

Switched-On Christian School

125 Alma Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH9 1DE

Inspection dates

15–16 November 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Outcomes for pupils

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as school leaders have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- The quality of leaders' development planning is not strong. It fails to take into sufficient account recent substantial changes that the school has experienced, such as a fall in the number of pupils on roll and the move to new premises.
- The role of the board of governors, which does not act in the capacity of proprietor, is unclear. This lack of clarity is reflected in key policies and procedures and is potentially confusing for staff and parents.
- The procedures for reviewing policies lack rigour. As a consequence it is sometimes unclear whether key documentation is up to date.
- Although safeguarding is effective, there are aspects of compliance with statutory requirements that need to be sharper.
- The quality of record-keeping is not good in a number of areas, such as the record of training undertaken by staff.
- The school does not have an effective accessibility plan and is, therefore, not fulfilling its duties with regard to the Equality Act 2010.
- The quality of questioning by teachers is not consistently good.
- Pupils' folders of written work are often untidily maintained and this undermines their usefulness.
- The school has not developed a culture of reading to which all pupils commit.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have a good understanding of the curriculum and the principles of personalised learning that underpin it. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and on pupils' progress.
- As a result of accurate assessment, leaders have a good understanding of pupils' ability when they enter the school. This allows them to plan pupils' learning effectively.
- Pupils make good progress during their time at the school.
- Teaching allows pupils to acquire key skills in literacy, numeracy, speaking and listening.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. The school also promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have a strong understanding of fundamental British values.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education and for life in modern Britain.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the school’s development planning is up to date, timely and takes fully into account the recently changed circumstances of the school
 - the place of the board of governors in the governance structure of the school is clarified, especially with respect to roles and responsibilities
 - record-keeping is improved, especially records of staff training
 - the system for reviewing key policies is more effective in order that they are all up to date
 - all the independent school standards are met.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers’ questioning is used more consistently to deepen pupils’ understanding
 - pupils’ folders provide a better resource for future reference
 - a culture of reading is more widely developed in the school.

The school must meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The proprietor must keep a register which shows in relation to each member of staff (“S”) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether a check of S’s right to work in the United Kingdom was made (paragraph 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a)(vii)).
- The proprietor must ensure that particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school’s internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request (paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which sets out clear time scales for the management of a complaint (paragraph 33, 33(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)).
- The school must make arrangements to meet the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The proprietor and school leaders have not ensured that the requirements of the independent school standards and associated regulations are met in full. These do not have a serious impact, however, on pupils' welfare, health and safety or their academic and personal development.
- The quality of school leaders' strategic development planning requires improvement. It is not tied closely enough to the current position of the school and is still based on the plan for 2012–2015. As a result it does not take sufficient account of the school's recent changed circumstances, such as a fall in the number of pupils on roll or its move to a new set of premises. Overall, this means the strategic direction of the school lacks clarity.
- At the time of the material change inspection in December 2015 there were some gaps in the school's admissions register that meant that it did not meet the requirements of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. These shortcomings have been rectified by the proprietor. Nonetheless, there are now omissions in relation to the destinations of pupils who have left the school recently. The school has all the required information but is not using it efficiently to maintain an effective admissions register.
- All of the other standards that were unmet at the time of the material change inspection have now been successfully met.
- The school's complaints policy is made available to parents via the school website but it does not include clear timescales for the handling of all stages of the complaints process.
- The school uses an online curriculum specifically developed for Christian schools as the basis for pupils' education. This covers the key areas required by a broad and balanced curriculum, such as mathematics, English, science, humanities, foreign languages and religious education. This core curriculum is supplemented by afternoon sessions which often focus on creative or practical activities (such as sport, art, music or cooking) or on topics such as fundamental British values. As a result of the design of the curriculum, pupils have good opportunities to develop key skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- School leaders and the proprietor have a very strong understanding of the curriculum that the school uses. They are proponents of personalised education and have a good understanding of the principles behind the approach that they are taking.
- The school's Christian ethos is at the heart of everything it does. In addition, pupils also learn about other religions such as Islam and Judaism, including through visits to a mosque and a synagogue. This aspect of the school's work is a central element in the successful promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils also have a good knowledge and understanding of fundamental British values.
- Leaders promote a culture of ambition and have taken steps to ensure that the school's curriculum enables pupils to make progress and to move on successfully to the next stage in their education. They have developed links with further education providers to ensure that they understand how the school's online curriculum is accredited and how it compares to the public examination system. This helps pupils to make the transition from the school to the next stage of their education smoothly.

