

St Joseph's Catholic High School, Business and Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112401
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378486
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2012
Lead inspector	Alison Thomson

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	666
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Hayes
Headteacher	Thomas Ryan
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
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Introduction

Inspection team

Alison Thomson	Additional inspector
Catherine Laing	Additional inspector
Patrick Feerick	Additional inspector
Paul Edmondson	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days’ notice. The inspectors observed 35 teachers teaching 37 lessons, two of which were joint observations with members of the school’s senior leadership team. Meetings were held with school leaders, members of the governing body and students. The inspectors observed the school’s work, including analyses of the students’ work, and looked at a number of documents, including those relating to safeguarding, child protection, development planning, the monitoring of the quality of teaching and external views of the school. The inspectors also analysed 162 parent and carer questionnaires, 162 pupil questionnaires and 50 questionnaires completed by the staff.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. A higher than average proportion of students is known to be eligible for free school meals. Most students are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus is higher than average. The school is a specialist college in business and enterprise and has gained national recognition for its innovation in enterprise education. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- St Joseph's is a satisfactory school, which is well thought of by parents and carers. Behaviour and safety are good. However, the overall effectiveness of the school is not good because leaders and managers are not bringing about improvements as quickly as possible, particularly in relation to student achievement and the quality of teaching. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Students' achievement is satisfactory. From average starting points in Year 7 students make satisfactory progress and leave in Year 11 with attainment that is broadly average. Attainment in English is above average. Students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs also make satisfactory progress.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall, but some is good and even outstanding. The best teaching is not shared well enough at present. Sometimes teaching is not adapted sufficiently well to challenge all students appropriately, particularly the most able. In addition, teachers do not always give students clear enough guidance to enable them to become more independent in assessing how well they are learning.
- Students say they feel very safe in school and that bullying of any kind is very rare. They behave well and are very polite and welcoming. They have positive attitudes to their work and cooperate well with each other in lessons. Attendance has improved but is average. Currently, the school has not persuaded all parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management of performance and leadership of teaching are helping to bring improvement, although this has not been as rapid as it might have been. Lesson observations do not always have a close enough focus on students' learning, and members of the governing body are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school first-hand. The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise student achievement through ensuring that all teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - sharing more effectively the good and outstanding practice in teaching and learning that already exists in school
 - ensuring that the work in all lessons is always adapted well to offer appropriate challenge to all students, particularly for the most able
 - giving students more responsibility for their own learning by always giving clear criteria for success in lessons, so that they can assess for themselves how well they are doing.
- Improve aspects of leadership and management to bring about improvements more quickly by:
 - focusing more clearly on the impact of teaching on learning when observing lessons to enable all staff to promote better learning and progress
 - persuading all parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance
 - increasing the involvement of members of the governing body in monitoring and evaluating the school's work, particularly in relation to the quality of learning and teaching, through greater first-hand knowledge of the school.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Inspection evidence confirms that students' achievement is satisfactory, although most parents and carers felt that it was good. Students arrive in Year 7 with attainment that is broadly average. Progress is satisfactory overall and good in English. At the end of Year 11 students' attainment is broadly average overall and above average in English. All groups make satisfactory progress including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school's data and results from early entry examinations indicate the fall in attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 4 in 2011 is being reversed. The progress of higher-attaining students, an area for development at the previous inspection, is improving so that it is more in line with their peers. The school has improved its monitoring of the progress of students and interventions to support those underachieving are becoming more timely and effective.

Students behave well. They work well independently and in groups when given the opportunity to do so. For example, in a Year 8 science lesson students made good progress, collaborating well in discussions to define the term 'efficiency'. They also rise to challenges well. This was demonstrated well in a Year 10 mathematics lesson where students made outstanding progress in developing hypotheses before carrying out statistical calculations. These lessons also demonstrated well the satisfactory application of key skills in literacy and communication. Sound information and communication technology (ICT) skills were observed in several lessons, including history and French. However, in some lessons students are not given enough responsibility for their own learning and they are unable to say if they are learning well as they are not clear what is expected of them. In those lessons progress slows. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs progress

as well as their peers, because teachers generally make suitable adjustments to learning. Students often receive effective one-to-one and small-group support. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 9 English lesson where reading and writing skills were promoted particularly effectively.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but it is variable. There are some examples of good and outstanding practice. Many teachers are enthusiastic and provide a range of interesting activities that enthuse students well. This was demonstrated in two Year 10 religious education lessons on the Trinity. In both lessons students made outstanding progress in understanding why Christians call God the 'Father'. These lessons also demonstrated the school's good provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Work is increasingly meeting the needs of all students, particularly those who are disabled and who have special educational needs. Teaching assistants are well prepared and proactive in helping these students access the work. There is evidence in some lessons of insufficient challenge, especially for the most able students, resulting in slower progress. Aspects of good and outstanding teaching include providing students with very clear criteria for success to enable them to become more independent in assessing how well they were learning. An example of this was seen in a Year 11 lesson on American history. Throughout the lesson the teacher helped pupils to assess how well they were learning. As a result, most made outstanding progress. However, this guidance is not a feature of the majority of lessons meaning progress is not as high as it could be.

