

Oaklands Catholic School

Address: Stakes Hill Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 7BW

Unique reference number (URN): 137345

Inspection report: 21 April 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.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders have prioritised attendance. They analyse attendance data in detail. This enables them to understand trends for individuals and groups. Attendance information is shared with staff. They take responsibility for the attendance of pupils in their tutor groups. Where pupils need specific support, leaders look at their individual needs and put bespoke support in place. Leaders' actions mean that attendance is now above average for all groups of pupils, and persistent absence is low.

Leaders' expectation is that all members of the community treat each other with kindness and respect. Harassment and discrimination in any form are not tolerated. Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations. Staff implement behaviour systems consistently throughout the school. This leads to a calm and purposeful learning environment, where pupils show notable dedication to their learning. Students in the sixth form act as mentors to younger pupils. They are role models for their positive attitudes to learning and other pupils look up to them. Bullying is rare. Where it does happen, leaders ensure that it is dealt with quickly. Leaders make adjustments for individual pupils and put tailored support in place. These bespoke adaptations lead to improved behaviour for these pupils.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders' ambition for a highly inclusive culture is evident throughout the school. They identify pupils' needs precisely as soon as they arrive. Leaders use information from families, primary schools and teachers to build a comprehensive picture of each pupil. This results in pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are disadvantaged and those with other barriers to their learning receiving effective support, tailored to their needs.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. They make meticulous checks on pupils' progress against their individual goals. Leaders then evaluate the support each pupil receives and adapt it as appropriate. Support is responsive to pupils' changing needs as they progress through the school. Consequently, pupils engage diligently in their learning, attend well and develop the independence and personal skills they need to thrive.

Leaders build productive professional relationships with external agencies and partners in the local area. This helps them to access the best possible support for pupils. The highly effective 'St Christopher's' provision and pastoral support team cater to pupils' social and emotional development and mental health needs. Leaders use alternative provision well and always in pupils' best interests. They spend additional funding wisely, such as the pupil premium grant for disadvantaged pupils. This removes barriers for these pupils.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

The development of the whole person is at the heart of leaders' highly ambitious and well-structured programme for personal development. This includes a curriculum for citizenship, and relationships and sex and health education. Highly trained specialist staff deliver the

curriculum to all pupils. These staff know the school well. They adapt their teaching as required. As a result, pupils are able to talk about misogyny, keeping healthy, and British values such as democracy and tolerance. Pupils know what it means to be a positive member of society and behave with integrity. They appreciate diversity and understand that some differences, such as race and gender, are protected in law against discrimination. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Effective careers education is delivered throughout the school. Pupils have the opportunity to meet a range of education, employment and apprenticeship providers. Additional opportunities to learn about their options are available for identified pupils. This means that pupils who face barriers to their learning and wellbeing are equally well prepared for their next steps.

Pastoral support is of high quality. Leaders identify pupils in need of help and put it in place, sometimes with input from external professionals. Pupils appreciate this. They know where to go if they have a concern and are confident they will get what they need.

There is a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including sporting, musical and academic clubs as well as engaging educational trips. During the annual 'challenge week', pupils in Years 7 to 9 take part in various inspirational activities that offer pupils the chance to do something outside their usual experiences. These include conservation activities, science, technology, engineering and mathematics initiatives, and a Year 9 camp. The enrichment offer is well received by pupils, and leaders track uptake carefully. Where pupils do not attend, leaders find out why and ensure that any barriers to participation are removed.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, are well prepared for their next steps. This includes academic achievement as well as the personal skills that prepare pupils for education, employment or training.

Pupils' outcomes in national assessments and examinations at the end of key stage 4 are close to or above average across a range of subjects. Disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with their disadvantaged peers nationally. They produce high-quality work in lessons. Over time, sixth-form students' achievements are in line with national averages. Where pupils have specific barriers to their learning, high-quality teaching and targeted sessions ensure that they achieve well from their starting points.

Leaders ensure that any gaps in reading, spelling, handwriting and mathematics are addressed effectively. This enables pupils to access the wider curriculum and achieve well.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum. The knowledge in each subject progresses logically from Year 7 to Year 13. Leaders' rigorous monitoring of the curriculum ensures that it meets pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that specialist teachers have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum.

Teaching is generally effective. Leaders ensure that there is consistency in lesson structure. Teachers design activities which develop pupils' understanding effectively. They use questioning and model learning expertly. However, there is some variation in teaching across the school. Teachers generally check on what pupils have understood but this is less consistent than other aspects of their practice. Sometimes, misconceptions in learning are not identified during lessons. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Teachers have detailed knowledge about pupils with additional needs and the barriers to their learning. They adapt their teaching to meet these needs precisely. This means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that pupils with gaps in their basic knowledge of reading, handwriting, spelling and mathematics catch up quickly, through a programme of targeted teaching sessions and whole-school initiatives.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders know the school well. They have a secure understanding of its strengths and areas to improve. Leaders identify how they are going to improve something and then skilfully put their plans into action. Leaders are passionate about their pupils. They have high expectations for all to achieve, both academically and as members of society.

