

St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120717
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358828
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Walker

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	631
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hellier
Headteacher	Mark Kerridge
Date of previous school inspection	23 January 2008
School address	Western Avenue Lincoln LN6 7SX
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 37 lessons and observed 23 teachers. They also held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of students. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence, including the school development plan, the tracking system to monitor the students' progress, safeguarding documentation, and the work students were doing in their books. They also analysed questionnaires completed by staff, a sample of students, and 68 parents and carers.

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

- The inspection team explored the progress being made by different groups of students and subjects in the school.
- It observed the effectiveness of teaching in engaging students so that they make at least good progress in lessons.
- It examined the quality of provision in the sixth form in meeting the needs of the students.
- It investigated the impact of the new structure of leadership and management in supporting improvements in the school.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average comprehensive school and is located near the centre of Lincoln. It serves students from a very large geographical area, which includes most parts of the city and the surrounding villages. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds although over a quarter of students are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, including Afghan, Chinese, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Slovakian and Spanish heritage. The percentage of students who speak English as an additional language is above average and over 27 languages are spoken in the school. There has been a particular increase in students with Polish heritage who now make up over eight percent of the school population. The proportion of students with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities is also above average. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

There has been some refurbishment of the school including a new building for the English and performing arts which was completed in 2007. The school has recently purchased the Newman Centre bungalow which provides accommodation for the designated Resource Base for a range of students with additional learning needs.

There have been a number of staff redundancies during the last year due to a temporary fall in student numbers and financial constraints.

The school has an expanding sixth form which works in partnership with neighbouring schools. The school gained specialist status in science in 2003. The school has received the Investors in People award and holds National Healthy Schools status.

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. It has some significant strengths. The strong tradition supports the very positive ethos in the school and the development of both the academic and personal development of the students. The school is fully inclusive in integrating students from different ethnic and social backgrounds including a significant number of students from Eastern Europe who speak English as an additional language. The headteacher provides effective leadership so that there is a clear vision for continuous improvement in the school. Most parents and carers speak very highly of the school and the support for their children. One parent wrote: 'My child is very happy at the school and I find the staff very approachable. The school knows my child and appreciates her as a young person and as a learner.'

Students make good progress, given their below average starting points, and leave with broadly average standards. The 2010 GCSE results for Year 11 are broadly in line with the national average with 68% of students gaining five A* to C grades which is an improvement on the previous year. However, attainment in a small number of subjects including English and mathematics is still slightly below average at GCSE and progress in these subjects is not as rapid as in other subjects. A significant number of students including those who speak English as an additional language do not have sufficient confidence in the key skills in literacy and numeracy which are important for success in the examinations. Students with below average attainment are not sufficiently supported to gain higher grades in English and mathematics.

The newly introduced tracking system for progress is beginning to identify underachieving students, who then receive appropriate support through a range of intervention strategies. The assessment information shows that students are set challenging targets in all years and the majority are making at least good progress in their work. Students are well informed about their targets although they are not always sufficiently challenged to gain their target grades in all subject areas. Students in the sixth form make good progress and the majority progress to higher education or employment.

Curricular provision is good and reflects the positive impact of the science specialist status. The good range of academic and vocational options in Years 10 and 11 have increased student motivation and engagement. Teaching is good overall so that students work hard and show a commitment to do well in their studies. The high standard of care, guidance and support is greatly supporting the good personal development of the students. The school is successful in supporting students

- with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The behaviour of the majority of students is good and this supports a positive atmosphere in the school. They make an excellent contribution to the school and local community by

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volunteering to take responsibility in school, raising money for charities and taking a full part in activities in the parish and local area. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is outstanding. They are respectful towards each other and every student feels valued as an individual. Students have been particularly supportive in welcoming and supporting newcomers from minority ethnic backgrounds. Attendance is now in line with the national average, although the attendance by a small but significant number of students is inadequate and adversely affects their progress and experience of school.