The majority of marking is of good quality and helps students improve their work, but it is inconsistent, not only across departments but also within departments. Most parents and carers and students believe that teaching is good. Students told the inspectors one of the things they liked best about the school was the help teachers provided, often outside their lessons. However, inspection evidence found teaching to be satisfactory overall and inconsistent in quality. Best practice in teaching and learning is not shared well enough at present.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

About a fifth of parents and carers did not agree that behaviour was good in school and about a quarter did not agree that their child's lessons were not disrupted by poor behaviour. Inspection evidence found behaviour to be good both in lessons and in and around the school. In addition, they found the students to be most courteous, friendly and polite. Older students told the inspectors that behaviour has been good for some time and that there is very little bullying of any kind, including racist or homophobic bullying. They also said that when any incidents do occur they are dealt with effectively and straightaway. Adults within the school are good role models for the students, never raising their voices; they are calm and treat everyone respectfully. As a direct consequence, the school provides a purposeful environment for learning where students feel secure and can thrive.

Almost all parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the school kept their child safe. Similarly, almost all students said that they felt safe all or most of the time. Students showed a good knowledge of aspects such as e-safety and promote safety for others through projects involving art and ICT. Students are happy and enjoy their learning. Despite this, some students have not attended regularly and attendance rates have previously been lower than that found nationally. The school has taken action which has

recently had a positive impact. Currently, students' attendance is broadly average, but the school has not been successful in persuading all parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance to raise it higher than it is at present.

Leadership and management

School leaders are being successful in addressing underachievement and securing improvement across the school, for example, in improving behaviour so that students make a positive contribution to their learning and in arresting the drop in attainment in subjects previously less strong. However, areas for development from the previous inspection have not been fully addressed and, as a result, improvement is not as fast as it might be. Despite this, improvements seen, particularly this academic year, mean that the capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and involves curriculum leaders fully. Students' progress is monitored thoroughly and gaps in performance of different groups are closing, helping ensure equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any type is not tolerated. Professional development and performance management procedures are satisfactory and have been used effectively to tackle underperformance, for example in the quality of teaching. Leaders observe lessons regularly and usually give appropriate areas for development to ensure improvement. However, there is not always enough focus on how well students are learning when judging the quality of teaching. This means that improvements are not occurring as quickly as they might do.

Staff questionnaire responses show that almost all are very positive about all aspects of the school. Every response confirmed they are proud to be a member of staff at the school and agree that the school keeps the children safe. This reflects the caring ethos of the school and the fact that the school meets safeguarding requirements. Governance is satisfactory. Members of the governing body are involved in the work of the school and challenge the school in many areas, although they do not have enough first-hand knowledge of the school at present. They can identify the school's strengths and support what it needs to do to improve further, but are not sufficiently involved in the monitoring and evaluation of quality of learning and teaching. This is contributing to improvements being relatively slow. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good overall. Spiritual development is outstanding. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. However, there is currently limited vocational provision in Key Stage 4. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, arts and music, which are much appreciated by the students.

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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.



23 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of St Joseph's Catholic High School, Business and Enterprise College, Workington, CA14 3EE

Thank you for making the inspection team very welcome when we visited your school recently. We are especially grateful to those of you who spoke with us in lessons and in meetings. We judge your school to be satisfactory. There is much to praise, such as your good behaviour and the school's good provision for your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Your academic achievement is satisfactory and you attain standards that are generally in line and sometimes above those found nationally. The quality of teaching you receive is satisfactory overall, and some of it is good or outstanding. Leadership of the school is satisfactory.

We are leaving the school with two key areas to improve; one is to raise your academic achievement through increasing the quality of teaching and the other is to strengthen leadership and management so that improvements occur more quickly. We have asked that the quality of teaching be raised further by sharing more effectively the best practice in teaching, by always adapting activities in lessons to meet the needs of all of you and by giving you clear ways of being able to tell if you are learning well. We have asked leaders to bring about improvement more quickly by focusing more closely on your learning when observing your lessons, by making sure that governors monitor the work of the school more closely and by further raising attendance through convincing the parents and carers of all of you of the importance of regular attendance.

We feel sure that you will continue to work with your teachers to help make St Joseph's even better. You can help by always ensuring that you have clear criteria for success in lessons to be able to know if you are learning well. Some of you can help by attending school more regularly than you do at present. We would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Thomson
Lead inspector

