

The Nottingham Emmanuel School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133353
Local Authority	Nottingham City
Inspection number	360496
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Dilip Kadodwala 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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	987
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	151
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Charter and Heidi Shewell-Cooper (Elect)
Headteacher	Carol Fearria
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
School address	Gresham Park Road West Bridgford NG2 7YF
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors, including one who focused for half a day on the school's provision for safeguarding students. Inspectors observed 30 teachers teaching 30 lessons and also made 19 brief visits to lessons to check on students' learning. They held meetings with a group of parents, groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including development plans, school and national data, and the school's evaluation of its effectiveness. Responses to questionnaires from 217 parents and carers, 65 members of staff and 149 students also provided additional evidence.

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

- The strength of the rise in students' attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science, and whether students' learning and progress are improving securely because of the quality of teaching.
- The effectiveness of the quality of leadership and management at all levels in tackling underperformance and sustaining improvement over time.

Information about the school

This is an averaged sized secondary school. Around 63% of students are from White British backgrounds, the remainder representing a variety of different heritages. Students from Pakistani, mixed White and Black Caribbean and Black Caribbean and African backgrounds form the largest ethnic groups. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although the number with a statement of special educational needs is low. This reflects the picture across the local authority. The school has achieved a number of awards including Sportsmark, Artsmark Gold and Healthy School status. The new school building was completed in June 2008 and there have been a number of staff changes since the last inspection.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This satisfactory school is improving rapidly because of senior leaders' drive and determination, underpinned by the school's very strong Christian ethos. Students' achievement has improved well over the last academic year and this reflects the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Overall GCSE results are rising. The proportion of students who gain five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics is also improving, but is below the national average. Students' progress in mathematics is slower than in English. The senior leaders' determination to tackle this weakness through changes in leadership and teaching are already making a difference. Challenging targets have been set for 2011 and senior leaders are confident that they will be met in the light of students' current gains and the robust tracking of progress. The process of school evaluation and improvement planning includes the governing body, enabling it to hold the school to account and to provide support and direction. Particularly effective is support to senior leaders to manage staff turnover in a context of change and development, including the move to a new school building since the last inspection. School improvement planning accurately identifies what needs to be done to consolidate success and gain further improvement.

A good curriculum is effective in meeting students' needs and aspirations. Adjustments to the curriculum have maximised students' opportunities to gain relevant qualifications and increased their enjoyment and motivation. Students have a good sense of belonging to the school community. They show a positive attitude, modelled by staff, of respect for religious, cultural and social diversity. The positive relationships between staff and students are evident in lessons and in the informal exchanges between them. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students enjoy school, as reflected in their above average attendance and good punctuality. Students understand the importance of good health and the great majority are committed to adopting healthy lifestyles. The staff take good care of students. Those who are most at risk are carefully monitored and effective work with external partners, for example the education welfare services, results in the successful inclusion of students so that they do not lose out on learning.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Although there is much good and occasionally outstanding teaching across the school, it is inconsistent. This results in satisfactory rather than good progress in a minority of lessons which lack enough challenge and where assessment information is not used sufficiently well to match work to students' different abilities. There is inconsistency in the marking of students' work. Students do not always receive detailed comments and advice is not routinely followed up by teachers to ensure that the desired impact on learning is achieved.

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The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Senior leaders have accurately analysed strengths and weaknesses in provision and have a clear strategy to capitalise on improvement secured so far.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 4 by ensuring that:
 - challenging targets set for all students are met through effective teaching and leadership.
- Increase the proportion of good or better teaching and learning, including in the sixth form, through:
 - the setting of challenging tasks and activities which are suited to students' different abilities
 - ensuring that there is consistency in the marking of students' work so that they all know how to improve their work.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and their achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 11. GCSE results are improving significantly in terms of students gaining five good passes. In 2010, 81% attained such passes, which is above the national average. Observations of teaching and learning during the inspection confirmed that the rate of students' progress is improving securely and quickly, against a background of historic underperformance in English and mathematics. Rigorous tracking and interventions are leading to improvement, although achievement in mathematics is slower than that made in English. In contrast to the situation seen nationally, the achievement of students known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to that of most other students. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by staff and they are given carefully directed teaching which is targeted to tackle their specific needs. As a result, these students also make satisfactory progress. Similarly, students from different ethnic heritages achieve in line with their White British peers.

Students have positive attitudes to learning. In the lessons observed, students cooperated well in groups and teams and acted responsibly. Students have a clear sense of right and wrong, and racial harmony is very evident, reflecting their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students willingly participate in opportunities to reflect on their own and others' experiences and to relate them to their own personal values. Students say that they feel extremely safe, a view reinforced by a very large majority parents and carers. Where more challenging behaviour exists, it is dealt with effectively, with the result that the students concerned go on to make satisfactory progress. Students make a strong contribution to the school and the wider community, for example through their fundraising initiatives to benefit a wide range of charities. A good proportion of students choose to eat healthy food options and most engage in at least the minimum of two hours of physical activity expected each week. The development of students' workplace skills is satisfactory.

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Improvements in basic skills in English and information and communication technology are embedded well but less so in respect of numeracy skills across different subjects.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	3
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?

The school has successfully integrated the great majority of new teachers into its staff. Leaders and managers have ensured professional development is at the forefront of school planning and development. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving from a solid base of satisfactory or better provision. Good or better teaching uses varied, engaging methods that provide suitable challenge. Teachers' carefully targeted questions and tasks that are matched to students' specific abilities lead to successful learning. Effective use is made of assessment information to plan lessons and students play their part sufficiently well in self-and-peer assessment. However, this better quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the school. Although teachers' planning identifies groups of students who have different needs, including the more able, activities are not always provided to match these. The quality of marking varies across subjects. Where it is effective, it results in students responding to teachers' detailed comments and follow-up is recorded. Weaker marking involves just a tick and some students' work remains incomplete.