Leaders have a sharp focus on staff development. They provide a range of professional learning opportunities that are aimed at continuing to improve the school's provision. The development of staff's understanding of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged has been impactful. Staff talk confidently about pupils' needs and how they support these.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They enjoy being part of the community and recognise the contribution they make. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and wellbeing. Parents and carers are supportive of the school. They are positive about the school's work and the impact it is having on pupils.

Those responsible for governance have an accurate understanding of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties, such as overseeing the school's safeguarding systems. Governors check the work of school leaders. They challenge leaders on strategic decisions. This enables leaders to consider the impact of their actions and modify them as needed.

Post 16 provision

Expected standard 

Students enjoy life in the sixth form. They feel part of a community and know that they will be supported by staff to do their best. The curriculum is broad and well designed to meet

students' needs. It builds on the knowledge students have already learned, while introducing new and more complex ideas.

Leaders ensure that teachers are specialists. Overall, teachers use their subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum effectively. They regularly check on what students have learned and skilfully adapt lessons. Leaders recognise the need to deepen students' understanding in some subjects. This would enable students to achieve even more highly. Currently students' achievement is broadly in line with national averages in external examinations.

Students benefit from a range of enrichment opportunities. These are designed to build independence and leadership skills. This is particularly evident in the mentoring programme, where students support younger pupils in both primary and secondary age groups. Students relish this and talk about the positive impact it has had on them. Careers education is excellent. Students are very well informed about their options. They receive impartial advice and ongoing personalised guidance. This ensures that sixth-form students secure ambitious destinations, including to the most competitive universities.

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

Pupils are proud to be part of the Oaklands community. They feel known by staff and trust they will get the support they need, both academically and personally. Pupils say bullying is rare and that it is not acceptable at school. They know that leaders deal with any form of abuse. This makes them feel safe.

Behaviour is excellent both in and out of the classroom. Pupils are keen to attend regularly and achieve well. They listen intently in lessons and ask questions to develop their understanding. Pupils treat each other and staff with respect. This makes it a happy and purposeful place for all members of the community.

Pupils enjoy learning. The curriculum enables them to build their knowledge gradually during their time at school. Pupils achieve above average in many subjects in GCSEs. In the sixth form, results are broadly in line with national averages. Pupils receive targeted and impartial age-appropriate advice on their career choices. They are well prepared for the next steps in education, employment and training.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged are very well supported. Leaders know pupils' needs precisely. They identify what adaptations can be made and ensure these are then put into place by well-trained staff. These pupils progress well from their starting points.

The school's ethos builds a strong sense of community. Pupils feel that they belong and are respected. They develop positive character traits based on the school values of community, unity and opportunity. A broad range of experiences, including school performances and competitive sports, gives pupils a sense of pride in their school. Culture week, organised by the sixth form, celebrates the range of cultures in the school in a variety of ways. Pupils value this and appreciate what it teaches them about the rest of the world.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers' checks on pupils' understanding in all subjects are consistently effective and inform subsequent teaching, which in turn supports all pupils to achieve highly.
 - Leaders should ensure that in the sixth form teachers maximise opportunities to deepen students' knowledge and understanding, enabling more students to achieve at a high level.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Edith Stein Catholic Academy 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), Matthew Quinn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gaynor Rennicks.

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.

During the inspection, inspectors spoke with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the CEO, other senior leaders, members of the local governing body, the chair of trustees and a representative from the diocese.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. It is in the Diocese of Portsmouth. Its last section 48 inspection was in November 2024.

The school makes use of 9 alternative provisions, 3 of which are unregistered.

Executive headteacher: Richard Cunningham

Lead inspector:

Paul Grundy, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Anne Cullum, Ofsted Inspector


Jason Philipasz, Ofsted Inspector

Russell Slatford, Ofsted Inspector

Aimee Floyd, Ofsted 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 21 April 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

1,367

Above 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

1,340

Close to 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)

17.17%

Below 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

2.63%

Close to 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

10.02%

Below 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)	48.1%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	52.5%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	60.0%	45.3%	Above

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)	52.3	46.0	Above
2023/24 (final)	50.9	45.9	Above
2022/23 (final)	53.0	46.3	Above

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)	0.19	-0.03	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	0.23	-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)	11.5%	25.8%	Below
2023/24 (final)	22.5%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.0%	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)	30.5	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	38.3	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	39.5	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)	-0.42	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.65	-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)	11.5%	53.1%	-41.6 pp
2023/24 (final)	22.5%	53.1%	-30.6 pp
2022/23 (final)	32.0%	52.4%	-20.4 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)	30.5	50.4	-19.9
2023/24 (final)	38.3	50.0	-11.8
2022/23 (final)	39.5	50.3	-10.9

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)	-0.42	0.16	-0.58
2022/23 (final)	-0.65	0.17	-0.81

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)	95%	91%	Above
2022 leavers (revised)	98%	93%	Above
2021 leavers (revised)	97%	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)	33.05	34.99	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.08	34.38	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	32.00	34.16	Close to average

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)	-0.1	0.0	Close to average
2023/24 (revised)	-0.3	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)	5.5%	8.1%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	6.0%	8.9%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.1%	9.0%	Below

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)	11.6%	21.9%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	14.1%	25.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	16.7%	26.5%	Below

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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