

Christ The King Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104964
Local Authority	Sefton
Inspection number	355669
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Ruth James HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1188
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Alan Rayner
Headteacher	Mr James Lancaster
Date of previous school inspection	4 March 2008
School address	Stamford Road Southport Merseyside PR8 4EX
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Thirty six lessons were observed and the same number of teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including school assessment data, the school development plan, value added analyses, lesson observations records and minutes of meetings. Inspectors also considered an analysis of 339 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- It investigated the quality of teaching, especially in subjects with weaker outcomes, such as mathematics.
- The effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the needs of all students.
- The strength of leadership and management at all levels in identifying and tackling weaknesses to raise achievement, especially in relation to boys and mathematics.
- The quality of sixth-form provision now in terms of advice and guidance about course choice, curriculum, quality of teaching, progress tracking and support arrangements, and leadership and management.

Information about the school

Christ the King Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre is larger than the average secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The number of students from minority ethnic groups is very small and few students speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, and the number with a statement of special educational needs is very low. The school has achieved a number of awards including the NAACE Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Mark, the Artsmark, and Healthy School status. The school has specialist technology status and became a Leadership Partnership school in 2009.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where students achieve above average standards of attainment by the end of Year 11 and make good progress in most subjects. Behaviour, both in lessons and around school is good. Christ The King is a caring school and staff know the students well. Transition arrangements from primary school are well managed. Students feel safe. They say there is very little bullying and any that occurs is dealt with effectively. They feel confident about approaching adults with any concerns. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through the many sporting opportunities.

The quality of teaching is good overall. Relationships in most lessons are positive, which helps to create a good climate for learning. Students enjoy practical activities and opportunities to work with each other. The specialist subjects of design technology and science are taught well, and make a valuable contribution to students' achievement. Mathematics teaching has weaknesses and, although the GCSE A* to C pass rate is about average, many students do not achieve the grades they are capable of. The marking of students' work is often perfunctory with little indication of how to improve. Some teachers do not consistently use assessment information in planning lessons and students are not always aware of their targets or how to achieve them.

The curriculum is broad and balanced with a suitable range of courses at Key Stage 4. Although the introduction of regular 'breakout' days has brought opportunities for different experiences in terms of the wider curriculum, the school underestimated the potential impact of the associated reduction in subject curriculum time. This is now being addressed for the future.

The vision and determination of the new headteacher are key strengths in the school's good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and the school correctly identified the most significant priorities for improvement. There are sensible strategies in place to tackle these. Value for money is good because of the good teaching and good outcomes.

Outcomes for students in the sixth form are satisfactory. Historically, provision has not been as strong as in the rest of the school. A wider range of courses, new target setting systems and more robust monitoring of the quality of provision are yet to have an impact on students' outcomes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further, especially in mathematics by:
 - improving behaviour management so that students remain on task
 - setting suitably challenging work for all students.

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- Develop stronger assessment systems and improve the marking of work to ensure that:
 - students know how well they are doing and how they can improve
 - teachers use up to date assessment information in planning lessons so that suitably challenging work is set for all students.
- Improve the quality of provision in the sixth form by:
 - ensuring that students are accepted onto courses appropriate to their ability
 - monitoring individual progress against targets carefully
 - providing high-quality teaching, support and intervention that enable students to achieve their potential.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Students arrive in the school with slightly above-average prior attainment, and they make good progress overall so their achievement is good. By the end of Key Stage 4, overall attainment is above national averages for most measures. However, the Year 11 cohort in 2010 did not achieve as well as in previous years and the proportion of boys achieving five or more GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics fell to below average, mainly as a result of weaknesses in mathematics. School assessment data show that the attainment and progress of current students are better, demonstrating that the 2010 outcomes are not indicative of a pattern of decline. Learning and progress are good in the majority of lessons where students display very good attitudes to learning, particularly when they are actively involved in tasks. In mathematics lessons, students often make slower progress as a result of weaknesses in teaching. Design technology and science, both specialist subjects, are strengths of the school. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers, as a result of appropriate teaching and support. Students say they feel safe and well cared for at school. Behaviour, both in lessons and around school, is good. Students are polite and friendly. Students have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles. There is good participation in extra-curricular sporting opportunities. Attendance is above average. The good range of vocational courses and appropriate advice and guidance prepare students well for the next stage of their lives. Students' spiritual, moral and social development is good.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In the large majority of lessons teaching is good or better. In these lessons students are well behaved and have good relationships with staff. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and set suitably challenging work. Some good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote learning was seen, particularly in music and science. However, in a minority of lessons, especially in mathematics, teaching has significant weaknesses and does not meet the needs of all students. In these lessons expectations are not high enough, class management is weak, students do not engage well with the tasks set and not enough work is done in the time available.

