

Inspection of St John the Baptist Catholic Comprehensive School, Woking

Elmbridge Lane, Kingfield, Woking, Surrey GU22 9AL

Inspection dates:	11 and 12 February 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is James Granville Hamshar. This school is part of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), James Kibble, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter O'Brien.

Ofsted has not previously inspected St John the Baptist Catholic Comprehensive School, Woking under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St John the Baptist Catholic Comprehensive School, Woking to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as an academy. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils receive an exceptional education at this school. Staff have consistently high expectations for all pupils. Relationships are strong and support pupils' well-being. They are underpinned by the school's shared values of respect, aspiration, integrity, love and service.

The school's curriculum is broad and ambitious. Pupils in key stages 3, 4 and 5 achieve highly, including in national examinations. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are catered for. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive highly effective support and achieve very well across subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. This is because the school has consistently high expectations of behaviour and conduct. Students in the sixth form are strong role models for younger pupils. Pupils and students in the sixth form work hard in lessons and demonstrate respect to adults and peers alike. They are keen to do well and are committed to their education. This is reflected in the high-quality work they produce. Where pupils struggle, the school takes swift and effective action to provide helpful support.

The school offers a rich range of opportunities to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils benefit from participation in a wide variety of visits, clubs, cultural events and charitable activities. These include visits to the Globe Theatre and raising money for pupils to visit Lourdes. These opportunities provide pupils and students with enriching and meaningful experiences.

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

The school's curriculum exceeds national expectations. High numbers of pupils study the English Baccalaureate. The school has thought carefully about the knowledge they want pupils to learn. This is coherently ordered and enables pupils to recall prior learning confidently and to apply this in different contexts.

Staff ensure that secure foundations are established in Year 7. Pupils are well supported to become confident readers and writers from the start. The school identifies pupils' specific needs accurately and shares this information with staff. Pupils with SEND are identified and supported well. Teachers use the clear guidance they are given and make skilful adaptations that enable all pupils to access and learn the curriculum successfully.

The school has prioritised high-quality subject-specific training for staff. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present ideas with clarity. They carefully check and address any misconceptions pupils may have. Pupils, including those with SEND, develop a deep body of knowledge across subjects. This prepares them extremely well for the next stage of their education. Students in the sixth form acquire and develop knowledge and skills that help them move successfully on to ambitious destinations.

Pupils and sixth-form students attend well. The school has high expectations of pupils' attendance and takes effective action to reduce absence. Staff are vigilant in monitoring any patterns of concern and work with external agencies to ensure that pupils' welfare is supported effectively.

The school's programme for personal, social and health education is designed to support pupils' wider development exceptionally well. Pupils learn about how to look after their mental and physical health. They benefit from learning about diversity as well as a range of different beliefs and perspectives. The school takes every opportunity to celebrate different cultures. Pupils are confident when discussing and debating ideas. The school's focus on developing pupils' character is exemplary. Pupils support each other willingly. Sixth-form students play a key role in the wider life of the school. They meet the school's high expectations of being 'the example, not the exception'. Pupils readily take on roles and responsibilities and are proud to represent their school. These include anti-bullying ambassadors, form representatives, reading buddies and representatives on the student leadership team.

The school makes sure that all pupils benefit from a programme of careers advice that prepares them thoroughly for the next stage of their education, employment or training. Visiting speakers and visits to other places of education provide pupils with useful information about different pathways, including apprenticeships and universities. This enables pupils and students in the sixth form to make informed choices about their next steps.

The school places high emphasis on staff's well-being. Staff enjoy working here and appreciate the atmosphere of collaboration and support. The school's vision for excellence is shared by all members of the school staff. Governors and the trust champion consistently high standards. They provide effective and rigorous challenge that is based on the range of accurate information they receive about the school's performance. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the education it provides for their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	143369
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10341819
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	1,538
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	322
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter O'Brien
CEO of the trust	James Kibble
Headteacher	James Granville Hamshar
Website	www.sjb.surrey.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust.
- The school uses four registered and six unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school has a Roman Catholic religious character. The school had its last section 48 inspection by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton in March 2019.
- 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 qualification and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the CEO, local governors and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors gathered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Russell Bennett, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Wendy Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Christian Kingsley	Ofsted Inspector
Fae Dean	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Johnson	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
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