

# Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103742
<b>Local Authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	355447
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Philippa Francis HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	882
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	114
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Elizabeth Lee
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Byrne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	Leasowes Avenue Coventry CV3 6BH
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 414515
<b>Fax number</b>	02476 692253
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons and saw 41 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a governor and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at improvement plans, records of lesson observations, the school's data on current pupils' progress and policies for child protection, equality and diversity. Inspectors considered 124 parental questionnaires and 203 pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well pupils learn and make progress in mathematics.
- To what extent sixth form students are retained on their courses and make progress in their studies.
- The effectiveness of the school's work in improving attendance.
- The challenge provided for more able pupils.

## Information about the school

Bishop Ullathorne is a smaller than average school with a small sixth form. It has held specialist humanities status since 2006. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. Most pupils have English as their first language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. A majority of pupils travel to school by bus from outside of the school's immediate neighbourhood. The school is part of the South West Coventry Federation of five secondary schools and a local further education college.

**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

Bishop Ullathorne is a good school. Pupils feel safe, enjoy school life and flourish because of the good care, guidance and support they receive. They value the school's warm and friendly atmosphere. Pupils behave well and most have good attitudes to learning. Pupils make a valuable contribution to many school and community-based activities. Many of the skills that pupils develop prepare them well for their future economic prosperity. Almost all move on into further education or employment. Attendance rates are improving but remain satisfactory; rates vary between groups and actions to resolve this have not been fully successful. Most pupils are reflective and thoughtful. They develop well socially and personally.

Pupils begin school with average prior attainment and leave school with above average results. Results in external tests have improved markedly. In 2010, a higher than average percentage of pupils gained more than five A\* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics. Results in mathematics improved significantly to above average in 2010, although a minority of pupils do not make enough progress in this subject because teaching is not always fully effective. Pupils make good progress in lessons. Learning and progress in English is particularly good. No groups of pupils underachieve. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities make consistently good progress.

The majority of lessons are good. Teachers help pupils to attain well but a minority do not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure that all pupils make the maximum progress possible. Assessment during lessons, although exemplary in some, is not always used consistently well enough. Teachers manage lessons well but, in a few cases, less effective behaviour management results in minor disruption to learning. The school's curriculum has been developed well to meet pupils' needs, particularly through partnerships.

The headteacher and senior leaders drive improvement in attainment successfully with a strong focus on making sure almost all pupils gain English and mathematics GCSE qualifications. Their recent work to ensure that all pupils maximise their full potential through a sharper focus on learning is being realised. Thorough monitoring and analysis of the quality of lessons means that managers know well what needs to be done to develop teachers' practice further. However, managers' actions based on the results of this analysis are not always rigorous enough to ensure that the best practice is widespread across all lessons. Self-evaluation is thorough, accurate and serves the school well in its drive for further improvement and supports its good capacity to improve further.

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Significant improvement has taken place in all aspects of provision, resulting in good outcomes for students. A number of initiatives to improve support for students and to make sure that the curriculum is broad and meets students needs have worked well. Entry requirements have been rightly raised. Students

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develop well personally and socially. They make good use of their study in moving on to further or higher education or employment.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance further by using the analysis of the attendance of different groups productively to determine and implement specific strategies to target instances where attendance is lower.
- Improve the quality of mathematics lessons by:
  - sharing the highly effective practice evident in the best lessons within the teaching team such as through peer observations and pairing of stronger with less effective teachers
  - maintaining the high levels of monitoring and support by senior managers.
- Strengthen the emphasis on learning in lessons to ensure that pupils are challenged to achieve their full potential by:
  - putting actions arising from monitoring of the quality of lessons into place rigorously, particularly for teachers who do not always provide enough challenge for their pupils
  - reinforcing the importance of and sharing of best practice in using assessment as part of learning such as through the use of extended questions to check on understanding
  - ensure that all teachers are well-equipped with effective strategies to tackle the very few instances where pupils' attitudes to learning are less positive.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

