

Trinity Catholic College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135606
Local Authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	360734
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Lee Northern HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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	1,336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Wood
Headteacher	Peter Coady
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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	And
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 56 lessons, taught by 55 different teachers. Of these, three were observed jointly with senior leaders from the school. Inspectors held meetings with representatives from the local authority and the diocese, groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the school's work, scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school and examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure that it meets statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding. In addition, 222 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised, and telephone conversations were conducted with two parents who wished to speak with inspectors. In addition, inspectors looked carefully at questionnaires returned by staff from the school and those from a representative sample of students.

Information about the school

Trinity Catholic College is larger than the average sized secondary school serving predominantly the Catholic communities of Middlesbrough. It was formed in September 2009 from the amalgamation of two predecessor schools and currently operates from the former sites of both of these schools. The school is scheduled to move into new buildings from September 2011 and has specialist status for technology, mathematics and computing.

A very large majority of students are of White British heritage, although a range of different minority-ethnic groups are represented in small numbers. A small minority of students speak English as an additional language. Slightly less than one third of students are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is above the national average. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although a smaller-than-average proportion has a statement of special educational needs. The school met the government's floor targets for academic performance in the first year of its formation in 2010.

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	3
Achievement	3
Teaching	3
Leadership and management	3
Behaviour and safety	3
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school in which students feel safe, well cared for and supported. Underpinned by the strong Catholic ethos that pervades much of its work, the school cares deeply about the welfare of the students it serves. Much of its work in this regard is highly valued by parents and carers, who feel the school is welcoming and listens to their concerns. The comment, 'An extremely good school in so many ways' was typical of the views of many.
- Overall, students make satisfactory progress in lessons and reach broadly average levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 4. Students say they enjoy their lessons, are keen to do well and speak highly of the support they receive from their teachers. However, there remain variations in achievement across different groups of students and between different subject areas.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall with particular strengths in English, art and design, and in music. However, in some lessons teaching does not always meet the needs of all the students in the class or engage them actively enough in their learning. As a result students do not always make as much progress as they could.
- Students conduct themselves well and the school is a calm and orderly environment. Levels of fixed-term exclusion continue to fall as a result of improved systems for managing poor behaviour where it occurs. Despite this, a small minority of students and their parents and carers express concerns about disruption to learning in some lessons. Inspectors found this to occur where teaching does not capture students' interest sufficiently well.
- The headteacher and the senior team have successfully led the school through

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the period following amalgamation and are preparing the school well for its move to a new building. They have prioritised further improvements in the quality of teaching and have begun to narrow the disparities in achievement between different groups of students across the school. The focus on raising students' attainment in mathematics and science and on rapidly improving overall levels of attendance has yet to result in significant and sustained improvement in these aspects.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management is no better than 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?

- Further improve students' achievement by:
 - further raising attainment in mathematics and science
 - improving the consistency and quality of written and oral feedback to students across the school
 - raising levels of attendance to at least the national average by December 2012.

- Raise the proportion of good and better teaching and learning and eradicate inadequate teaching by:
 - ensuring all lessons address, more closely, the learning needs of all students
 - improving the quality of teachers' questioning, especially for the more able, so that more students are challenged to justify their answers
 - ensuring all lessons interest more fully and engage students more actively in their learning in order to eradicate low-level disruption in some classes.

- Strengthen the capacity for further improvement and reduce variations in the quality of teaching across the school by:
 - evaluating more effectively the impact of actions on the outcomes for different groups of students across the school
 - linking the evaluation of teaching more closely to its impact on students' learning and progress.

Main report

Since its inception in September 2009, the headteacher, governing body and other senior leaders at the school have worked with great skill and determination to ensure a smooth transition following amalgamation. They have successfully resolved issues in relation to staffing and management structures and in tackling significant budgetary changes. They have established a shared vision for the future and have

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high ambitions for the school and its students. Staff morale is good. Throughout this period, leaders and managers have maintained a focus on improving students' achievement and, as a result of actions taken, the gaps in attainment between different groups of students are now beginning to close. However, as the school has correctly identified, more needs to be done to ensure that differences in students' outcomes are reduced more rapidly. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

In the external examinations of summer 2010, just under half of students in Year 11 secured five or more good grades at GCSE, including in English and mathematics, which was slightly below the national average for this measure. The school's robust tracking of students' progress indicates that attainment for students currently in Year 11 are on track to be broadly in line with those seen in 2010. Given these students' lower starting points on entry to the school, this indicates that overall levels of achievement are rising. However, despite this broadly satisfactory picture of achievement, there exists considerable variation in the quality of provision and outcomes across the school. Students achieve well in English, in a range of subjects linked to the specialism of technology and in vocational GCSE courses. Students' attainment in mathematics and in science is rising more slowly because too much teaching is no better than satisfactory. Outcomes for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those students known to be eligible for free school meals are improving as a result of additional targeted provision, such as through 'guided group' support. However, provision is less effective in lessons where teaching is not always sufficiently well adapted or targeted to meet their needs. The achievement of the more-able students is also rising, although progress is faster in subjects where assessment information is used well by teachers to provide additional challenge in lessons, such as in English.

