

St Augustine's Roman Catholic School, Scarborough

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121714
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	395296
Inspection dates	23–24 April 2012
Lead inspector	Andrew Swallow

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	509
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christopher Scutt
Headteacher	Jesús Echevarría
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2007
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Introduction

Inspection team

Andrew Swallow
Geraldine Hutchinson
Nancy Walker

Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 31 lessons, taught by 28 teachers, including three observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, meetings were held with two groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, the safeguarding and equality policies, and minutes of the governing body meetings. Also, inspectors analysed 162 parental and carers' questionnaires and others completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is much smaller than the average sized secondary school. A lower than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Overall numbers who are disabled or are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is slightly above the national average. A small, but increasing, group of pupils is from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly Polish and Philippino, and who speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current floor standards, which are the government's minimum standards for attainment and progress. Among the school's awards are Healthy School status and the Inclusion Quality Mark.

Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have joined the school, and the entire senior leadership team has changed. In addition, a new Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body have recently taken up post.

A minority ethnic achievement hub, funded by the local authority, but managed by the school, is located on the school's site. The hub provides outreach support for pupils with English as an additional language, both to the school and other local schools. The hub was not part of the formal inspection process, but the impact of its work in the school was evaluated.

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 of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Adults provide high levels of pastoral care for all pupils and create a positive climate in which all pupils support each other. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school's work. Pupils say how much they enjoy life in school and the many extra-curricular and enrichment experiences, particularly music. These help to promote well pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is not yet a good school because not all pupils achieve well, especially in mathematics, as a result of inconsistencies in teaching. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. From generally average starting points, most reach average standards by the end of Year 11. Achievement and standards in mathematics is improving, but lags behind other subjects, including English and science, and results in underperformance by some pupils.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Inspectors saw examples of good and outstanding teaching, and a small proportion that was inadequate.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils are very polite and respectful around school. Parents and carers, pupils and staff believe that the strong relationships promote a culture of safety. In lessons, most pupils are eager to learn and succeed. When teaching lacks challenge some pupils are less attentive. Attendance is rising, and is average.
- Leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. There are examples of leaders taking decisive actions to improve teaching, though inconsistencies remain. Self-evaluation systems are established but lack sufficient rigour to secure accurate judgements about the effectiveness of teaching on learning and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better by summer 2013, in order to raise standards to above average, by:
 - checking the impact of professional development and support more rigorously to reduce inconsistencies in mathematics
 - reducing the amount of talking by teachers in some lessons, and generally increasing the time spent by pupils working with each other and thinking for themselves
 - providing activities and experiences better suited to the needs of all pupils, as a result of more astute checking of their progress during lessons
 - planning more clearly for the skills and understanding to be developed in lessons
 - improving the quality of marking to ensure that pupils are always given a clear view of their attainment and how they can improve it.
- Improve the evaluation of the school's work by leaders and managers at all levels by:
 - refining present arrangements to monitor the progress of all pupils across Years 7-11, to pinpoint underachievement earlier and to ensure the highest expectations of how well all can achieve
 - establishing a more systematic approach to assessing the quality of the school's work, setting aside the necessary time to appraise how effective arrangements are in all subjects to raise achievement, and using rigorous criteria against which to make judgments
 - focusing more on the impact of teaching on the quality of pupils' learning experiences and how well these are supporting their achievements.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

The vast majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily to reach average standards by the end of Year 11. Achievement is improving in mathematics, but is not as strong as in English and in some other subjects. While there are not significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils at the school, there remains some underperformance by the more able, especially girls, in mathematics. This is because planning does not take consistently, account of pupils' abilities to challenge them sufficiently in key mathematical skills such as oral calculation, presenting data in different formats and applying basic number operations to solve problems in 'real-life' contexts.

Most of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire think that their children are making good progress. The majority of the pupils think that they learn a lot, most or all of the time. The inspectors found this to be so in the lessons where teaching was good, but not so in general. This is largely due to activities that are not matched sufficiently to pupils' differing needs at different times, with many participating in the same experiences for much of the time. Disabled pupils and those special educational needs make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. They are adequately supported in their learning, particularly those with English as an additional language, by all adults, including those from the minority ethnic achievement hub.

In lessons and across the school, most pupils show positive attitudes to learning and, when given opportunities, talk purposefully with each other, structuring what they say clearly and listening perceptively to each other's viewpoints. For example, in a Year 10 physical education lesson, students readily coached their peers on the importance of pacing during endurance activities, pointing out the impact of too brisk a pace, at the beginning of a twelve minutes run, on subsequently slower laps and severe tiredness. Many write coherently, marshalling ideas and facts cogently, using key language and grammar, as well as punctuation, to good effect. When learning is less engrossing, some lack the levels of motivation and self-discipline required to sustain their efforts and achieve well. The promotion of reading skills across Years 7-9 is a strength, with many pupils reading with increasing confidence, fluency and interest, as they move through the school.

Quality of teaching

A majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire think that their children are taught well. The inspectors found evidence of good and outstanding practice, but not yet sufficient to make the quality of teaching good overall. The best examples were seen in English, science, food technology, music and physical education. More typically, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is more variable in the core subjects, especially mathematics.

