

The Holy Family Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103106
Local Authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	363671
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	John Daniell 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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1108
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Virginia Fawcett
Headteacher	Dr Andy Stone
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2008
School address	1 Shernhall Street London E17 3EA
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 43 lessons taught by 38 teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at school performance data, self-evaluation documentation, policies, the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures, students' work and school improvement planning. Discussions took place with staff, students, members of the governing body and organisations with which the school works in partnership. Inspectors scrutinised 251 questionnaires from parents and carers, 256 from students and 56 from members of staff.

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

- The rate of progress made by students at Key Stage 4, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.
- The extent to which leaders at all levels are driving school improvement in their quest to become an outstanding school.
- Whether the revised sixth form leadership structure is having an impact on the overall effectiveness of the sixth form.
- The extent to which the school's focus on teaching and learning is impacting on students' outcomes. The extent to which the school's focus on teaching and learning is impacting on students' outcomes.

Information about the school

The Holy Family Technology College is a larger than average Catholic school which operates on two sites within close proximity of one another. There are more boys on roll than girls. Students from minority ethnic groups form 83% of the school's population. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly above average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is also above average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average but the proportion of students with a statement of educational needs is in line with the national average.

The school holds the Investors in People Award and enjoys Healthy School status. It also holds the Sustainable Travel Award and the Intermediate International School Award.

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

The Holy Family Technology College provides its students with a good quality of education. This is because extremely well-targeted care, guidance and support, coupled with a history of high attendance and a clear focus on raising achievement, secure good outcomes for students. Basic skills are well developed and students are prepared effectively for the world of work. Students say they appreciate the efforts made by staff at the school to create a safe and healthy environment where good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is the norm. Students are rightly proud of their school and are especially proactive in seeking to develop an effective cohesive community which looks not only inwards but also makes an outstanding contribution to the wider community. The strong Catholic ethos permeates throughout the school and contributes significantly towards students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Good teaching overall secures good learning and progress, particularly, but not exclusively, for those students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. The distribution and gathering of student data are well managed. However, the effective use of assessment to support learning remains inconsistent across subject areas and the quality of marking of students' work is variable. The good curriculum meets the needs of students and regular monitoring of its impact triggers appropriate intervention strategies where appropriate through calendared sessions or extra-curricular clubs.

Leaders and managers of the school are aware of its strengths and areas for development, and effective communication between the large senior leadership team and other staff secures a shared vision for the school. The committed headteacher works with his skilled team to break down barriers to school improvement, and the self-critical approach adopted correctly identifies issues which need to be addressed. Accurate self-evaluation processes, and the development of leadership at both senior and middle level, give the school a good capacity to sustain further improvement. The governing body, through pertinent questioning and targeted support and challenge, holds the school to account and fulfils its statutory duties, particularly with regard to the safeguarding of children. Parents and carers are equally involved in the school's work and good use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to ensure key information is passed on. The school's good work with other organisations, with which it works in partnership, enhances the provision and is having a positive impact on students' outcomes. The specialist subject areas in particular have enabled effective and productive links to be established, through working collaboratively with primary schools in the local area.

The increasingly popular sixth form, through good leadership and management, complements the provision provided in Years 7 to 11 and is regarded by many students as the obvious choice for their post-16 studies. Students' good achievement is being secured

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through an appropriately diverse curriculum offer and they are well prepared for the next stage in their lives, be it higher education or the world of work. Sixth form students speak highly of the provision and are empowered to develop as increasingly independent learners.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to secure outstanding progress by
 - ensuring the marking of students' work is consistent and informative so that students know how to move up to the next level
 - making sure teachers make full use of available assessment data when planning their lessons, to cater for the needs of all groups of learners through the delivery of the lesson
 - ensuring that the features of outstanding teaching and learning become more commonly evident across all subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students enjoy a positive experience in the classroom, where learning is mostly good, with nothing that is inadequate. In the better lessons, students are encouraged to become independent learners through activities which present an element of challenge and which match the needs of all groups of students. In these lessons, very good use of questioning enables the teacher to monitor the progress students make in relation to the learning outcomes. In a geography lesson, students made outstanding progress when they learned about fair trade through writing their own poetry, songs and raps. Students assessed each other's performances accurately and exercised sound judgements.

