

# Saint Paul's Catholic School

Spencefield Lane, Leicester, LE5 6HN

## Inspection dates

6–7 December 2012

|                                |                      |             |          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good        | 2        |
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Achievement of pupils          |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Quality of teaching            |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils |                      | Good        | 2        |
| Leadership and management      |                      | Good        | 2        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement has been consistently above average over recent years and well above average in some years.
- The sixth form is good. Achievement has improved due to a rapid improvement in the quality of teaching.
- The progress made by disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good. The rate of progress for those students who speak English as an additional language is very good.
- Teaching is mainly good with some that is outstanding. Students are mostly given demanding work and nearly all make good progress.
- Effective training for staff, including learning from other teachers, has helped to improve the quality of teaching, especially in the sixth form.
- Behaviour is good and students come to school wanting to learn and achieve.
- The positive values of the school are based on shared beliefs. The good relationships between teachers and students lead to school being a place where all students can enjoy their learning.
- Leaders, managers and governors are fully committed to ensuring that the quality of teaching in the school leads to good and better student progress. They know the strengths of the school and they also know what they need to do to improve it further.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Year 11 students did not make enough progress in mathematics in 2012.
- There is not enough evidence of students working independently in Key Stage 3 and in some subjects in Key Stage 4.
- Students are not always given the opportunity or the time to reflect on what they are learning in order to deepen their understanding.
- There are some lessons where activities and expectations are not matched carefully enough to the needs of the most-able students.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons or parts of lessons. There were three joint observations with the headteacher and senior leaders and 44 teachers were observed in total. Inspectors also observed an assembly and several form groups during their registration session.
- Meetings were held with various senior and middle leaders in the school, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with and listened to the views of four groups of students across the Year 7 to Year 13 age range.
- Twenty five staff members completed questionnaires and these were taken into account by inspectors along with the 16 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team observed the school's work, looked at student books and information relating to student achievement, attendance, behaviour, safety and safeguarding.
- Documents relating to the school's evaluation of its own performance, improvement plans, performance management and pay progression information and records of the school's monitoring of teaching were examined.

## Inspection team

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Liz Talmadge, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Robert Pritchard             | Additional Inspector |
| Anthony Felsenstein          | Additional Inspector |
| Christopher Christofides     | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Saint Paul's Catholic School is a little larger than the average secondary school and teaches students from 11 to 18 years of age. Students travel from all over the east of the city and county to attend this school.
- Approximately half the students in the school are from White British backgrounds and half are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Above average numbers of students speak English as an additional language and the school provides additional support for them.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students entitled to free school meals, for children in local authority care and for students with a parent in the armed forces) is currently well below average but is rising quickly year-on-year.
- The proportion of students joining the school other than at the usual time of admission is higher than that seen nationally.
- The numbers of students supported by school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally but the number supported by school action is close to average.
- There are a very small number of Key Stage 4 students supported by attendance at off-site courses.
- The school currently meets the government's floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took over in September 2011.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase students' achievement in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4 so that it matches their achievement in English.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - all lessons provide consistently high levels of challenge for the most-able students by closely matching activities to their learning needs
  - there are more opportunities for students' greater involvement in lessons, including learning from each other in pairs and in small groups.
  - time is identified during lessons for students to reflect on what they are learning so that they deepen and extend their understanding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' start at the school with Key Stage 2 results that are a little lower than average. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4 they have made good progress.
- Achievement has been consistently above average for several years and remains so. The school has robust monitoring systems in place to ensure that they are able to provide targeted support and intervention where students are not reaching their potential.
- 2012 GCSE results, while still above average, were lower overall than in 2011. The school fully understands that this was because results in mathematics were weaker than in English or in other subjects.
- Until this year, the school entered the most-able students early for GCSE examinations in mathematics. They have now stopped doing this because it was preventing the most-able students from getting the highest grades.
- The school has worked hard to ensure that there is a reliable system in place to measure the progress that students are making and to predict future success. This provides convincing evidence that current Year 11 students are on track to attain GCSE results that are well above average in 2013.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs has been above average over time. In line with overall achievement in 2012, these students performed better in English than they did in mathematics. The needs of students attending the alternative off-site provision are effectively met and they make good progress.
- The achievement of those pupils who have English as an additional language is very good and is well supported an ESOL (Improving English for Speakers of Other Languages) course and that helps them to quickly develop their communication skills.
- The progress of the small group of students eligible to attract the pupil premium is good over time. This group of students makes progress at least in line with national averages in both English and mathematics because they are given extra teaching in smaller groups. Where individual students are at risk of falling behind, swift action is taken to support them and help them overcome any barriers to learning.
- A small group of Key Stage 4 students are educated away from the school following courses that are designed to give them a taste of the world of work. These students are making good progress.
- Sixth form students are now making good progress and the issues identified in the last inspection have been successfully tackled. Strong leadership and a focus on improving teaching at post-16 means that sixth form results at both AS and A2 have improved with many more students attaining higher grades. Since 2010 expectations of students joining the sixth form have risen and as a result the numbers of students completing their courses has increased.
- School records indicate that, typically, all students at the end of Year 11 or Year 13 secure a place in education, employment or further training.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- Since the appointment of the new headteacher, the school has focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership of teaching is strong and this has led to most teaching now being good or better, with the majority of sixth form teaching now outstanding. The best teaching helps students to make consistently good or better progress. Good use of target-setting and assessment to support learning and help students to know how much progress they are making.
- In the best lessons, strong working relationships between teachers and students mean that students engage well and try their best. These lessons are consistently well planned and designed to provide regular opportunities for students to identify the progress they are making.
- Teachers always want students to do their best and their good subject knowledge gives students the confidence to ask well thought-out questions. This helps students to extend their understanding.
- Many teachers, particularly when teaching sixth form, use very good questioning skills, encouraging students to think more deeply so that they develop their understanding more quickly.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly but they do not always explain exactly what needs to be done to improve the quality or the standard of students' work.
- Activities are usually carefully chosen to meet the needs of different groups of students, enabling them to make good progress. However, in Key Stage 3 and in some subjects at Key Stage 4 the level of work is not always demanding enough for the most-able students.
- The best teaching in the sixth form and in some Key Stage 4 lessons makes time for students to work on their own and with others to solve problems and think things through for themselves. This helps students to extend their knowledge and understanding and think carefully about what they are learning.
- The support for students new to English is good, as is the support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. In-class support and one-to-one support are used effectively to help these students make rapid progress. The teaching of literacy skills is well developed across the school.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The school has shared values based on beliefs and attitudes and embraced by the whole school community: school leaders, governors, staff, students and parents and carers.
- Students are well-behaved, well-mannered and polite. They enjoy being in school and their attendance is above average. Students like their school, and feel safe and well supported by the adults who guide and advise them. Students report very few instances of bullying; they understand the risks associated with the various kinds of bullying, including cyber bullying, and know who to go to if they have any concerns.
- Exclusions are reducing because, for the small group of students who find school challenging, there is now good alternative provision that offers learning experiences that are matched well to