In 2010, two-thirds of pupils gained more than five A\* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics. Almost all pupils over the last three years have gained at least five GCSEs at A\* to G. Pupils' rate of progress overall has been above or well above average in two of the last three years. Inspectors' observations of lessons confirmed that current pupils are making good progress. Progress in mathematics was much less strong over this period, although in 2010 nearly three-quarters of pupils gained at least a GCSE C grade. Nevertheless, the percentage who gained the highest grades in this subject was below average. Inspectors' observations of lessons and scrutiny of the school's records of progress in mathematics showed that current pupils are making better progress. Different groups of learners achieve as well as their peers. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieved much improved progress and attainment in 2010. Even the very few pupils who were reluctant to attend school achieved at least four GCSE passes in 2010.

Prompt and effective tackling of bullying and other forms of discrimination ensures that pupils feel safe. Pupils show good safety awareness and move around the school sensibly. In lessons, such as science or food technology, they show awareness of safe practices such as laboratory and food hygiene safety rules. Most have a satisfactory awareness of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle but feedback from pupils and parents shows that not enough is done to promote healthy living such as through increased participation in

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physical education. A lack of lockers means that many pupils have to carry their equipment with them, which some find tiring and onerous.

Pupils are cheerful and well behaved. They are courteous and helpful and always willing to provide directions or engage in conversation. A very small minority of pupils disrupt lessons on the few occasions when teachers fail to capture their interest and engage them. Pupils acquire good skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). These prepare them well for their future. Their enterprise is evident in many ways, such as extensive fundraising and achievement of Duke of Edinburgh awards. The school council is active and instrumental in bringing about improvement. The level of persistent absence has declined notably. The schools' intrinsic spirituality permeates pupils' way of life and they take part in a good range of cultural experiences.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

Pupils work diligently in most lessons because teachers plan carefully and use a good range of learning strategies including effective use of ICT. Most lessons start productively with short activities that engage and motivate pupils. Lessons in the school's specialist humanities subjects, particularly English, are often the most effective. Although the majority of lessons are good, teachers recognise that they do not always provide a higher level of challenge for more-able pupils to ensure they achieve their full potential.

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Inspectors observed some effective strategies in place to ensure this, such as probing and challenging use of questions; however, not enough teachers use such strategies consistently. The use of assessment to promote learning in lessons varies in effectiveness. While in a minority of lessons, frequent and accurate assessment works well, in other lessons, teachers' checks on understanding are too superficial and opportunities for assessment are missed.

The curriculum provides plenty of opportunities for choice and the subject range helps in personalising learning to each individual pupil. The school's good collaborative work within the South West Federation has proved highly effective in broadening the curriculum. The humanities specialism is used widely and effectively. Timetabled time in physical education at Key Stage 4 had been reduced slightly to allow extra time for other subjects, but the school no longer adopts this strategy. A wide range of enrichment activities is used well. However, participation in sports is uneven and higher at Key Stage 4 than in other key stages.

The level of pastoral care is very high. A system of monitoring pupils' progress, supported by a strong team of pastoral managers, ensures that any concerns are tackled promptly. Vulnerable pupils receive excellent support and achieve well. Support arrangements are responsive. For example, a Polish teaching assistant supports newly arrived pupils from this minority group. Provision to improve attendance further is extensive and improvement is obvious. However, not enough is done to act on the analysis of attendance of different groups, such as lower attendance by girls in Years 10 and 11. The recent emphasis on ensuring pupils gain the highest grades relative to their prior attainment has sharpened the focus on learning support for the most able.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher's and governing body's aim to ensure that all pupils achieve a valuable set of qualifications, including in English and mathematics, within a caring and supportive environment is unequivocal. Staff across the school are committed to the success of individual pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, and have become increasingly effective in ensuring this, as shown by pupils' results in 2010. Careful and thorough monitoring is undertaken at all levels with managers' intervention being effective. For example, the subject area of mathematics has required considerable management support and is just starting to produce more consistent results. Regular lesson observations identify areas for improvement in teachers' practice but resulting actions are not always rigorously

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implemented. This means that a few teachers do not benefit from sharing of good practice or particular support to tackle aspects that they find difficult.