Governance

- The proprietor works at the school and as a consequence has a good knowledge of the education it provides. Nonetheless, key areas of the governance of the school clearly require improvement. Development planning is not sharp enough. The systems for reviewing and updating policies are not efficient or rigorous enough and this means there is often uncertainty about the precise status of key documentation that the school is required to have.
- The school does have a small board of governors but it is not the named proprietor on the register of independent schools. Its precise role in the governance of the school is unclear and this lack of clarity is often reflected in the procedures and policies of the school. This can cause confusion to governors, staff and parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils are safe and they feel safe. The headteacher and the proprietor are both trained to carry out the role of designated safeguarding lead. Moreover, they are keen to develop the school's culture of safeguarding further and are proactively working with representatives of the local authority and the local safeguarding children board in order to do this.
- At the time of the inspection the school's child protection and safeguarding policy was not on the school's website. School leaders rectified this situation once it was brought to their attention. The policy itself has regard to the latest guidance issued by the government and all staff have read part one of 'Keeping children safe in education', 2016.
- The school's single central register of the checks made on the backgrounds of staff and their suitability to work with children meets requirements, with one exception. The information recorded about the right of staff to work in the United Kingdom had not been updated efficiently. The school has accurate information on this and was able to update the single central register during the course of the inspection, but this is another example of how record-keeping in the school requires improvement.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching demonstrates a consistently good understanding of the curriculum and the principles that underpin it. The headteacher undertakes almost all the teaching in the school, supported by the proprietor in his role as a teaching assistant. This means that the approach to teaching is consistent across all subjects. As a result, pupils are clear about expectations in terms of their approach to work and their behaviour. In addition, it also means that pupils have a good understanding of the curriculum and how its components fit together.
- Teaching is well planned. In the mornings, pupils work on their personalised learning programme through the online curriculum. Teaching supports this through regular conversations with pupils about their learning and what they are working on. With this support, pupils develop the ability to take responsibility for organising their learning across the week well. In the afternoons teaching focuses on aspects not covered by the online curriculum, such as sport, art, music and cooking. These lessons contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching makes good use of baseline testing and ongoing assessment of pupils' work to monitor pupils' progress and to plan for the next steps in their learning.

- Many pupils arrive in the school from other schools or elective home education at times other than the usual transition points. Teachers work well to make this a smooth process and to ensure that pupils quickly begin learning and making progress.
- The most able pupils' knowledge and understanding are developed effectively by personalised learning programmes. The opportunities for project work in the curriculum allows them to broaden and deepen their understanding, and this helps them to make good progress.
- Effective teaching helps pupils to acquire knowledge across a range of subjects. Pupils are given time to review their learning and to revisit areas that they need to work on. Teachers often use questioning to assess pupils' knowledge but do not consistently use it to probe and develop pupils' understanding. This does not help pupils to acquire deep and secure understanding of the subjects they are studying.
- Pupils keep folders of notes that they have taken during their online learning. These are often scrappy and poorly organised. They do not provide a useful resource for future learning.
- Teaching has not developed a culture of reading in the school. While some pupils read widely and often, others display a lack of interest in developing this aspect of their learning.
- Teaching has helped pupils to develop a good awareness of fundamental British values and the importance of equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Teachers provide parents with accurate information about their children's education. Annual reports include comments from teachers about pupils' progress and a detailed breakdown of their attainment in the online courses that they undertake. The reports do not contain enough information, however, on what pupils need to do to improve.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are self-confident young people who mix easily with each other and with adults.
- For the most part pupils take pride in their work and want to do well. They show good levels of self-motivation and independence as they work through their online curriculum. These positive attitudes are not necessarily reflected, however, in the quality of their notes, which are sometimes very poorly presented.
- Pupils show respect for others' views and opinions. Not only do they know precisely what the fundamental British values are (democracy, the rule of law, liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs), they understand how they can be applied to life in modern Britain. For example, pupils understand that tolerance does not mean you have to agree with a particular view in order to respect the right of someone to hold it. They know that there are differences and similarities between the major religions in Britain and can talk meaningfully about them. They also talk explicitly of how tolerance extends to people who have no religious faith. This developed understanding of tolerance and diversity is testament to the school's successful work to promote pupils' personal development and to help them become good citizens.
- Pupils are safe and express very strongly that they feel the school is a safe place to study. The parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agree with this assessment.