Students can extend their learning through project-based homework at Key Stage 3. These projects allow them to assess their own progress and receive written feedback from staff. This good practice is rarely seen in the more routine marking of books. A few subjects provide useful written feedback to students explaining how they can improve their work but this is not consistent.

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. At Key Stage 4 it provides vocational and college courses as well as a personalised curriculum for students with particular needs. Changes to the curriculum in 2009, with the introduction of regular enrichment days, provide rich opportunities to enhance the curriculum. However, the associated reduction in mainstream subject curriculum time had a negative impact on the 2010 outcomes. This has been reviewed by the school and changes are planned. A wide

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range of extra-curricular opportunities are offered including sports, various clubs and theatrical productions.

Care, guidance and support are good and students value the support of their teachers and other adults.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has rapidly gained a clear view of strengths and weaknesses of the school and how it can be moved forward. He is supported by an experienced senior team with well defined roles and responsibilities. There is a growing sense of confidence among middle managers as they are becoming more actively involved in the management of the school and being held to account, although some inconsistencies remain.

Self-evaluation shows that the school is aware of its priorities although it is still developing and refining processes for quality assurance. The monitoring of teaching has been thorough but the grading is over-generous at times. Action is taken to improve teaching where weaknesses are found, including coaching. Partnership arrangements are strong. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

The school's contribution to community cohesion is good, with strengths in local and international aspects. Understanding of the diversity of communities within the United Kingdom is now being addressed through links with a school in a very different area.

The school has a clear commitment to equality of opportunity. In the absence of a permanent head of mathematics, key actions by senior leaders are in place to secure improved outcomes, especially for boys. These include close links with, and monitoring of, Year 11 classes. Senior leaders are also undertaking individual student mentoring for those at risk of underachieving.

Members of the governing body include highly capable individuals with wide-ranging experience. They are conscientious, committed and dedicated to the school, as shown by the approach to the appointment of the new headteacher. They are well informed and have plans to further increase their involvement and understanding, for example, through a presence at more key events and subject department links.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

Outcomes for students completing two years in the sixth form are satisfactory and these students make satisfactory progress. Under new leadership, and with the strong support of the new headteacher, historic weaknesses in the sixth form are being tackled robustly. The school has recognised the need to improve Year 12 outcomes and retention into Year 13. A wider range of courses is now offered, including vocational courses, and further developments are planned to ensure that suitable provision is available for students from across the ability range. Advice and guidance on course choice has improved. An appropriate system to set individual targets and monitor progress against these has been developed, although this is not yet fully embedded in all subjects and it is too early to measure its impact. There are plans to monitor the quality of teaching in the sixth form more closely to ensure that the quality of provision improves to match that elsewhere in the school. Students speak very highly of the care and support they receive from their teachers.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires are very supportive of the school. A minority believe that the school does not help their child to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors found that students are generally well informed about healthy lifestyles, an appropriate range of healthy options is offered at lunchtime and sports provision, including extra-curricular sport, is good. Specific comments made by parents and carers related to a variety of different issues. For example, a few raised concerns about the quality of mathematics teaching, which inspectors also found to be an area for improvement. Several commented favourably on the impact of the new headteacher.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Christ The King Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 399 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1188 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	167	42	215	54	14	4	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	154	39	236	59	8	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	126	32	240	60	23	6	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	149	37	225	56	13	3	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	119	30	251	63	18	5	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	107	27	233	58	43	11	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	20	254	64	51	13	1	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	116	29	233	58	18	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	133	33	228	57	21	5	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	125	31	211	53	32	8	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	79	20	243	61	41	10	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	129	32	243	61	6	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	160	40	208	52	18	5	1	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Christ The King Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre, Southport, PR8 4EX

Thank you for your warm welcome during our inspection of your school. We were impressed by your behaviour. We found that your school provides you with a good education and you achieve particularly well in two of the school's specialist subjects of science and design technology.

Your attainment by the end of Year 11 is above average, and you make good progress in most subjects during your time in school. Teaching is good overall and the school provides you with a good range of courses that meets your interests and needs. The school cares for you well, including those of you with particular needs. The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have a good overview of the work of the school. Examination results for students leaving the sixth form at the end of Year 13 are about average.

We have identified three areas where we found the school should make improvements. First, we have asked the headteacher to work with the staff to make all your lessons as good as the best, and to ensure that you make good progress in all your subjects, including mathematics. Second, we have asked the school to improve assessment systems to ensure that you all know exactly how well you are doing and how to improve. Third, we have asked that the sixth form be improved to ensure that students achieve their full potential.

You can help in this by continuing to work hard in all your lessons and always doing your very best, especially in mathematics.

We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth James

Her Majesty's Inspector

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