

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

Tongue Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS6 4QE

Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- The progress that students make, given their various starting points, is too slow. This is particularly the case for the students supported by the pupil premium.
- Although there is some good and outstanding teaching, there is still too much which requires improvement. Teaching is not always strong enough to drive students' learning and progress at a fast pace.
- In less effective lessons, work is not challenging enough for students. In some lessons, teachers talk for too long and they miss too many opportunities to develop students' learning.
- The senior leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is not sufficiently accurate and robust to drive the rise in standards at a fast enough pace.
- Senior leaders do not have a strong enough focus on driving improvements in teaching and learning across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an inclusive school where every student is valued as an individual.
- Students behave extremely well around the school and politeness, friendliness and respect are very well modelled by all staff.
- Students achieve consistently well in mathematics as a result of strong leadership in that department.
- Governors are very supportive but they also hold the school to account. They have supported a new appointment to the senior leadership team which has developed its capacity to take the school forward.
- The curriculum successfully meets the needs, aspirations and interests of the students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons given by 40 different teachers, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Six groups of students met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders and newly qualified teachers. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. A telephone conversation took place with a representative from the local authority and a parent.
- Inspectors took account of 31 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and of 47 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors read a range of documents. These included information on the school's procedures for gaining a view of its performance, school improvement plans, students' current progress, policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Patrick Hargreaves	Additional Inspector
Tony Price	Additional Inspector
Barbara O'Brien	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is a voluntary aided 11–16 faith-based specialist language college. It is slightly smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is slightly above the national average, with those who speak English as an additional language being broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than that found nationally.
- The school meets the current government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A small number of students attend bespoke alternative provision which includes courses at 'Skills4U', 'Elect' and at the 'Catholic Out of School Provision'.
- The school has gained the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard and the International School Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching across the school so that more lessons are good or outstanding by making sure all teachers:
 - plan activities that encourage students to think for themselves and take more responsibility for their own learning
 - challenge pupils more and have higher expectations of what students can achieve
 - use questioning more effectively to check and develop students' understanding regularly
 - mark students' work thoroughly, explaining clearly what they need to do to improve.
- Ensure that all students make at least good progress by:
 - using the information from tracking students' progress more effectively to identify underachieving students who require additional support
 - prioritising the monitoring and review of the performance of different groups of students, particularly those who are supported by the pupil premium, so that any gaps in achievement are closed
 - making sure all teachers use assessment information to plan more effectively to drive learning and progress in the classroom.
- Improve and strengthen the effectiveness of the school's leadership by:
 - making sure that leaders across the school focus on students' learning and progress
 - having an accurate and robust view of the school's performance which informs a clear action plan, focused on raising achievement
 - prioritising improvements in teaching and learning, ensuring that the good and outstanding practice that exists across the school is shared with all staff.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students enter the school with standards which are above other students' nationally. In 2012, there was a dip in students' achievement and they did not make as good progress as they had in the previous two years. Currently, students are making good progress in the majority of lessons.
- In 2012, the percentage of students attaining five A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was broadly in line with the national average. However, it had been significantly higher than the national average in the previous two years.
- Over the last three years, students have achieved well in mathematics. There has been an improving trend in the progress that students make in this subject, with the percentage achieving expected progress in 2012 being considerably higher than the national percentage. In English, the number of students who made expected progress in 2012 dipped below the national percentage, but for the two years prior to this, it had been significantly higher.
- The progress in English of those students who are eligible for the pupil premium funding is significantly lower than that of students nationally in this group. The gap between the average point score of this group of students and the rest of the cohort is wider than that found nationally. The school is now being much more focused in targeting this additional support and these students are beginning to make faster progress. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where there is clear impact of improved student achievement following targeted support. The school has used this funding to reduce class sizes for targeted students in English and mathematics. One Year 11 student explained how being in this smaller group had improved her confidence, and how she has now moved up a set and is performing above her target grade.
- In 2012, there was a dip in the achievement of students with special educational needs, which was linked to high exclusions and low attendance rates for this group. The school has responded to this with a renewed drive on behaviour and attendance, alongside strong and appropriate alternative provision to meet the needs of students. The progress of students attending alternative provision is monitored closely; these students are well supported and they attend regularly. They say that the opportunity to participate in college placements has improved their attitude to learning in school. There is now robust tracking of this group of students across all subjects and their achievement is now comparable to students nationally in this group. The achievement of students from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is in line with the rest of the cohort.
- The school does not have a policy of entering large groups of students early for examinations. However, individual students may be targeted for early entry in mathematics and if they achieve their target grade, they will spend more of their time on achieving the best possible grade in English.
- In a minority of lessons observed during the inspection, students' learning and progress were sometimes less than good. This was because the learning activities did not create opportunities for this to happen.
- The school actively encourages reading for pleasure. Reading takes place regularly in English lessons and students are encouraged to keep a reading diary in Key Stage 3. There is now a sharper focus on literacy across the school but teachers miss too many opportunities to develop literacy in their lessons.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are variations in the quality of teaching across the school and it is not consistently good.
- In lessons where teaching is less than good, teachers often spend too long talking to the whole class and dominate activities too much. Students are not given nor do they take enough responsibility for their own learning.
- Often, where teaching requires improvement, lessons lack the appropriate level of challenge,

usually because the work is too easy. Teachers do not take enough account of individual students' targets and current achievement when planning lessons. This means that they are not given the opportunity to make good progress.

