

Childwall Sports and Science Academy

Queen's Drive, Liverpool, Merseyside L15 6XZ

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 4 has been weaker in English, mathematics and science than in other subjects.
- Some pupils in key stage 4 have not benefited from improvements in teaching for long enough to tackle weaknesses in their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Although pupils' progress in science overall has improved, their progress and attainment in the combined science qualification are too weak. This is due to gaps in pupils' knowledge caused by previous weak teaching.
- Leaders have managed a very turbulent staffing period very well since the last inspection but teaching in some areas of the school requires improvement.
- Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils, especially boys and the most able.
- Teachers do not develop pupils' writing skills, effectively across the school.
- Not all teachers use pupils' support plans as well as they could to improve the progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- While attendance in the sixth form is improving, some students do not attend school frequently enough. Some students do not complete the courses that they start. Those studying GCSE mathematics do not make as much progress as those who are studying for their English examinations.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, governors and the trust, has navigated the school through difficult financial and staffing challenges well. The school is now a viable concern, stable and improving quickly.
- Pupils, staff, parents and carers are highly supportive of the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and conduct are good. They feel safe and well supported.
- The school's curriculum, including the personal, social, health and careers education programme, is highly attuned to pupils' needs, and aspirations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is commendable.
- Low-attaining pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the variation in teaching so that pupils, especially those in key stage 4, make stronger progress in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that teachers:
 - have high expectations of what boys and the most able pupils can and should be able to do for their age and ability
 - provide more effective support to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - develop pupils' writing skills systematically
 - strengthen plans for teaching the combined science qualification.
- Improve the leadership of the sixth form further by:
 - further developing strategies to ensure that students do not drop out of their courses or the sixth form
 - improving the progress of those students who are studying GCSE mathematics
 - refining strategies to improve students' attendance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has steered the school successfully through difficult times since the last inspection. Astute decisions made by the governing body, including trustees, have assured the school's financial stability. Since the last inspection, the leadership team has been restructured and a number of teachers have left, and others joined, the school. Despite this, and in a short period of time, teaching has improved in many departments and pupils' progress, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is much stronger than previously. Nonetheless, there is still work to do to reverse the impact of historic weak teaching on current pupils' outcomes, especially for some pupils in key stage 4.
- Leaders' impact on pupils' behaviour and welfare is demonstrable in the school. Members of the school community live up to the school's values and ethos. Staff, pupils and parents speak highly of the school and the supportive and caring environment in which pupils can thrive. Mutual respect abounds.
- Subject leadership, especially in English, science and mathematics, is now strong. As a result of clear expectations and good training, these leaders rigorously monitor teaching and pupils' progress. They put together detailed plans to support pupils' underachievement and they review their effectiveness routinely. As a result, progress in these subjects for current pupils across most of the school is improving quickly. Where there are concerns due to previous weak teaching, robust and effective plans are in place to accelerate pupils' progress.
- The leadership of teaching is strong and improving. Teachers are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their skills, to review their practice and to learn from others. Teaching is monitored rigorously. Leaders have shown a track record of improving weak teaching quickly. However, despite the marked improvements in teaching, some pockets of weaker practice remain in some departments.
- The transformation of the curriculum has been key to the school's success in bringing about improvement. Leaders have responded to the changing assessment and qualification requirements at key stage 4 by refocusing the key stage 3 curriculum to great effect. These adjustments enable younger pupils to acquire skills and knowledge at an appropriate level to prepare them more effectively for the demands of key stage 4. The school's 'Aspire' pathway in Years 7 to 9 is offering the most able pupils tangible opportunities to deepen their thinking skills. This level of challenge is not replicated for those higher ability pupils who are not on this pathway.
- The school's 'Nurture' pathway, which offers vulnerable pupils important emotional and social support and a personalised curriculum, is helping low-attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils have opportunities to study a range of academic and work-related courses in key stage 4. The curriculum is broad and balanced.
- Leaders' work to support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. Pupils speak confidently about their social responsibilities and they regularly get involved in a number of charitable causes. They have a good understanding of the faiths and cultures that make up modern Britain. Pupils relish opportunities to visit

museums, art galleries and the theatre. They have a strong moral compass and as a result, there are few prejudiced-based incidents in school.