The governing body supports the school well and has a good understanding of its strengths and where improvement is needed. Parents and carers engage well with the school in a highly positive way. The school's work with partners ensures smooth, well supported transitions between each stage of pupils' school life as well as considerable curriculum benefits through partnership arrangements. For example, four diplomas are offered as well as other vocational courses using a common timetable across the federation partners.

Equality is central to the school's ethos. Success of different groups is monitored carefully and no groups underachieve. Notable success has been made in closing achievement gaps between groups, such as pupils known to be eligible for free school meals whose attainment nearly doubled in mathematics in 2010 compared to the previous year. However, teachers have not always ensured that higher ability pupils have consistently achieved their full potential. Managers now have a sharp focus on this area for improvement. Safeguarding arrangements are good. Site security has been strengthened by the addition of a new secured entrance to the school. Work to promote global community cohesion has been recently enhanced through new links with a school in Mexico. The school buildings and extensive grounds are well maintained. The school is financially stable and provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

Students in the sixth form develop well personally and socially. They play their part in school life well. Most complete their courses and the number who progress from GCE AS



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level to A level study has increased. Attendance is high. Almost all students move onto higher or further education or employment after their studies.

At GCE A level, students made good progress in 2010 compared with much less progress in the previous two years. Progress made at GCE AS level has been more consistently above average over time. Both pass rates and achievement of high grades in 2010 are well above average because much has been done to improve the quality of provision and ensure that students are placed on the right courses. Managers have made a number of significant improvements, based on accurate and thorough self-evaluation, including revising entry requirements and putting in place rigorous progress reviews.

The curriculum is largely based on GCE courses the collaboration with the South West Federation provides students with a wide range of choices to meet their needs. Teaching works well to develop independent learning skills with an appropriate emphasis on the development of higher order skills such as analysis and evaluation. The sixth form accommodation has been improved relative to the provision of information and learning technology but students are less well satisfied with the social spaces allocated to them.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

The response from parents and carers was relatively low. The responses show a high level of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the school's work with the exception of the extent to which the school helps pupils to have a healthy lifestyle, where their level of satisfaction is just below average. Inspectors concurred with this view and judged that the school does not do enough to promote healthy living. Almost all parents and carers who responded said that the school keeps their children safe.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School 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 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 882 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	36	71	57	7	6	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	40	32	82	66	2	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	53	43	66	53	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	35	74	60	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	34	27	85	69	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	23	81	65	11	9	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	17	77	62	21	17	0	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)	35	28	74	60	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	27	84	68	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	31	72	58	7	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	22	80	65	7	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	37	30	81	65	3	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	40	72	58	1	1	0	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils and Students

**Inspection of Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School, Coventry, CV3 6BH**

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing you at work. A particular thanks to those of you who helped us find our way around the school site. This was very helpful.

We judge Bishop Ullathorne to be a good school with good capacity to improve further. Your achievement and enjoyment are good as shown by the good results in the main school and sixth form in 2010. The good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that you gain prepare you well for the future. You develop well socially and personally and feel safe, although one area where we judge further improvement is needed is in your awareness of healthy lifestyles. We found you worked well together, are respectful and caring of each other and often rightly reflect on your work, school life and wider society. Attendance is improving but remains satisfactory which means a few of you are not attending as well as you should. You can help raise attendance by ensuring that none of you miss any school time.

Lessons are good, interesting and helpful. Most of you work diligently but just a very few of you cause unnecessary disruption in lessons. Teachers help you to learn well but a few do not always do enough to make sure you reach your full potential. The curriculum matches your needs well. Staff support you with a high level of pastoral care. The headteacher and managers organise the school well and are good at making improvements. The sixth form is well managed. These are the things we have asked managers to do to bring about further improvement.

Increase attendance rates further.

Improve lessons in mathematics.

Ensure all teachers challenge pupils to reach their full potential.

I wish you all well in your studies and congratulate you on the good work you do within the school and local communities.

Yours sincerely

Philippa Francis

Her Majesty's Inspector

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