Leaders and managers at all levels invest significant time and energy in maintaining a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The impact of work to support students' literacy skills across all aspects of the curriculum can be seen in rising standards in English and in the consistency of approaches in lessons to developing skills in reading and writing. However, work to promote students' numeracy skills is at a much earlier stage of development. The curriculum is being increasingly well adapted to meet the needs of different groups of students and the specialist subjects of technology and computing have been particularly active in this regard. The establishment of an extended leadership team has been effective in building further capacity across the school and in developing a broad package of support for teachers' professional development. Although there is a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching, the evaluation of teaching is not focused sharply enough on its impact on learning. As a result the proportion of teaching that is no better than satisfactory is too high, particularly in science. While the school has begun to monitor the impact of some aspects of its work across different groups of students, too little has been done to ensure that actions are tailored more precisely to address underachievement where it occurs. At present, outcomes are not evaluated systematically and with sufficient rigour to ensure that differences in achievement between groups of students, particularly those known to

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be eligible for free school meals, are reducing more rapidly.

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, although a small amount of inadequate teaching was observed during the inspection. Students generally display good attitudes to learning in lessons, although there remains too much variation in the quality of teaching and marking across the school. Students make better progress in lessons where teachers plan well to meet their needs and provide stimulating and engaging activities that capture their interest. In an outstanding English lesson for Year 8 students, students set their own ambitious targets from assessment information provided by the teacher and worked with great determination and enthusiasm to achieve them. Where teaching is less effective, students are not expected to participate fully in the lesson and only a minority of students contribute their responses or views. In such lessons, the more-able students are rarely provided with more challenging activities or questions which require them to justify their answers in more depth. In a few instances, poor behaviour results when lessons are insufficiently well planned to capture the interest and engagement of all groups of students. The quality of marking and feedback to students varies a great deal across the school. In the best examples, such as in English, students say they value the regular marking and feedback which diagnoses errors and provides helpful and precise comments so that they can improve their work. However, in some subjects, work is rarely or irregularly marked, or marking does not provide the guidance that helps students to improve.

A very high proportion of students say that they enjoy school and feel very safe while they are there. They say that bullying is rare and that, where it occurs, the school acts promptly and effectively to address it. A very large majority of parents and carers agree. The comment, 'My child has been happy throughout his time at school and any concerns have been dealt with' was typical of the views of many. While a small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about disruptions to learning in lessons, inspectors found this to be linked closely to the quality of teaching in a small number of lessons. Provision to support students' behaviour has been introduced on both school sites and the impact of this support can be seen in the decline in the numbers of students subject to fixed-term exclusions. Overall levels of attendance are rising only slowly and remain below the national average. However, the impact of the school's work with support agencies and with parents and carers has resulted in a significant reduction in the numbers of students who are persistently absent from school. Students understand well the importance of a safe and healthy lifestyle. They respond positively to a range of enrichment opportunities and students say they appreciate the number of activities that are on offer. The support provided for younger students as they transfer from Year 6 is good and the specialism plays a significant role in forging effective links with primary schools. Safeguarding procedures meet all government requirements.

The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a particular strength of the school. As a result the school is a cohesive community in which the well-being of every individual is at the heart of its work. Students respond well to opportunities to develop their spiritual understanding, including through an

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appreciation of other faiths and cultures. To this end, the school has developed partnerships with organisations locally and internationally, although it recognises that more work is needed to provide students with first-hand opportunities to experience diversity within the United Kingdom. Students show great empathy with issues affecting communities close at hand and across the world, as shown by the extent to which they spontaneously and generously support a wide range of charitable causes.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity Catholic 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 222 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,437 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	109	49	104	47	6	3	2	1
Q2 My child feels safe at school	115	52	99	44	6	3	2	1
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	99	44	105	47	16	7	2	1
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	98	44	107	48	12	5	5	2
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	105	47	110	49	4	2	3	1
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	96	43	115	52	8	3	3	1
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	48	21	132	59	29	13	9	4
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	31	14	110	49	59	26	15	6
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	77	34	108	48	17	7	7	3
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	78	35	122	55	14	6	6	3
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	85	38	112	50	12	5	8	3
Q12 The school is well led and managed	90	40	115	52	6	3	8	3

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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 achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



27 May 2011

Dear Students,

Inspection of Trinity Catholic College, Middlesbrough, TS5 7EY

You will remember that a team of inspectors and I inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and took careful note of the views that you expressed. We judged that the school is providing you with a satisfactory standard of education. In your meetings with us and in your questionnaire responses, you said that you valued the caring and safe atmosphere that the school provides. We found that the school promotes these aspects well.

Overall, achievement is satisfactory, although you make better progress in English, in vocational and design and technology-based subjects and in music because more teaching interests and engages you and you receive helpful feedback on how to improve your work. However, in some lessons teaching does not always meet the needs of all students in the class or expect you to be more actively involved in your learning. As a result you do not always make as much progress as you could. We found that almost all students conduct themselves well and the school is a calm and orderly environment. However, a small minority of you and your parents and carers express concerns about disruption to learning in some lessons. We found this to occur where teaching does not capture your interest or engage you in your learning sufficiently well.

We have asked school leaders and managers, and the governing body, to ensure that standards in science and mathematics in particular continue to rise. We have also asked that the school continues to work with you and your families to promote the benefits of regular attendance. To improve the quality of teaching we have asked the school to ensure that all teaching regularly meets the needs of all students and provides frequent opportunities for you to be more actively involved in your learning. We have also asked that your work is marked more consistently and that you receive useful feedback on how to improve. Finally, we have asked the school to analyse more closely the achievement of all groups of students.

You can play your part in improving Trinity Catholic College by continuing to attend regularly, behaving well and working hard. I wish you every success for the future and hope you enjoy your new school buildings.

Yours sincerely
Lee Northern
Her Majesty's Inspector

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