their needs. This provision is carefully monitored by the school to ensure that there is full attendance and that good progress is made by students in both their learning and personal development.

- Behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes outstanding because of the well-developed relationships between students and between staff and students. Students work well in small groups and support each other in their learning. They enjoy working together and say that they would value being given more opportunities to do this.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, together with those for whom English is an additional language, have positive attitudes to learning. Teachers are well supported in meeting these students' individual learning needs, particularly through the systems for keeping a close eye on how they are doing, enabling students to be fully involved in their learning.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium are effectively supported in taking part in all that the school offers. Good pastoral support ensures that they are able to discuss and resolve any problems promptly.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher, in post for just four terms, is making a positive impact on the school. His vision for teaching and learning is supported by leaders at all levels. He brings energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the role and has high expectations of himself and others.
- School leaders know the school well and, in a short space of time, have improved the quality of teaching in the sixth form. By helping teachers to improve their questioning techniques, they have ensured that students now make better progress.
- Improvement planning correctly identifies the goals for the school. Planning to improve teaching and learning has led to good quality training being available to teachers from talented colleagues within the school. This has ensured that the majority of teaching is now good and often outstanding.
- Staff say that they feel privileged to work at the school and go out of their way to provide a wide range of support for students both during the day, at lunchtime and after school.
- The school has introduced a robust system of setting targets for teachers to improve their work and is successfully tackling pockets of underperformance. Salary progression for teachers is firmly linked to the quality of their teaching.
- The school offers students a good range of subject choices with some work and college-based learning for a small group of Key Stage 4 students. This off-site provision is carefully monitored and students given any additional support required. Students benefit from a wide range of clubs, visits and overseas trips.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is a strong feature of the school and actively promoted by all staff. The strong and inclusive values, attitudes and beliefs that the school promotes ensures that everyone having an equal chance is central to the daily life of the school. The school has good relationships with parents and carers, and regularly reports the progress their children are making.

- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements; procedures are regularly reviewed and staff training in child protection is updated annually.
- The pupil premium funding is used to provide specialist support for vulnerable students and to teach them a range of wider key skills that motivate them to engage fully with their learning.
- The local authority offers light touch support to the school because it is confident that the school is a good school.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body plays a key role in determining the school's future and asks searching questions of school leaders. Its members are familiar with the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and learning. They know how finances are being used and have a good understanding of how pupil premium money is used, for example, in providing key skills teaching for Key Stage 4 students. They are fully involved in decisions about performance management and know which teachers will receive salary increases each year. Like the new headteacher, governors are aspirational, they undertake appropriate training and see themselves as part of the Saint Paul's learning community.

## What inspection judgements mean

| School  |                      |  |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |



## School details

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 120307    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Leicester |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 403432    |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                         | Secondary                        |
| <b>School category</b>                        | Voluntary Aided                  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                    | 11–18                            |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                       | Mixed                            |
| <b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>     | Mixed                            |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>    | 1050                             |
| <b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b> | 152                              |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>                  | The governing body               |
| <b>Chair</b>                                  | Laura O'Brien                    |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                            | Neil Lockyer                     |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>     | 6 February 2008                  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                       | 0116 241 4057                    |
| <b>Fax number</b>                             | 0116 241 9156                    |
| <b>Email address</b>                          | office@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk |

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