- The personal, social, health and careers education is a strength of the school. Pupils and parents value highly the support and wraparound care that staff give to pupils. Anti-bullying organisations, and anti-hate-crime workshops, help pupils to understand the perils of prejudiced-based behaviour. The school's work to support pupils' mental health is well thought out and valued by all.
- Leaders make good use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Dedicated staff are employed to support these groups. These staff understand pupils' needs and the barriers to their learning. Many pupils are benefiting from this effective extra support and making good progress as a result. However, leaders' evaluation of this funding is not as precise as it could be to ensure that they achieve the very best value for money.
- Leaders use the Year 7 catch-up funding to good effect. Eligible pupils make rapid progress in their reading and mathematical skills. As a result, many pupils who started the school year needing to catch up are 'school ready' by the time they finish the programmes.
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance are systematically delivered in all key stages of the school. Pupils undertake visits to universities and complete suitable qualifications to develop their employability skills.
- Pupils studying at off-site provision do so because of serious health, behavioural or emotional needs. Their progress is monitored closely and they learn and achieve well. There is close liaison between the local authority and the school to ensure that these pupils benefit from safe and purposeful alternative provision.
- The trust has been pivotal to the school's journey of improvement. It has kept sound oversight of the school's finances and helped to assure its future. It has supported the school to strengthen subject leadership, especially in science and mathematics. The main school in the trust has provided effective support to develop the school's curriculum and to verify leaders' and teachers' judgements about pupil assessments. The trust's director of school improvement provides leaders with a realistic view of the school's performance.

Governance of the school

- The governing body of the school has been transformed over recent years. As a result of an audit of governance, the make-up of the governing body has been carefully restructured and its membership is highly skilled. The governing body has demonstrated strong skills in challenging leaders. This has contributed to the rapid improvements over the last two years.
- Governors undertake regular training to update their skills. The committees are effective in monitoring different areas of the school. Middle and senior leaders provide governors with focused presentations about the effectiveness of their work. These leaders are challenged robustly when performance is not at the required level. This close monitoring has led to significant changes in staffing, including at leadership level, but more importantly, improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.

- The governing body monitors the school's spending of government funding regularly. They recognise that some of the evaluations of the impact of this spending are not as sharp as they could be to ensure the very best value for money.
- Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They are relentless in ensuring that school leaders tackle weaknesses robustly. They have made astute recruitment decisions for the teaching and leadership team.
- Governors have actively encouraged strong parental links and community support. As a result, the number of pupils on roll is set to rise year on year. The very positive feedback from parent surveys is a strong indication of the faith parents have in the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are highly trained and knowledgeable. The systems set up to support pupils who are subject to child protection or support are comprehensive.
- The designated safeguarding leader has been instrumental in ensuring that pupils requiring the highest levels of need are receiving the external support they need from professional bodies in the local authority.
- Leaders are well aware of the local risks to the school community. They have developed the curriculum well to mitigate them. The pastoral curriculum is focused well on issues such as gang-related crime, child sexual exploitation, threats of extremism and online safety. As a result, leaders protect pupils extremely well.
- Pupils and parents agree that the school is a safe place. Pupils told inspectors that they have full faith that the adults in the school would help them if they had a worry or a concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching is improving rapidly in the school. However, there are still some pockets of weaker teaching practice in some subject departments.
- Some teachers do not insist that the most able complete the more challenging tasks which are routinely set. Consequently, these pupils do not practise writing in more depth, or thinking more deeply about the work that they do, often enough. This hinders their progress.
- While boys demonstrate confident oral skills in class, their written work does not reflect their understanding. Some teachers are not insistent enough that sufficient work is completed and to the required standard. Boys' performance, especially at key stage 4, lags behind that of girls in many subjects.
- Teachers' focus on extending pupils' communication and reading skills is making a real difference. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to work in groups to extend their confidence. Most pupils read fluently and demonstrate strong comprehension skills.
- Teachers' strategies to support pupils' writing skills are variable across the school. In some subjects and classes, pupils use their grammar, spelling and punctuation

knowledge well to structure their writing accurately. Elsewhere, teachers provide little or no guidance to develop pupils' writing. Consequently, pupils continue to make basic errors and do not build up the stamina to write at length.