The headteacher and governing body are well aware of the strengths and areas for development in the school. The governing body is working very closely with the local authority to manage effectively the recovery plan for the deficit budget. Strategic planning is good and there are clear actions for improvement. The clear vision and ambition of the headteacher and senior leadership team, the developing systems of tracking student progress and the improvements in standards indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of attainment across the school so that the proportion of students attaining five A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is in line with the national average, by ensuring that teachers :
 - challenge and support students to gain their target grades in all subject areas
 - identify and provide support for all students who need additional assistance in their work
 - develop students' literacy skills and confidence in reading, writing and comprehension
 - extend students' numeracy skills and ability to apply these skills in external examinations.
- Improve the level of student attendance so that it is above average for all groups by making sure that the school is:
 - identifying individuals and groups of students whose attendance is unsatisfactory
 - developing rigorous systems for monitoring and following up absences
 - making full use of the services provided by external agencies to follow up persistent absences
 - working positively with students, parents and carers and external agencies in order to improve the level of attendance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students are proud to be part of the school and they develop into positive, friendly and confident young people. Most students have a good understanding of how to adopt healthy lifestyles as acknowledged by the National Healthy Schools status. A large number of students take part in a wide range of sporting activities although fewer students are taking up the healthy canteen options at lunchtimes. Students enjoy the opportunities to

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take responsibility such as acting as representatives on the school council, taking part in assemblies and supporting activities in the primary schools. Students show respect and empathy towards each other as well as demonstrating an excellent appreciation of the multicultural diversity of our society.

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	3
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	1
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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 majority of teaching is good as most teachers plan lessons that are appropriate to the abilities of the students. The mutual respect between teachers and students ensure that there is a constructive learning environment in the classroom. In the best lessons, teachers plan a range of interesting activities and have high expectations of the students. They also mark the work regularly and show the students exactly what they have to do to improve their grades. As a result, students display enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. Outstanding learning takes place when teachers extend the students through high quality questioning and encourage students to take responsibility for their learning. A small minority of teachers talk too much in lessons and are not fully engaging their students or checking their understanding of the work. Not all teachers are using the assessment information effectively to inform their planning so that their lessons meet the different learning needs of the students.

The curriculum provides the students with a good range of learning opportunities. The school's specialist status ensures that there is enhanced provision in science as well as a

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greater use of technology as a tool for learning. Revised schemes of work in English and mathematics are beginning to support improvements in student progress. All subjects are reviewing curriculum plans to ensure greater success in examinations. The expanding range of applied courses in Years 10 and 11 has encouraged many students to pursue particular vocational interests which meet their learning needs and allow them to succeed in examinations. Programmes in citizenship, including Conscience Week and Aspire Days greatly support the good personal development of the students. The comprehensive programme in physical education is supported effectively through the Schools Sports Partnership. The wide range of extra curricular activities and educational visits provides good opportunities to enhance students' enjoyment and experience of school.

Arrangements for care, guidance and support are strengths of the school. Students confirm that they are confident that any issues or concerns are addressed promptly and effectively. Good working relationships between the school and external agencies benefit students, ensuring their social and learning needs are met through effective programmes. However, systems for monitoring absences and improving attendance are not fully effective. The vertical tutor and Faculty system is instrumental in promoting the academic and personal development of the students although the daily tutorial period is not effectively used in all tutor groups. The school is very successful in supporting students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Newman Centre successfully provides more individualised support for students with a range of additional learning needs including autism, dyslexia and deafness. Students who speak English as an additional language are well supported and quickly integrate into the school. Good arrangements are in place to support a smooth transition from a wide range of primary schools. Structured guidance through the careers programme helps students make confident and well-informed choices about their future.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 provides energetic and collaborative leadership so that all staff are involved in the development of the school, as recognised by the Investors in People award. He has managed the process of redundancies well during the last year and is effectively supporting the staff in raising the academic and personal outcomes of the students. The extended senior leadership team is also providing a strong impetus for change across the school. More rigorous systems of monitoring teaching and tracking student progress are supporting the improvements in the school.

