

Corpus Christi Catholic Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119780
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	358624
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Joan Davis 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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	745
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Gray
Headteacher	Mr Martin Callagher
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2008
School address	St Vincent's Road Fulwood, Preston Lancashire PR2 8QY
Telephone number	01772 716912
Fax number	01772 718779
Email address	martin.callagher@talk21.com

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Thirty three lessons were observed and thirty two teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation documentation, the school's development plan, policies and students' work. The team also considered an analysis of 118 parents and carer questionnaires as well as those from staff and students.

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

- Whether all students in the school make at least satisfactory progress in all subjects, but particularly in English and mathematics.
- The extent to which teaching challenges students and meets their needs and interests.
- Whether the drive for improvement is sufficiently embedded at all levels to provide satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

Information about the school

Corpus Christi is a smaller than average secondary school near Preston. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The percentage of students from minority ethnic groups is slightly below the national average, while the number of students who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school has specialist status for sport and technology.

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

3

Main findings

Corpus Christi is a satisfactory school. Satisfactory progress has been made in tackling the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection and there is now a tangible and concerted ambition at all levels to secure improved outcomes for students. The attainment of students is now broadly average and learning and progress are satisfactory. Therefore, their achievement is satisfactory overall and improving.

The school has a number of good features. Its chief strength lies in the contribution that the sports' specialism has made in improving outcomes for students, such as the wide range of sporting activities on offer, which help students adopt healthy lifestyles. The specialism has also been a factor in driving improvements in attainment and leads developments in sports' education at both local and national levels. Excellent leadership in this area is now being harnessed to drive improvements in other areas of the school's work, such as in the management of behaviour. Students feel safe in the school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting the school's inclusive ethos. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and movement around the school is orderly. Students are friendly, cooperative and polite. They say that there is very little bullying and when it occurs it is dealt with effectively. The school provides a caring environment where all students are valued.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is of good quality in lessons for older students, when they are preparing for examinations. The school does not, as yet, provide sufficient opportunities to share existing good practice in order to improve the overall quality of provision. As a result, some lessons are dull and low-level disruption on the part of some students impairs their learning and that of others.

The use of assessment to support learning is inconsistent. In some lessons, questioning is used effectively, for example, to establish whether students have understood the work or to encourage debate. However, procedures for monitoring the marking of students' work are not rigorous enough and opportunities are missed to give students information on how to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Good links with primary schools have been established and the school works effectively in partnership with a number of institutions through the sports' specialism and its links with industry.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory but improving. The headteacher has a clear vision for the further development of the school and has made improvements to leadership at all levels. The school has embraced challenge and support from a number of agencies, and leaders are developing a much sharper focus on improving students' achievement. Robust action has been taken to eradicate underperformance. Development planning has been an area of weakness. Planning is not being used effectively to ensure

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that all members of the school community know exactly what they need to do to improve outcomes for students. Nonetheless, given the satisfactory level of self-evaluation, the shared ambition to improve students' achievement, a greater degree of accountability and steady improvement in some key measures, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. The school provides adequate value for money because outcomes for students are satisfactory. Procedures for safeguarding are satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by:
 - - building on improvements in English and mathematics and thereby accelerating the rate of progress in improving outcomes for students
 - - improving development planning so that plans are specific and focused with clear information as to how the impact of plans will be monitored and evaluated.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching, particularly in Key Stage 3, by:
 - - providing regular training on the key elements of good and outstanding teaching for all staff
 - - improving the engagement of students with their learning by matching the work to students' different learning styles and abilities
 - - making better use of existing good and outstanding practice in teaching within the school by providing more opportunities for dissemination
 - - making assessment and marking procedures consistently good across the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students enter the school with prior attainment that is broadly in line with the national average. They make satisfactory progress overall so their achievement is satisfactory. Attainment of students when they leave the school has been low but it improved in 2010 and this trend has been sustained so that current attainment is now broadly in line with the national average and for some key measures it is above. The learning and progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are also satisfactory. Attainment in English and mathematics has been poor, largely owing to staffing difficulties. The school now benefits from excellent, dynamic leadership and improved teaching in these subjects. As a result, attainment is rising rapidly. In an outstanding Year 10 mathematics lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher's excellent subject knowledge and careful planning ensured that students sustained effort and concentration and made outstanding progress. One student was overheard saying to her friend, 'I love it when I understand it – I feel such a sense of achievement!' In other subjects, students make good progress in Years 10 and 11 in lessons, but progress in Key Stage 3 is satisfactory because activities in lessons are often not imaginative enough or do not sufficiently address the interests and abilities of the students.

Students feel safe in the school. They trust staff and feel that they can confide in them should problems arise. Students' behaviour between lessons and around the school is

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generally good. The school benefits from an excellent environment and uses social spaces effectively so that students can mix with their peers. The library is used to good effect at break and at lunchtime, as students can pursue their interests, read and take part in social activities. Older students say that behaviour has improved. The number of students excluded is decreasing. However, on occasion, instances of poor behaviour were observed in some lessons when students were not fully engaged by the activities provided.

Students have a good appreciation of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles which is reinforced in many aspects of the curriculum as well as during form time and assemblies. Students enjoy the many opportunities they have to take part in extra-curricular sport. Students speak highly of the healthy options available in the canteen. There is a much higher than average take-up of school meals and the school has won a national award for its excellent provision in this respect.

Students have opportunities to take up positions of responsibility, for example as buddies for Year 7 students. However, younger students are less involved in the life of the school than older students. Students contribute to the community by holding an annual Christmas party for senior citizens, which is much appreciated. They also raise substantial amounts of money for charitable causes.