- Teaching in key stages 3 and 4 supports lower ability pupils well. Teachers provide a good structure for these pupils to access their work. Teachers provide support based on an informed picture of pupils' emotional and social needs well.
- Teachers do not consistently make use of pupils' support plans effectively to help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This is especially true in key stage 4. As a result, the progress that these pupils make across the school is too variable.
- In Year 10, improved teaching in English, mathematics, science and humanities subjects is helping pupils to make better progress overall. In many cases, this is because teachers are effective in closing gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding caused by previous weak teaching. Leaders have addressed weaknesses in mathematics and science, but there remain pockets of weakness, such as pupils' progress in the combined science qualifications.
- Teachers are confident in the key stage 4 qualifications and assessment requirements. Their subject knowledge is strong. As a result, they have brought about rapid improvements in the quality of the curriculum and many more pupils than previously are making the progress that they should.
- Teachers' questioning skills are effective. Teachers layer their questions well to build and test pupils' understanding. On many occasions, teachers target their questions well according to pupils' ability.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' progress is effective in key stage 3. This is because the curriculum is well thought out and stronger teaching has prevailed for longer. Teachers use interesting resources to motivate and challenge pupils.
- In Year 7, teachers, especially in English and mathematics, have a clear understanding of pupils' previous assessments and starting points, so they adapt their teaching well to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. They move the most able pupils on in their learning quickly.
- Pupils develop their skills and knowledge increasingly well in their 'option' subjects at key stage 4, especially in the non-GCSE subjects. Teachers encourage pupils' enjoyment of the practical aspects of the course by selecting interesting and motivating stimuli. Pupils speak highly of their enjoyment of these courses.
- Teachers' assessments are rigorously standardised and checked using a range of school-to-school support activities and external specialist consultancy. This has led to more focused improvement planning with a particular focus on boys and the most able pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- The school has effectively developed pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are highly accepting of the differences between themselves and others. They speak positively about other faiths and cultures and they have a good understanding of diversity in modern Britain. Incidents of racism, homophobic prejudice and bullying are rare.
- The school has strong links with external organisations to support pupils' understanding of sexual health and relationships, racism and hate crime. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities towards each other and their community.
- Pupils' mental health is supported well. They speak confidently about strategies to help them manage their anxieties as teenagers.
- Pupils' participation in extra-curricular clubs and activities, including during their lunchbreak, is increasing.
- Pupils are aware of what constitutes 'risky' behaviours. They understand the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse and they know the features of healthy relationships.
- Vulnerable pupils are supported well through the pastoral system and the curriculum.
- A range of agencies help to support pupils receiving off-site education. These pupils and those deemed vulnerable in school are given sensitive support.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school and their appearance are mostly exemplary; they are polite and respectful to their peers and to adults. They represent their school well during sports events and school trips.
- Incidents of poor behaviour and the proportion of pupils excluded from school temporarily have decreased rapidly. This is due to teachers' effective use of the behaviour system and improved pupils' attitudes.
- Leaders have been particularly effective in improving pupils' attendance to school. Disadvantaged pupils now attend school more regularly. Close links with parents and the use of the school minibus to collect those pupils at risk of not attending school have been particularly successful in reducing absence rates.
- The numbers of incidents of bullying, other anti-social behaviour or disruption to lessons are low. This because of the school's improved learning culture.
- Pupils attending off-site provision have improved their behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress improved markedly at the end of 2017. Year 11 pupils made similar progress as other pupils nationally in a range of subjects. However, the progress that they made in English, mathematics and science was below average. The improvements in pupils' progress are being sustained. Current pupils in Year 11 are making similar progress as those pupils who left key stage 4 in 2017 because leaders have strengthened teaching. Nevertheless, some of these pupils, and some pupils in Year

10, have not had enough time to benefit from the renewed and better teaching practice that is now evident in many subject departments. Consequently, these pupils still have some gaps in their learning.

- Pupils' attainment, by the end of Year 11, also improved in 13 out of 17 subjects in 2017. The proportion of pupils achieving A*–A grades increased, particularly in separate sciences. Pupils attained well in many subjects, including non-GCSE subjects, such as health and social care and construction. Pupils achieve particularly well in work-related information technology courses. However, pupils' overall attainment in English, mathematics and science was not as strong. It was below the national averages.
- Pupils in Year 10 are acquiring knowledge and skills more effectively, especially in mathematics, science and humanities, than in previous years. Over 70% of these pupils have already achieved their end-of-year target. Pupils studying separate sciences continue to make good progress, although the progress made by those pupils who are studying the combined sciences is not as consistently strong.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 also improved last year. Current school assessment information shows that progress and attainment for this group of pupils are improving further this academic year. Nonetheless, many of these pupils still have gaps in their learning due to a legacy of weaker teaching in the past.
- In 2017, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made poor progress by the end of key stage 4. Some pupils in that cohort had specific long-term medical issues which affected their attendance. Current pupils are making much better progress because leaders have strengthened the provision for them.
- Boys' progress across a range of subjects at key stage 4 is improving but they still lag behind girls, in some subjects by some distance, especially in Year 11. Boys are making much better progress in key stage 3.
- The school has invested greatly in improving the curriculum in key stage 3. With this, and improved teaching and closer monitoring, pupils now make good progress across a range of subjects. Disadvantaged pupils often outperform others in many subjects.
- The more challenging curriculum pathway is promoting good progress for Year 7 pupils. However, the high levels of challenge that they receive is not sustained in Years 8 and 9.
- Pupils' attainment across a wide range of subjects is rising. The majority of pupils studying courses off site are acquiring good skills in the courses they are following. Many make good progress from their low starting points.
- Pupils are rapidly improving their knowledge and skills in English, mathematics, science and humanities subjects. The small number of pupils who study a modern foreign language achieve highly.
- There is a strong and improving reading culture in the school. Pupils with weak reading skills are supported well to improve. Pupils who start school with below-average reading ages catch up quickly to age-related reading scores. However, outcomes in writing across the school are variable.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. This is due to the close support that they receive.

