

St Philip Howard Catholic School

St Mary's Road, Glossop, SK13 8DR

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement is not yet good. There is too much variation in achievement between different groups of students and between subjects. Many boys and students known to be eligible for support through special government funding, the pupil premium, do not achieve as well they should.
- Teaching is improving but is not yet resulting in consistently good progress for all groups of students and across subjects. For example, students are not given enough opportunities to work in groups or pairs to clarify ideas or work things out for themselves.
- Leaders and managers have systems and approaches in place that are improving teaching and raising achievement. Many of these initiatives have been put in place recently and this work has not yet resulted in good achievement for all students.
- Checks on how well school policies and new initiatives are put into practice in classrooms are not yet rigorous enough to lead to consistently good teaching.
- The governing body does not have a full understanding of students' achievement in relation to other schools.

The school has the following strengths

- Overall, students' attainment has improved since the previous inspection.
- Though there is more to do, leaders and managers are well focused on raising students' achievement and improving the quality of teaching. Training for staff is linked to the school's priorities.
- The governing body monitors many areas of the school's work closely and ask challenging questions of school leaders.
- Students behave well. Students appreciate the family atmosphere of this small school where they feel that staff know them well and do a great deal to support them. They feel safe and say that bullying is rare and is sorted out quickly. Most students enjoy learning.
- An extensive range of sporting, musical and cultural activities promotes students' personal development well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 part-lessons and, of these, three were seen jointly with senior leaders. In addition to the work seen in students' workbooks during visits to lessons, samples of students' work in English, mathematics, science and humanities were analysed.
- Meetings were held with staff, governors, representatives of the local authority and students from each year group.
- Documents examined included those relating to students' progress, attendance and behaviour, safeguarding and child protection, the school self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, records of monitoring of teaching and governing body minutes.
- Parents' views were taken into account through the 16 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the most recent survey of parents carried out by the school.
- A recent survey of students' views carried out by the school and staff questionnaires distributed during the inspection were taken into account.

Inspection team

Gill Salter-Smith, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Simon Mosley	Additional Inspector
Caroline Maskery	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. (Pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families.)
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported through school action is average. The proportion of such students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- Education is provided at the University College of Buxton for a small number of students in Years 10 and 11 for one day per week.
- The school is a member of the Peak 11 Learning Federation which is a partnership made up of 11 schools of the High Peak and Derbyshire Dales and it shares good practice and provides training for staff.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes to the structure and staffing of the leadership team. A new deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2011.
- The school meets the current government floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for students' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more of it is good and outstanding in order to speed up students' progress, particularly for boys, students known to be eligible for pupil premium and the more-able by:
 - providing more opportunities for students to clarify their ideas about a particular topic or subject by talking these through in pairs or groups before putting them down in writing in their own words
 - giving students the chance to find things out for themselves and work in pairs and groups more often
 - checking more frequently on what is being understood in lessons so that no students get left behind
 - using the good information available to teachers on students' progress to provide tasks in lessons that challenge all students to do their best, including more-able students
 - improving teachers' marking so that more of it gives students useful guidance on how to improve and that students are expected to respond to, and make, the improvements suggested
 - creating an atmosphere in all lessons where students are confident to tell teachers when they do not understand
 - enabling students to aspire, and be taught, to a higher level than their target grade where they show capability
 - ensuring that the work started to support students at risk of falling behind in their progress and those known to be eligible for pupil premium funding does make the expected impact on their learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by:
 - improving the rigour with which leaders check that school policies and new initiatives are put

into practice, particularly those relating to teaching and marking, so that teaching improves at a faster rate

- taking greater account of the impact of teaching on students' progress when evaluating teaching
- being more rigorous and systematic in approaches to improving teaching and sharing best practice in order to bring greater consistency to students' achievement across subjects
- ensuring that the governing body is fully informed of, and understands, students' achievement in relation to other schools.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection GCSE results have improved and information on the progress of students currently in school shows that the overall improvements are set to continue. The 2012 results are close to national figures for attainment; most students made the progress expected of them, from overall average starting points, but not enough made better than expected progress.
- Achievement is not yet good because, despite an improving picture, many boys do not achieve as well as they should. The gap in achievement between students being supported through the pupil premium funding and those who are not, although narrowing, is not closing quickly enough. Attainment across subjects is uneven and, in too many lessons, more-able students are not being challenged to reach their full potential.
- The school is using its pupil premium funding to provide one-to-one support, smaller teaching groups, revision sessions and funding for visits relating to the curriculum. These are starting to help targeted students to do better. Following a class visit related to work in English, the pupil premium funded students improved their performance in that particular piece of work significantly. The school is aware that more needs to be done to accelerate the progress of these students, many of whom are boys. Recent initiatives are providing better targeted support but it is too soon to assess their effect on students' progress.
- Students' skills in reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology are developed sufficiently to enable almost all to be reasonably ready for their next stage in education, training or employment. However, many students are not confident when speaking and discussing their work in class. This is more marked for students in Key Stage 4 than Key Stage 3 because these older students have not experienced the better teaching that is enabling younger students to develop these skills more effectively.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Students' needs are identified accurately and additional expertise and support from adults is planned appropriately to match their capabilities.
- The school's attention to equality of opportunity is evident in the increasing effort they are making to support every student and to help all to achieve their potential. For example, the system that identifies students' underachievement and that leads to targeted support has recently been extended to all year groups. It is too soon to judge its effect on students' progress. The school's policy of early entrance to some examinations does not prevent students from gaining the highest grades of which they are capable before the age of 16, including in mathematics.
- The small number of students who attend the University College of Buxton part time benefit from courses that are well suited to their interests and abilities. Most go on to education, training or employment which are often related to these courses. Suitable checks are carried out to assure students' health and safety whilst attending these courses.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is improving but it is not yet good because there is too much inconsistency between lessons and it is not yet resulting in good progress for all groups of students and across all

subjects.

