

Inspection of The Chalfonts Community College

Narcot Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 8TP

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud that their school is inclusive. Leaders promote a culture of understanding and acceptance. Pupils from a broad range of backgrounds and cultures are equally welcome here. Their wide range of needs are met successfully. Recent work to tackle the casual use of homophobic language during social time has been successful. Pupils, empowered by leaders, have made a significant contribution to this work.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. They act decisively when a small minority do not rise to the challenge. Most pupils conduct themselves well, acting in a kind and thoughtful way. A few are needing more intensive support to settle back into school routines after the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At times, their behaviour makes some of their peers feel unsettled in school. Nevertheless, pupils are safe here. Bullying is dealt with effectively by adults who know pupils well and are sensitive to their needs.

Adults want pupils to be well prepared for a successful future. They ensure that pupils receive a suitably broad education. As a result, most pupils move onto appropriate and ambitious destinations at the end of Year 11 and Year 13.

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

The school's curriculum helps pupils to secure the knowledge and qualifications they need for future success. At the end of Year 11, all pupils secure suitable further education, employment or training. High proportions of sixth-form students take up university places, with a growing number accessing high-quality apprenticeships.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. For a small number, minor adaptations to their curriculum help them to access the extra support they need. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve suitably ambitious outcomes. Where pupils attend alternative provision, this helps them to re-engage successfully with learning. Refugees arriving from Ukraine are helped to quickly catch up in English and mathematics. This enables them to access the wider curriculum successfully. Support for sixth-form students who still need to achieve a level 2 qualification in English and mathematics is in place but is less well structured.

The proportion of pupils accessing the English Baccalaureate suite of key stage 4 qualifications is below the government's ambition. Leaders have recently made changes so that key stage 3 learning continues until the end of Year 9. They feel this will prepare pupils better for following a broad range of academic subjects at key stage 4. As this change is being established, what pupils need to learn during Year 9 is not defined precisely enough in some subjects.

Leaders are working hard to re-establish a culture of high expectations following the disruption caused by the pandemic. This is improving the atmosphere around the school, although there is more to do. Central to this work is ensuring that staff

consider the underlying causes of poor behaviour, rather than just addressing the symptoms. Most pupils behave well, although a small minority sometimes do not. When incidents occur, leaders address them with suitable rigour.

Pupils benefit from rich opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They contribute to their local community, such as by fundraising for local food banks and Ukrainian families. Large numbers participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, developing their self-confidence and understanding of their place in the world. Careers information, education, advice and guidance is coherent and considered, although oversight of it is less clear in the sixth form. Pupils receive useful information about the broad range of post-16 and post-18 options, meeting the requirements of the Baker Clause. Post-16 work experience is due to recommence this year, following a pause during the pandemic.

Leaders want pupils to live and breathe the school's values of 'commitment, conscientiousness, courtesy and community-minded'. They recognise that some pupils do not consistently translate their learning about relationships and respect into their daily actions. Leaders use assemblies well to help pupils understand the consequences of their actions. Although an appropriate programme of personal, social and health education is in place, new leaders are ambitious to do much more. Their plans to improve the quality of this part of the curriculum are well considered but are in the early stages of being put into place.

Much has changed since the last inspection, with many leaders, including trustees, quite new in their posts. This change has brought renewed energy to the school's leadership but has been unsettling for some pupils, staff and parents. Leaders have an accurate and shared understanding of the school's current strengths and priorities for improvement. They know there is much to be done and are tackling relative weaknesses in a timely and sensible way.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have worked hard to establish a culture of vigilance. Relevant training gives staff useful knowledge about potential risks to pupils. Consequently, staff are well placed to act swiftly when concerns arise, because pupils' needs and vulnerabilities are well understood. The prompt reporting of concerns enables leaders to provide pupils and their families with timely support that helps keep them safe.

Safeguarding leaders are very new in post. They have ambitious plans to further develop how pupils are taught to stay safe. These plans look set to build on what pupils already learn about safeguarding issues such as healthy relationships and sexual consent.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning is less well developed in Year 9 than it is in other year groups. Consequently, in some subjects, the building blocks of knowledge that equip pupils for key stage 4 are not identified or taught precisely enough. Leaders should review and refine recent changes to the Year 9 curriculum so that it prepares pupils consistently well for their key stage 4 learning.
- Some aspects of personal development are not taught well enough across the whole school. As a result, some pupils do not routinely make positive choices about how to behave towards each other. Leaders should ensure that the taught personal, social and health education programme enhances their existing work to develop a positive culture of behaviour in the school.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137215
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10241903
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,350
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	184
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Solloway
Principal	Caroline Whitehead
Website	www.chalfonts.org
Date of previous inspection	25 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, several leaders have left the school and several others have joined it. The principal took up her post in September 2021. Some other senior leaders are relatively new, having joined the school in September 2022. There are similar changes to governor personnel, with none of the current governors having been in post at the last inspection.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) funded by the local authority. It provides eight places for pupils with physical disabilities. Currently, there are three pupils enrolled in the specially resourced provision. They access all of their curriculum alongside pupils in the main part of the school.
- A very small number of pupils access alternative provision as part of their schooling, either part time or short term. The school uses two local provisions, one of which is registered with Ofsted and one which is not required to be.

- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above average. This includes pupils with physical disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. A below-average proportion of pupils are identified as needing a lower level of SEND support.
- The school does not have a particular religious denomination.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal and with a range of senior and middle leaders to gather a broad range of evidence about the school's effectiveness. The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the trust board and with a local authority school improvement partner who is working with the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into art, design technology, English, languages and science. This involved meeting with leaders of those subjects, visiting a sample of lessons, then talking separately to teachers and pupils from those lessons, as well as looking at samples of work. They gathered additional evidence about the quality of education provided to pupils with SEND and those identified as having other additional needs.
- Inspectors reviewed the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. They scrutinised the school's central record of recruitment and vetting checks on adults coming into school. They explored arrangements for training, teaching pupils about safeguarding and for reporting, recording and acting on any concerns that arise.
- Additionally, inspectors considered survey responses from pupils and staff and parents' responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils during the inspection and spoke to pupils and staff informally during breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

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