Students' prior attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment in 2009 was significantly above average for those students gaining five or more good grades at GCSE level including English and mathematics, at 66%, but this dipped to just below the national average in 2010. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities nevertheless performed in line with expectations. The school has presented a convincing argument as to why attainment fell for a cohort which presented a variety of challenges and for which the school provided appropriate support and intervention. Available data for the current Year 11, which includes data from early examination entries, indicate that attainment and achievement will recover to at least the standard set in 2009 because of the good progress being made, based on reliable tracking data. Progress in English continues to be good and has shown significant improvement in mathematics and science due to a sharper focus on the use of tracking. Students from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other students. Girls' attainment is higher than boys but the gap is narrowing. Students with English as an additional language achieve as well as other groups due to well-targeted intervention strategies.

Students' behaviour is good, and the proportion of fixed-term exclusions has been reduced following the introduction of the 'Bethany Room', where they follow a programme of supervised study and have the opportunity to reflect on their actions. Students say they feel safe in school and the few incidents of bullying that occur are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The large uptake for extra-curricular sporting activities demonstrates students' desire to stay healthy and the proportion of students taking a healthy school lunch is high.

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Students' contribution to the school community is very strong and the highly effective school council has effected change for the better. A striking example of students contributing to school improvement is the recent research project where they were trained to observe lessons and offer constructive feedback on teaching and learning. Another group has established 'safe havens' in local shops for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable, who might seek refuge should trouble occur on the streets. High attendance, good punctuality and above-average attainment in basic skills prepare students well for their future. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and secures a harmonious school underpinned by mutual respect.

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	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
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 good overall and some is outstanding, although this is currently confined to a few subject areas. In the better lessons, teachers know the needs of their students well and plan lessons which allow them to make better than expected progress. Effective use of questioning tests comprehension, and high expectations and standards motivate students well. Marking is regular and informative so students know what they have to do to move up to the next level. Additional adults in the classroom, including teaching assistants and technicians, are deployed well to facilitate learning. In weaker lessons, teachers do not make effective use of assessment to inform their teaching; they

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deliver the same lesson to the whole class and any marking is unhelpful in securing improvement.

The good curriculum provision effectively meets the needs of all students, with a renewed approach to curriculum planning. This is based on the development of key skills, and links learning across subjects and is having a positive impact on student outcomes. The introduction of more vocational courses in Key Stage 4 has broadened the curriculum offer and motivated students to make good progress. Some students benefit from collaborative arrangements with a Building and Craft College which enable them to enjoy and achieve, and the science faculty is successfully addressing the needs of students through the introduction of BTEC courses and a triple science qualification. A wide range of clubs and activities enhance the curriculum and are appreciated by students.

Outstanding care, guidance and support are well targeted to support and benefit students and are central to the school's ethos. For example, some students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Year 7 are identified to be part of the 'Nurture Group' and receive well-targeted support in developing basic skills. Work with potentially vulnerable students and their families has been exemplary so that students facing very challenging circumstances now make good progress. Students who join the school with little or no English receive daily support from a specialist teacher at the start of the school day. Systems for supporting high attendance are embedded and there is a successful focus on the link between attending school and achieving well. Transition arrangements for students entering Year 7 and the sixth form are highly effective. The specialist subject areas support the primary transition phase very well through collaborative work with local primary schools.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers share the desire to secure school improvement and their vision is shared. Roles and responsibilities play to strengths, and lines of communication are clear. School improvement planning correctly targets the key issues and empowers particularly middle leaders, whose leadership and performance is closely monitored. Aspiring senior leaders are nurtured by means of an associate senior leadership team and teachers are encouraged to be creative by taking on school improvement projects. A comprehensive weekly staff development programme is well managed and covers key aspects relating to teaching and learning. School lesson observation records closely matched the judgements made by the inspection team and systems for converting satisfactory teaching to good are effective.