The most effective lessons were characterised by careful planning, with precise references to how all pupils can deepen understanding and build on prior knowledge. Prompt and stimulating beginnings enthused all learners. Frequent opportunities for pupils to share ideas and think for themselves heightened motivation and participation rates, and developed effective listening and communication skills. In these instances, pupils collaborated readily, understood exactly what was expected of them and the standard required. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, all pupils showed an excellent insight into the effectiveness of an author's use of symbols to evoke key messages to the reader, immersed in independent discussion with one another, and were spurred on by skilful questioning by the teacher. Support provided by adults from the minority ethnic achievement hub is effective in helping to involve pupils with English as an additional language in their learning. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are appropriately supported, for the most part, by resources and activities that match their needs.

In many lessons where teaching is no better than satisfactory, teachers take too long to explain and introduce activities. They do not always take sufficient note of pupils' previous outcomes. Experiences are, therefore, not always as motivating and as challenging as they might be, with learners passive for too long, sometimes becoming restless. Not all teachers listen to and observe groups of pupils and individuals, with sufficient care during these lessons. There are inconsistencies in the ways they provide feedback about how well individuals are doing and how they can improve. As a consequence, opportunities are missed to re-shape learning and particularly deepen the understanding of the most-able. Teaching is particularly variable in mathematics, where teachers tend to present solutions too readily and opportunities are missed for pupils to collaborate, think and work things out for themselves. The quality of marking across all subjects, but particularly in mathematics, is variable, with inconsistencies in how regularly pupils are provided with a clear view of their attainment, and how they can improve it.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say overwhelmingly that they feel safe in school and that adults are very supportive. As a consequence, they have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of school. Parents and carers also believe that the school takes good care of their children and manages behaviour very effectively. Attendance is rising and is average, with pupils arriving punctually to school and to lessons. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good over time. Incidences of bullying are rare and a large proportion of pupils express confidence in the school's systems for dealing with such occurrences, if they arise. Pupils are acutely aware of different forms of bullying, particularly homophobic and cyber-bullying and, through their work on the school council, and other responsibilities around the school, actively try to prevent it from occurring. They make a good contribution to a safe, positive learning environment. For example, they are inclusive, in their work and play, of peers who join the school from overseas and at an early stage of speaking English. At the same time, they show positive regard to those with disabilities and special educational needs, ensuring that no-one feels left out. However, in some lessons behaviour lapses, and is not as positive as it might be. This is especially the case when teaching is uninteresting, and where pupils are not involved soon enough in their learning.

Leadership and management

Recently there have been significant changes in the senior leadership of the school, in roles and responsibilities of key leaders and managers across the school, and in governance. Not all of these changes are yet embedded, and have taken effect as well as they might. Nonetheless, staff and members of the governing body share an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, and have used the information effectively as of late, to determine key actions for improvement, including tackling underperformance in mathematics. They recognise that much remains to be done and have identified appropriate priorities. Suitable systems are in place for ongoing self-evaluation. Overall, this demonstrates satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Nonetheless, there is scope to refine present arrangements to monitor the progress of all pupils across Years 7-11, so that achievement in relation to pupils' starting points can be checked more rigorously, and expectations of pupils' outcomes by all teachers raised. Procedures to assess systematically the quality of teaching do not yet involve leaders and managers at all levels. They concentrate too much on teaching, rather than its effectiveness on the quality of pupils' learning, and achievements by different groups. Consequently, judgements about the overall quality of teaching are over-generous. Outcomes of monitoring are not yet used successfully to reduce inconsistencies and promote consistently good or better practice, fast enough. Not all leaders and managers have sufficient time to check the impact of professional development and performance management arrangements, on the quality of day-to-day teaching and learning.

The curriculum is predominantly academic, although with some applied and vocational courses. This meets effectively the needs of most students. Extra-curricular events and clubs, including many sporting and performing experiences, visits abroad and to local museums, theatres and art galleries, enhance the more formal arrangements. Over one third of pupils take part in musical activities, singing in the three choirs, playing in the jazz bands and school orchestra, and participating enthusiastically in the range of concerts and musical events throughout the school year. Regular access to the prayer room and school chaplain, well-planned assemblies and good links with the local church, underpin the

school's Catholic ethos. As a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Members of the governing body discharge their statutory responsibilities and ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. They ensure that the school adequately promotes equality of opportunity and tackles any discrimination. They are developing a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, but the information they receive on the school's work does not always enable them to determine fully how well the school is performing, against a wide enough range of national benchmarks.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Augustine's Roman Catholic School, Scarborough, YO12 5LH

Thank you for talking to my colleagues and me when we visited your school recently. The inspectors spoke with you in lessons, around the school and in groups, looked at your work, read the results of questionnaires filled in by you and your parents and carers, and spoke with some of your teachers. Here is a summary of the main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- The school provides you with a satisfactory standard of education.
- You make satisfactory progress in most lessons, reaching average standards by the end of Year 11. The progress that you make in mathematics is improving, but the standards that you attain are not as high as in other subjects.
- Most of you behave well and are polite to visitors and respectful of each other.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory, but is not consistently good enough across all subjects to ensure that you achieve as well as you might.
- The school provides adequate support to those of you who need additional help.
- Senior leaders and governors at the school know what needs to be done to bring more rigour in evaluating how well the school is doing, and to make things even better.

I have asked the headteacher and the governing body to increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better, in order ensure that standards across the school are above average by the summer 2013. I have also asked that staff are more rigorous in evaluating the quality of teaching and the progress that you make. They will need your help to make the school as good as all of you want it to be, and I hope you will continue to attend regularly, participate enthusiastically in all lessons, and tell your teachers when you find your learning to be too easy or too difficult.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Swallow
Lead Inspector

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