- In a minority of lessons, teachers do not use questioning to probe students' understanding, which means that students do not learn as much as they could. However, where teaching is good or better, effective questioning is used to develop students' confidence in expressing their ideas. Teachers in these lessons ask searching questions, challenging students to take their thinking to the next level.
- Where the quality of teaching is good or better, teachers use their passion for their subject and their knowledge of their students to engage, enthuse and involve them in the lesson. They use a range of assessment throughout the lesson to inform the learning and ensure all students are making good progress. An example of this was in a Year 10 English lesson, where the teacher's attitude created a positive energy in the classroom. She encouraged the students, working in pairs, to explore the symbolism in a gothic novel and was willing to extend the activity when it was clear they were challenging each other to think in depth about the author's choice of language. Students could articulate their ideas confidently, using the correct literary terminology.
- The quality of marking is variable across subjects. There is clear evidence of teachers implementing the new school marking policy but this is not yet consistent across the whole school. At its best, marking celebrates success and gives specific guidance for improvement, but too often, it lacks detail and does not explain to students how to progress to the next level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students enjoy their learning and are keen to do well. When they are given the chance, they grasp the opportunity to work collaboratively, responding maturely and demonstrating initiative. Unfortunately, there are not enough of these opportunities and too often during lessons, the learning activities require them to be passive and not take responsibility for their own learning.
- This is an inclusive school. Students, staff and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Students feel safe and well cared for. Students spoke positively and articulately to inspectors about their school. When asked about enrichment opportunities, one student said there was 'a plethora of activities'!
- Low-level disruption in lessons is rare. The behaviour management sanction and reward system is well understood. Occasionally, reward stamps are issued too often and this devalues their effectiveness.
- Students have a clear understanding and awareness of different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare but when it occurs, it is dealt with effectively by the school. They know how to report it and feel that all adults in school will support them.
- The school is meticulous in its reporting and reviewing of racist and homophobic incidents, all of which have been dealt with extremely well. The work the school is involved in is linked to the Stephen Lawrence Education Standard and the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools agenda is further testament to the importance the school attaches to this area. Students have a well-developed appreciation of other cultures and a strong sense of empathy.
- Over the last three years, attendance has been above the national average and is improving overall. The school monitors attendance very closely and gaps for student groups are now closing. There has been a significant decline in the number of fixed-term exclusions from 2011 to the present.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- This is a truly cohesive school where everyone shares the same values. Respect is a key aspect of the culture at Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School and this informs every area of school life.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very strong. The school strives to meet the needs of every individual student and this is valued, particularly by parents. A school survey of Year 8 parents and carers and the responses to Parent View show that parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

- However, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its performance are not sufficiently robust. This has prevented senior leaders from driving the rise in standards at a fast enough pace. Senior leaders have not been sufficiently strategic and systematic in driving improvements across the school and action plans do not focus enough on the progress of students.
 - Senior leaders have not used data effectively to track students' progress, focusing instead too heavily on students' attainment. A range of data is available across the school but there is no consistency in how this is used to monitor and improve students' progress effectively. The school has recognised this as a priority: a newly appointed senior leader has a brief to extend across the whole school the good practice currently evident in mathematics.
 - Leadership of teaching and learning requires improvement. Driving improvements in teaching and learning is not a high enough priority. Senior leaders have recently introduced some positive strategies to bring about improvements in teaching across the school, but it is too early to judge what impact these are having on students' learning.
 - Joint lesson observations with senior leaders and the school's own records show a correlation in the judgement about the quality of teaching across the school.
 - The performance management targets set for teachers are clearly linked to students' achievement and their own professional development. The headteacher and governors use the performance management process effectively to determine teachers' salary progression.
 - The curriculum provides well for students' needs and the school effectively personalises provision, including off-site opportunities to help students to achieve.
 - A recent appointment to the senior leadership team has strengthened its capacity to take the school to the next stage of its improvement journey.
 - The school has been supported and challenged by the same member of the local authority for over five years. He knows the school well and his reports provide a useful and impartial review of the school's performance. The local authority has also played an important role in supporting governors.
 - Procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is supportive of the headteacher and holds her and other leaders to account on all aspects of school life, including on how the school spends the pupil premium funding. Heads of department are required to present reports on student achievement to the teaching and learning sub-committee. They are aware of the quality of teaching in the school and fully understand how the school links salary progression to performance management. Governors have an effective strategic role and have already supported a new appointment to the senior leadership team to strengthen its capacity. Governors take advantage of the training which is offered by the local authority. They ensure that all statutory responsibilities are met.
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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	108095
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	413427

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	908
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Murray
Headteacher	Elizabeth Cox
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2010
Telephone number	0113 336 8800
Fax number	0113 294 0320
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