- Positive relationships between students and staff mean that in most lessons students feel that teachers give them the help they need to succeed. However, in a few lessons some students do not feel confident enough to say that they do not understand. Consequently, their learning is slowed down.
- In many lessons, teachers pay good attention to improving students' reading and writing skills. They encourage the correct use and spelling of key terminology. Increasingly, staff pay attention to improving students' writing skills, for example, by giving them opportunities to write reports on scientific investigations. However, in too many lessons, teachers do not provide students with enough opportunities to develop their understanding of key subject-related ideas by talking these through with others in pairs or groups or to find out information for themselves. As a result, students' written work does not include the level of thinking that would help to raise their standards of work.
- Checking of students' progress over time has improved and is more accurate. However, in lessons teachers sometimes do not check closely enough on how much has been understood and some students get left behind.
- Students know the target grades they are aiming to achieve and mostly know how to reach them. Increasingly, teachers have good information on students' progress and those at risk of underperforming are now identified in all year groups. However, this good information is not always used well enough to make sure that tasks in lessons are matched closely to students' different levels or abilities. Consequently, more-able students are not always challenged to do their best and those struggling are not always well enough supported. Occasionally, students aspiring to reach higher levels and grades than their targets are not given the opportunity to do so.
- The school policy on marking students' work introduced this year is not yet put into practice consistently by all teachers so that there are still occasions when students do not receive enough guidance on how well they are doing in relation to their targets or what they must do next to improve. Students are not always expected to make improvements to their work in response to the guidance given by their teachers.
- In good and outstanding teaching, students rise well to teachers' high expectations of learning and conduct. Tasks are effectively matched to students' different abilities. Students are encouraged to discuss their ideas in a well structured way and find things out for themselves. Teachers' questions recognise how students' are thinking and develop their ideas carefully. Students are encouraged to reflect on how well they are doing and a good pace for learning is maintained. This was observed in a Year 11 dance lesson where students, with guidance from the teacher, took responsibility for improving their own performances and identified very clearly what they needed to do next in order to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Disruption to learning in lessons is uncommon. Most parents consider that behaviour is good.
- In most lessons students concentrate well and are eager to learn. They get on well with each other, and when given the opportunity to do so, cooperate with each other in sharing ideas and evaluating each other's work. Some students lack confidence in expressing their ideas, especially older students, and at times students are content to listen to the teacher and not contribute

their own ideas.

- Students feel safe in school and have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe in many different circumstances including when using modern technology. They say they learn how to keep themselves safe because they are well taught in personal, social and health education lessons.
- Students are fully confident that staff deal with the rare incidents of bullying quickly and effectively. They feel part of a small 'family type' community where staff know them very well and do a great deal to support them and help them to do their best.
- Incidents of exclusion have fallen since the previous inspection and are below national figures. Overall rates of attendance are in line with national averages.
- Students take on many responsibilities including those of the school council and the local Youth Parliament.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher, senior leaders and the governing body have a clear agenda for improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement for all students which is supported by most leaders and staff. The school improvement plan sets out clear priorities and helps to drive through improvements. The ability to make further improvements is demonstrated in the rise in students' attainment since the previous inspection. Recently developed systems and approaches to learning and teaching and measuring the levels that students are working at are starting to improve teaching and raise achievement. This work has not yet resulted in good achievement for all students.
- Training for staff is well focussed on the school's priorities and recognises individual staff needs. It is leading to better teaching. For example, all staff plan lessons to a common format that includes a focus on developing students' literacy skills and identifies the purpose of the lesson. Newly qualified staff and teachers in training are well supported. Increasingly, staff share good practice with each other and benefit from working with colleagues in the Peak 11 partnership. However, actions to improve teaching and share best practice are not always targeted systematically enough to turn around the least effective teaching.
- The accuracy of assessment and checks on students' progress have improved. Students who are not making enough progress are identified and additional support is provided. This expectation has recently been extended to every class. It is too soon to see the impact on students' overall progress.
- Checks on the quality of teaching are more frequent but evaluation of its quality do not fully take into account the effect teaching has on students' progress. Nor are checks always rigorous enough to ensure that school policies, such as the policy for marking students' work, are put into practice consistently.
- The range of subjects and courses provided increasingly matches students' different abilities and aspirations, especially for courses in Key Stage 4. There are improved opportunities for learning modern foreign languages. The Year 7 'Opening Minds' course develops students as more confident learners. Personal, social and health education lessons support students' good personal development. A very broad range of extra-curricular activities in sport, music, drama and many other activities are well attended by students. Sporting links with the community are

strong.

- The school has increased its links with parents. They are consulted more frequently and their views listened to. Workshops to help parents support their children's learning are well attended. A Parent Forum is well established. Parents are more involved in events with their children, for example, in a dad's cooking session.
- The local authority supports the school's improvement well. Training has been provided for staff and governors. Reviews of the work of the school hold leaders to account.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have benefitted from regular training, and monitor many areas of the school's work closely and ask challenging questions of school leaders. However, they are not fully informed of students' achievement in relation to the national picture. They know how good teaching is and are involved in managing the performance of teachers; progression in salary is looked at closely in relation to the effectiveness of teaching. Governors analyse and evaluate thoroughly how well pupil premium funding is spent. They fulfil requirements with regard to keeping students and staff safe.

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

Unique reference number	112972
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	405444

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	510
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev. Canon Don Bowdren
Headteacher	Wendy Steciuk
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2010
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