Students develop workplace skills through enterprise and vocation days and links with partners, such as that with Yorkshire Bank. Actions taken by the school to improve numeracy and literacy skills are now improving students' future employment prospects. Attendance is broadly in line with the national average and students are punctual to lessons.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is a strength of the school. They respond very positively to the excellent opportunities provided for them to reflect on wider issues. Students cooperate well and show respect for each other. They develop an understanding of other faiths through the curriculum and their cultural development is enhanced through visits to museums, theatres and trips abroad.

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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	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	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 quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but is better in lessons for students in Key Stage 4, where the large majority of lessons are good. Teachers use information and communication technology effectively in order to support students' learning. There are substantial variations in the quality of teaching both within and across subjects. In the better lessons, imaginative learning activities are well matched to students' abilities and interests, enabling students to learn by applying their knowledge in context and then reflecting on their learning. For example, in one outstanding English lesson seen during the inspection, students were studying a poem about slavery and the activities planned by the teacher helped them to imagine the plight of slaves, encouraging empathy and compassion. In weaker lessons, activities are not sufficiently matched to the abilities of learners and therefore students lose interest. On occasion, too much talk from the teacher results in a loss of concentration on the part of students leading to low-level disruption and chatter.

The use of assessment to support learning is variable. The school now has extremely effective systems for tracking the performance of students and putting intervention and support in place when students are not performing as well as they might. This has contributed to the rising trend in attainment. However, the quality of marking is highly inconsistent. Good practice exists, but varies both within and across departments.

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The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a wide range of traditional, academic subjects on offer and the school is increasing the variety of vocational courses. However, the impact of such provision on outcomes is yet to be seen as some of these courses are in the early stages of development. Effective support is provided for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The effectiveness of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The guidance students receive when they attend school is good and appreciated by students; however this is not as effective for students who are reluctant to come to school. Arrangements for transition from primary to secondary school are smooth and well managed. The recent appointment of directors of learning who have a much sharper focus on improving achievement is starting to have an impact on outcomes for students. The school has worked effectively to reduce the number of students who were persistently absent.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher shows ambition for the school and understands what the school needs to do to improve. He has been supported by a knowledgeable and capable governing body in tackling underperformance. Some barriers to improvement have been removed and recent developments have established a culture of accountability and a shared focus at all levels on improving outcomes for students. The school now has robust systems to monitor students' progress and set aspirational targets. Although the school's self-evaluation is accurate, planning for improvement has lacked clarity and clear indications as to how the impact of initiatives is to be monitored and evaluated. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are improving. However, the monitoring of the quality of assessment and teaching lacks rigour and uniformity. The school does not, as yet, provide sufficient opportunities to share the good practice that exists within the school, so that all teaching can become as good as the best.

Governors are supportive and hold the school to account. They have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have started to build constructive links with departments to challenge underperformance. The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers appreciate the efforts that teachers make to support their children. The school has good partnerships with a range of institutions which enrich the lives of students. For example the link with Enterprise and Training 2000 is enabling the school to offer a wider range of courses. The school has good policies in place to promote equal opportunities and tackle discrimination. The school is a cohesive community where students of all cultures are welcomed and

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diversity is valued. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The school's student population is increasingly diverse and relationships between students of different cultures are characterised by friendliness and mutual respect. The partnership with a school in Slovakia and participation in the exchange scheme with Zambia through the University of Central Lancashire enables students to meet with their peers from other parts of the world. Arrangements for safeguarding are satisfactory, but could be stronger in some aspects. The school is now addressing some minor issues raised during the inspection regarding safeguarding.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a lower than average return to the Ofsted questionnaire. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and a very large majority state that their children enjoy school and that the school informs them about their children's progress. Most parents and carers feel that the school prepares their children well for their future.

Some parents and carers raised concerns about behaviour. While inspectors found that behaviour is improving, we also observed that some low-level disruption occurs in lessons when the work is not appropriately pitched at the interests and abilities of students. We have therefore recommended to the school that existing good practice in teaching be shared across the school to improve students' motivation and engagement in lessons.

A very large majority of parents and carers feel that their children are safe and that the school is led and managed effectively. Most parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at Corpus Christi.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Corpus Christi Catholic Sports 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 118 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 745 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	38	63	53	8	7	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	56	47	59	50	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	75	64	39	33	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	43	58	49	5	4	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	49	42	60	51	5	4	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	36	66	56	6	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	37	64	54	4	3	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)	46	39	67	57	2	2	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	42	62	53	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	38	53	45	12	10	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	36	62	53	7	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	52	44	61	52	4	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	57	44	37	4	3	2	2

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.



31 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Sports College, Preston, PR2 8QY

Inspection of Corpus Christi Catholic Sports College, Preston, PR2 8QY

Thank you very much for the warm welcome we received during our inspection of your school. We were impressed by your friendliness and the good attitudes you show towards one another. We found that your school is improving and provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Many of you enjoy taking part in activities such as trips abroad and the excellent range of sporting opportunities on offer. You have good links with students from other parts of the world and you have a good understanding of other cultures. Your attainment by the end of Year 11 is average and you make satisfactory progress in most subjects as you move up through the school.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, but is better when you are in Years 10 and 11 preparing for examinations. We noticed that sometimes the behaviour of some students is not good, especially when they are not interested in the activities prepared for them by teachers. Behaviour is better when lessons are more suited to your interests and abilities. The school cares well for you and you trust your teachers. You know you can talk to them if you have a problem.

We identified a number of areas where we think the school should make improvements. We have asked the headteacher to make sure good teachers share their ideas with other teachers so that all lessons are as good as the best. We also think that the school should help you to continue to improve your results in examinations, particularly in English and mathematics. We have asked the headteacher to make sure your work is marked more regularly and that teachers give you advice on how to improve.

All of you can help in this by attending school regularly, working hard and taking advantage of the many opportunities available to you.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan Davis

Her Majesty's Inspector

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