- The proportion of pupils going on to appropriate post-16 education compares well to the national averages. Current pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education than in previous years due to improved careers education, information, advice and guidance.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The leadership of the sixth form is good. The unusual dip in performance in a few subjects last year has been swiftly addressed. Leaders have demonstrated that they have the capacity to address the few remaining weaker areas such as students' progress in their GCSE mathematics course. The sixth-form study programmes are planned and implemented well. As a result, students make good progress in a range of subjects. Most subjects achieve standards broadly in line with or above the national average.
- In 2017, students overall did not make the progress the school expected of them. Students' progress in many of their A-level subjects was below average. Progress in three subjects (chemistry, film studies and sociology) were well below the national average. Students studying work-related courses made better progress. In addition, disadvantaged students did not make the progress they should have compared with other students nationally. Leaders have taken swift action to address weak subject performance. Students, including disadvantaged students currently, are making good progress across a range of subjects.
- In previous years, too many students, especially those who are of low ability, dropped out of the courses that they had started. Too many did not continue into Year 13 from Year 12. While this year fewer students than previously did not pursue their original course and the number of students staying on to Year 13 increased, student retention and course completion remain issues for the school.
- While students' attendance to school has improved compared with previous years, it is still not high enough.
- Students re-sitting their GCSE mathematics qualification do not make the progress that they should. In 2017, students made significantly below-average progress. This year, more students than previously have made good progress, but some remain stuck. While strong plans are in place to address this issue, it rightly remains a key focus for improvement for leaders. In contrast, those students who are studying for their English GCSE examination make good progress from their starting points.
- Current students studying work-related courses and level 2 courses make good progress. Teaching in these subjects is mostly good. Students enjoy learning in the sixth form. They benefit from small classes, and close and strong relationships with teachers. They conduct themselves impeccably around the school and act as good role models to younger pupils.
- The vast majority of teaching is good in the academic subjects. Teaching in a few subjects requires improvement, as work is not consistently matched to students' needs.
- The school invests a great deal into developing students' wider enrichment education. Students speak positively about their volunteering work in the community as well as in

the main school, such as helping younger pupils to read. All students undertake work experience.

- Students have a wide range of opportunities to visit universities and training colleges. The careers adviser has provided valuable careers education, information, advice and guidance to students. Last year, all students who applied to university were successful. Many students took up employment or apprenticeship places. The proportion of students not in education, training or employment is low.
- Students are provided with excellent pastoral care and guidance. They are kept safe and they are prepared well for the risks and experiences they may face as they enter adulthood. They have good strategies to support their mental health. They understand the dangers of extremist ideologies. The school has prepared them well for life in modern society.

School details

Unique reference number	138787
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10045876

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	818
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	140
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Dr Sandra Hiett
Headteacher	James Kerfoot
Telephone number	0151 722 1561
Website	www.childwallssa.org
Email address	contactus@childwallssa.org
Date of previous inspection	17–18 May 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller than an average-sized secondary school. The number of students in the sixth form is smaller than average.
- The school is part of the Lydiate Learning Trust.
- The make-up of the staff has changed by approximately 20% since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium support is double the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average, including in the sixth form. The proportion of pupils who have an education,

health and care plan is much lower than the national average. The school is without a special educational needs coordinator due to long-term absence.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.
- Pupils typically enter the school with attainment in English and mathematics that is significantly below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has received additional support from Deyes High School. The chief executive is a local leader of education.
- There are 12 pupils who attend alternative provision at Alder Centre for Education, New Heights High School (Netherley and Fazakerley), Active TT and Everton Free School.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all faculty areas and in all key stages. Inspectors also examined pupils' workbooks and spoke to pupils in lessons. Most observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of school leaders, including the headteacher and senior leaders, subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and humanities, the leader of the sixth form, the current administrator for special educational needs, the designated safeguarding leader and the school bursar.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing body, the chief executive officer of the trust, the trust's school improvement director and a school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors spoke formally with a selection of pupils from each key stage, including students in the sixth form.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and reviewed 64 responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and 22 free-text comments. Inspectors considered 42 staff responses to the staff survey. No pupils completed the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Bailey	Ofsted Inspector

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