- Pupils use careers education to make informed decisions about their future. Information on the destinations of pupils after they leave the school shows that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well and are polite and courteous to each other, to staff and to visitors at all times. In particular, older pupils display a lot of kindness to younger ones. These younger pupils greatly appreciate this and the 'family' atmosphere it generates. Pupils enjoy helping each other with their work.
- Pupils respect the school environment and there were no instances of disruptive behaviour during the inspection. School records confirm that serious instances of misbehaviour do not occur. Pupils have clearly developed good levels of self-discipline.
- Pupils say that there is no bullying at the school, which shows that the school's anti-bullying strategy is effective.
- Pupils value their education and attendance is good. No pupils are persistently absent.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- When pupils arrive in the school they undertake rigorous baseline tests, what the school refers to as 'diagnostics', which are used to assess accurately their prior knowledge and understanding. This means that teachers have a clear understanding of pupils' starting points and can set work at the appropriate level for each pupil. This provides the bedrock for the good progress that pupils make during their time in the school.
- Observations in lessons, conversations with pupils and examination of their work shows that overall pupils in the school make good progress across a range of subjects, including mathematics and English, whatever their relative starting points. Given the small number of pupils in the school, the inspector was able to look at the achievement of all the pupils present during the inspection in great detail and across all the subjects they are studying. This showed a consistent picture of good progress for all these pupils.
- As they move through the school, pupils prepare for and then undertake a series of assessments that ultimately earn them the equivalent of an American high-school diploma. The school works proactively with local further education providers to ensure that they understand the nature of the qualifications that pupils attain and this helps pupils to move on to appropriate courses for the next stage of their education.
- The school has no disadvantaged pupils and very small numbers of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so it is not possible to make any meaningful statements about these groups. The same is true of the most able pupils, but close examination of the work and achievement records of individual pupils identified by the school as most able show that they are making good progress.
- The extent to which pupils read is variable. A number of pupils clearly read widely and often, but others do not display a similar enthusiasm. Nonetheless, of the sample of readers listened to across a range of abilities, all could read with some fluency. Those who read more frequently outside school showed better comprehension of what they were reading and the ability, for example, to use context to work out the

meaning of unfamiliar words. Younger readers showed some ability to use phonics techniques to decipher unfamiliar words.

School details

Unique reference number	138249
DfE registration number	837 6008
Inspection number	10012901

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent Christian school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Switched-On Education Ltd
Headteacher	Cheryl Hill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£3,600
Telephone number	01202 859 421
Website	www.bournemouthchristianschool.co.uk
Email address	Switchedonchristianschool@gmail.com
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2013

Information about this school

- Switched-On Christian School is a small faith school. It is run by Switched-On Education Limited whose owner acts as the proprietor of the school. There is a board of governors but it does not act as the proprietary body.
- The date of the school's last standard inspection was 15–16 May 2013. It had a material change inspection in December 2015, after which it had to produce an action plan. Upon evaluation, this plan was deemed to require improvement.
- The school opened in 2012 and moved to its current premises, which it leases from Winton Methodist Church, in 2015.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection the inspector held regular meetings with the proprietor and the headteacher. He also met with a member of the board of governors.
- The inspector observed pupils' learning in lessons, looked at their work and talked to them about it. He also looked in detail at the school's records of pupils' attainment and progress over time.
- The inspector held a discussion with all the pupils in the school and heard a number of them read aloud.
- An extensive range of documentation was examined both prior to and during the inspection.
- In reaching his judgement the inspector took into account four responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.

Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016