The curriculum meets students' needs well because it has been adjusted to appeal to their interests, as well as providing the studies to which students are entitled. Recent initiatives,

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for example, modification to the Year 7 curriculum to help improve students' literacy and numeracy skills, are having a positive impact. The Key Stage 4 provision has been enhanced to include a variety of courses, including vocational ones, and a programme of targeted activities to stretch the more able. Enrichment activities available before, during and after school hours have good participation across a comprehensive range of students' ages and abilities.

Well-targeted support for all students enables them to make the best of the opportunities provided. The school works well with primary schools to help students joining in Year 7 to settle quickly. Equally, students are guided well in making their choices for Years 10 and 11 and for when they leave statutory education. Improvements in tracking student performance have strengthened guidance, and ensure that students and parents are kept well informed about progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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 headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders and the governing body, has successfully communicated an ambition for higher achievement. The success of leaders' drive for improvement is evident in the raised students' attainment by the end of Year 11 in terms of five good passes at GCSE. Strong systems for accountability between senior and middle leaders concentrate on students' performance, using robust data and evaluations from lesson observations. A wider evaluation of each faculty's performance draws on a good range of evidence and results in suitable action plans to tackle areas of weakness: for example, a specific push on improving the percentage of A* and A grades at GCSE. Equal opportunities are promoted well, for instance through the rigorous analysis of the performance of different groups of students and the removal of barriers to learning. Good efforts are made to engage parents and carers through a wide range of communications and mechanisms, including the parent partnership forum where attendance is open to all. Parents' views have influenced the new school uniform and the quality and frequency of homework. Good community cohesion is evident in the harmonious relationships between different groups and in the engagement with a wide range of community groups beyond the school, including developing links with schools internationally. Safeguarding procedures are very robust and there are highly effective systems in place to ensure students' safety.

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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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

Although standards at the end of sixth form courses have been below national averages, the progress made by students has improved since the last inspection with Year 13 students attaining slightly above the targets set based on their GCSE results. A good number of students join the sixth form and complete their courses. Although the proportion of students gaining a pass grade in 2010 was high, the proportion achieving higher grades was below expected levels. This is consistent with the performance seen in lessons during the inspection, where the level of support for lower attaining students is more effective than the challenge for potential higher attainers. Students are given a range of opportunities to participate actively in their learning, but teacher-led lessons often constrain students' independent thinking skills.

The curriculum builds appropriately on that in the lower school, with a broad range of choices at Levels 1 to 3, including vocational courses. The school makes every effort to meet students' needs, so that some groups run with very low numbers. Newly appointed leaders and managers, aware of the need for development, are at an early stage in planning and implementing improvements. Already, students feel well guided by the new leadership structure that provides a strategic overview and personal support. As a result of structures put in place this term, attendance is improving and performance on courses is being monitored so that issues are rapidly identified and addressed. The full impact of this change on learning is still not clear, especially as there are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of tutorial groups so that follow-up actions are variable. Other changes, such as the introduction of pastoral and community activities and core sessions, are highly regarded. Students take pride in their contribution to local primary schools and in the mentoring of younger students.

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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

Views of parents and carers

Around 22% of parents and carers returned a questionnaire. A very large majority of parents and carers view the school as doing a good job overall. They agree that their children enjoy school and are kept safe. A few parental criticisms were offered constructively, and these were discussed with the headteacher. Some parents feel that the school does not deal with unacceptable behaviour effectively. Inspectors asked students, observed behaviour during break times and in lessons, reviewed records and concluded that the school operates a firm but fair system to ensure that students' learning is not disrupted. Some of the parents and carers also indicate that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors concluded that, on balance, the school provides a broad range of opportunities for consultation and that, wherever feasible, parents suggestions are influential in seeking improvements to what the school provides.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Nottingham Emmanuel 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 217 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 987 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	80	37	118	55	13	6	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	91	43	115	54	7	3	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	71	33	123	57	12	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	29	117	55	29	14	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	24	135	63	22	10	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	27	116	54	31	14	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	23	128	60	25	12	2	1
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)	60	28	114	53	20	9	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	28	124	58	18	8	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	22	105	49	39	18	15	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	50	23	112	52	32	15	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	51	24	129	60	21	10	6	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	36	113	53	17	8	3	1

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 The Nottingham Emmanuel School, West Bridgford, NG2 7YF

Thank you all very much for welcoming the inspectors and being helpful when we inspected your school recently. We reached conclusions that I would like to share with you.

Your school is a satisfactory school and one that is improving quickly. The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is also satisfactory. The headteacher and other leaders are effective in driving improvement. This is clearly evident in the most recent GCSE results which reflect a continuing, rising trend. Your achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 11, given your average starting points on joining the school. The curriculum provided for you is good because it is matched well to your needs and aspirations and it contributes well to your sense of enjoyment.

Staff take good care of you and you told us that you feel very safe, a view endorsed by the great majority of parents and carers. You have positive attitudes to learning, and behaviour in classes and around the school is good, as are your attendance and punctuality. We were particularly struck by the positive relationships between different groups and the respect you show for religious and cultural diversity, underpinned by the school's Christian ethos. You make a good contribution to school life and the wider community, and you participate well in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but we also observed good and some outstanding teaching. Although GCSE standards are rising, the proportion of A* to C grades including English and mathematics is below average.

To improve further, we have asked senior leaders to raise attainment in mathematics by the end of Year 11 and to increase the quality of teaching from satisfactory to consistently good or better, including in the sixth form. You can play a part in this by rising to the challenge provided by teachers through their setting of work which is better suited to your different abilities and responding to their advice on how to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala

Her Majesty's Inspector

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