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Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and are effective in their evaluating and monitoring roles. Robust procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's very caring approach. Governors regularly check that all practices and procedures fully meet health and safety requirements. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and equal opportunities for all, which ensures that the school is fully inclusive in integrating pupils from different ethnic and social backgrounds.

The school develops positive relationship with parents and carers. They are given regular information about school events and the progress of their children. The school has good partnerships with the feeder primary schools, the consortium of local secondary schools and a range of local organisations. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion and works very closely with the families from minority ethnic communities to welcome them into the community of the school and the church. A Polish Community School uses the school facilities on a Saturday morning to help young people maintain their cultural heritage. However, work on the school's action plan is only recently underway and it has yet to evaluate the impact of its work on community cohesion.

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

Increasing numbers of students from all social and ethnic backgrounds enter the sixth form and make good progress. They attain results which enable them to continue successfully to higher education, training or employment. Improved guidance on course selection has led to high retention rates on all courses although there is some variation in student progress between subjects. Students say that they enjoy their sixth form education. They have mature attitudes to learning, attend regularly and make a considerable contribution to the main school. Students play an important part in the vertical tutorial system by supporting the tutor and acting as role models for the younger

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students. All students take part in community service within the local community. Many sixth formers take a full part in extra curricular activities including sport, drama and music. Teaching is generally good although it does not always provide sufficient opportunities for independent learning. The partnership with other schools ensures a sixth form curriculum with a good range of subject choices at both AS and A2 levels although some groups are very small. Level 3 vocational courses are also available and help to meet the different learning needs of the expanding sixth form. Students greatly appreciate the helpful support that they receive when they plan their futures. Effective leadership and management by senior staff ensure that students benefit from their time in the sixth form.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
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

Only a very small minority of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Most of these are very positive about the work of the school and its impact on their children's learning. Responses to the questionnaire included a number of detailed comments emphasising the sense of community in the school, the good leadership of the headteacher and the caring approach of staff towards their children. A small minority of respondents suggested the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found clear evidence that the school deals effectively with the very few students who display challenging behaviour. A small minority of parents and carers also mentioned that the school does not help them to support their children in their learning. Inspectors have asked the headteacher to review this point with staff so that parent consultation and information evenings can be more informative. Overall, parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College 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 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 631 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	42	31	48	4	6	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	31	48	30	46	1	2	3	5
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	55	24	37	2	3	3	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	32	32	49	8	12	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	18	28	30	46	5	8	3	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	28	30	46	8	12	4	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	26	42	65	4	6	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)	30	46	24	37	4	6	4	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	41	30	46	5	8	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	34	25	38	11	17	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	32	29	45	7	11	3	5
The school is led and managed effectively	22	34	30	46	1	2	5	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	41	33	51	1	2	4	6

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



17 February 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College, Lincoln, LN6 7SX

Thank you for making us so welcome and for talking to us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you during the assemblies, breaks and lunchtimes. St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School is a good school. Your parents and carers told us how pleased they are with the standards of education in the school.

There are many positive things about your school. The strong tradition supports the very positive ethos in the school and your good personal development. Your school is fully inclusive and you have been very supportive in welcoming and supporting newcomers from different countries and backgrounds. It is good to see how you show considerable respect towards each other and demonstrate excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many of you told us how you are enjoying the opportunities for responsibility in the school and most of you are contributing in some way to the local and global community. You are making good progress in your work and it is encouraging that many students are staying on in the sixth form for further qualifications. Your headteacher and teachers care greatly for you so that you do well in your work and develop good personal qualities. You are certainly developing into positive and friendly young people who are a credit to the school.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to do the following things to make the school even better.

Raise standards of attainment across the school so that the proportion of students attaining 5 A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, is in line with the national average.

Improve the level of student attendance so that it is above average.

We would like to wish you success in your future education. Keep working hard and enjoying the many good things in your school.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector

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