 (final)	39.8	50.3	-10.5

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)	-0.47	0.16	-0.63
2022/23 (final)	-0.66	0.17	-0.82

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)	88%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	95%	93%	Average
2021 leavers (revised)	96%	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)	27.33	34.99	Below
2023/24 (final)	28.58	34.38	Below
2022/23 (final)	26.42	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)	-0.3	0.0	Below
2023/24 (revised)	-0.2	0.0	Below

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)	9.3%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.2%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	7.8%	9.0%	Close to average

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)	24.3%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	27.2%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	22.7%	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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



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