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The governing body has rightly focused on teaching and learning, achievement and the sixth form, and both challenges and supports leaders and managers when appropriate. Visits to monitor the work of the school have empowered members of the governing body more to ask the right questions and use existing skills to gain a deeper insight into the work of the school. As a result of an external review, members of the governing body promote community cohesion well and monitor its impact on students' outcomes. Work with local faith groups through The East London Community Organisation has resulted in improvements to the locality. Good safeguarding procedures are secured through regular staff training, the delivery of the curriculum and effective risk assessment systems.

Parents and carers are offered many opportunities to work in partnership with the school through specially arranged evenings, weekly surgeries with the headteacher, weekly newsletters and through regular reporting on their child's progress. A proactive parent and teacher association has been successful in raising additional funds for the school. Equal opportunities and tackling discrimination enjoy a high profile in the school and the school monitors entitlement and impact of strategies by different groups of students. Hence, any remaining gaps in performance are identified and are narrowing quickly.

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

Students in the sixth form make good progress based on their starting points, and the proportion of students achieving grades A*B at Advanced Level has increased over three years from 29% to 42%. Achievement is stronger in Level 3 courses but the school has rightly identified the importance of reviewing its Level 2 course provision. Variations in performance by subject are being eliminated because of improved systems for data tracking. High attendance and the good development of independent study and research

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skills make a positive contribution to good students' outcomes. Effective support and guidance help to secure places at universities for 90% of students.

The curriculum is well suited to the needs of students and provision is monitored for impact on outcomes. Teaching in the sixth form is good and has become more effective as every subject area now has a link person attached to a member of the sixth form leadership team, with the aim of developing and sharing good practice. An effective enrichment programme provides opportunities for students to make a positive contribution to the community, including all of Year 12 through the Student Community Action Day.

A comprehensive review of leadership resulted in a new structure which has improved the overall effectiveness of the sixth form. Sixth form leaders demonstrate drive and enthusiasm, which has resulted in an increase in sixth form numbers, more refined tracking of student progress and improved outcomes. Students are proud of the sixth form and willingly take on roles which develop their leadership skills.

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

Almost a quarter of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire but there were few additional comments. Responses were largely supportive of the school's work. The overwhelming majority feel the school keeps their child safe and most are happy with their child's experience at the school. A large majority believe that the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle. The inspection team observed students eating healthily in the school canteen and noted that a large number of extra-curricular clubs are provided and participation in these activities is monitored closely.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Holy Family Technology 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 251 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	89	35	145	58	10	4	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	89	35	158	63	3	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	99	39	122	49	23	9	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	23	159	63	27	11	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	52	21	179	71	14	6	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	48	19	164	65	31	12	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	13	161	64	46	18	4	2
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)	73	29	132	53	21	8	4	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	21	167	67	17	7	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	96	38	130	52	15	6	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	21	156	62	30	12	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	76	30	151	60	11	4	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	36	139	55	15	6	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	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 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.



10 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of The Holy Family Technology College, London E17 3EA

Thank you very much for making the inspection team so welcome when we visited your school recently. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and you believe that the leaders and managers are doing a good job. These are our main findings:

- The Holy Family Technology College is a good school.
- Your high attendance, coupled with good behaviour and outstanding care, guidance and support, secures good achievement.
- Teaching and learning are good overall but your teachers do not always make the best use of assessment data they have on you to plan their lessons to best effect. Marking does not always tell you how to improve your work.
- Your school keeps you safe and encourages you to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community.
- The curriculum meets your needs well and you appreciate the many clubs available. The school works well with other organisations to enhance your learning experience.
- Your school has a good sixth form, where students achieve well.
- Leaders, managers and members of the governing body are doing a good job in running the school and can identify its strengths and areas for development.

We have asked leaders and managers to ensure your work is marked regularly and to show you how you can improve. We have asked teachers to make full use of data they have on you when planning their lessons and increase the proportion of outstanding lessons delivered. We ask you to respond to comments written on your marked work and to do your best to achieve challenging targets set by your teachers.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell

Her Majesty's Inspector

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