

St Edmund's Catholic School

Old Charlton Road, Dover, Kent CT16 2QB

Inspection dates

January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures

- Too many students, including disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make inadequate progress. As a result, students' attainment at the end of Year 11 has been significantly below average.
- Teaching is inadequate. Teachers do not provide work that is matched to the needs and prior attainment of their students.
- Students' conduct has improved significantly but they are not always ready to learn and this aspect of behaviour requires improvement.
- Despite very recent improvements, leaders, managers and governors have not addressed the shortcomings identified in the previous inspection and have not significantly slowed the decline in the school's performance.
- The provision available to the sixth-form students requires improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The new interim leadership team has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons, looked at students' work, attended an assembly, listened to students reading and talked to them about their work.
- They held a conversation with the governors, representatives from the local authority and school leaders and managers. They also held discussions with several different groups of students.
- They discussed professional development, safeguarding, performance management and the effectiveness of teaching and learning with teachers and other staff.
- Inspectors reviewed documents relating to governance, self-evaluation, improvement planning and the monitoring of teaching. Inspectors also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also took account of 30 questionnaires completed by school staff and 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Robert Ellis, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Anne Welham

Her Majesty's Inspector

Roger Garrett

Additional Inspector

Janet Simms

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

Information about this school

- The local authority conducted a review of the school and issued it with a warning notice. An interim leadership team took responsibility for the school in December 2012.
- St Edmund's is a smaller than average-sized non-selective secondary school in an area where selection by ability takes place. It is federated with St Richard's Catholic Primary School. The school serves the deanery of Dover in the Archdiocese of Southwark. An executive principal and joint governing body have responsibility for both schools.
- The school is a specialist college for the performing arts.
- Around one in four students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is average. The pupil premium is government funding targeted to support pupils entitled to free school meals, children in local authority care and children with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. Most of these students have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or moderate learning difficulties.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision as part of their programmes of study. Sixth-form provision is through collaborative partnerships with other local secondary schools.
- Around one in six students comes from a minority ethnic group. Most students speak English as their first language but an increasing proportion of students are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The school's recent unvalidated GCSE results met the government floor standard, which is the minimum level expected for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate inadequate teaching and promote high professional standards so that all teaching is good or better by January 2014 by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of students' capabilities
 - using assessment information effectively when planning lessons to ensure that work meets students' needs and is sufficiently challenging
 - ensuring that lessons are delivered at a brisk pace and engage students actively in their learning
 - ensuring teachers' marking and feedback consistently provide students with good quality advice and guidance so that they can improve their work.
- Accelerate students' progress and raise standards by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that teachers ensure that all the different groups of students make consistently good progress in their learning
 - raising students' aspirations and teaching them how to learn independently and confidently
 - expecting students to be active participants in lessons and judge their own progress
 - ensuring that all students have equal access to good teaching and work that meets their

specific needs

- ensuring that all students develop the skills in reading, writing and comprehension that are needed to support their learning
- building on improvements to the sixth form so that all sixth-form students are enabled to make good or better progress.

■ Strengthen the capacity of leadership and management at all levels to sustain improvement by:

- undertaking an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved
- rapidly improving governance so that governors are able to ask challenging questions and hold the school to account for improvements in teaching and students' achievement
- developing appropriate systems and procedures to manage the performance of staff so that all teachers are accountable for improving teaching and learning
- creating an effective and sustainable long-term structure for leadership and management so that the school is led and managed well.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Students join the school with attainment that is below that which is typical for their ages. Many students have low prior attainment in literacy and numeracy.
- Since the previous inspection, inadequate progress has resulted in low attainment and a drop in the proportion of students gaining 5 or more A* to C grades at GCSE. The school has recently been working to improve the progress of students but the impact has still to be seen and there is much ground to make up due to previous underperformance.
- There are gaps in students' knowledge and skills in literacy and this slows learning because some students are not able to read with understanding the printed materials and other sources of information that are provided in lessons.
- Disabled students, students with special educational needs and those who are at the early stages of learning English often make inadequate progress because of the lack of clearly directed support and because of teaching that does not meet their individual needs.
- The difference in attainment between students known to be eligible for free school meals and other students, as shown in their average points scores, is smaller than that found nationally. On some measures, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than others. However, students who are not eligible for the pupil premium significantly underperform.
- Students are entered early for mathematics and some other GCSE examinations. Those who are successful in gaining at least a C grade are then expected to continue to work toward achieving the higher grades. There is insufficient evidence to judge whether this has a beneficial impact on students' overall performance.
- Students in the sixth form do not achieve as well as expected. There is considerable variation in outcomes across the different courses. Despite some better results in 2012, achievement in the sixth form requires improvement.
- A significant proportion of the parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire were concerned about the progress that their children make. Inspection findings show that students are capable of making better progress that they currently do.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teaching and learning over time are inadequate and students have not been able to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding that they need to be successful.
- A lack of ambitious targets, combined with inaccurate and unreliable assessment systems, has limited progress.
- The new interim leadership team has introduced new assessment systems and procedures which should help teachers to measure the progress that students are making. Inspectors observed several lessons where teachers did not take full account of information about students' prior attainment and consequently pitched the work at the wrong level.
- Most students have some awareness of the levels they are working at but many are unsure about what they need to do to improve in order to move on to the next level.
- The quality of marking is variable, so students do not always get good advice and guidance that helps them judge how well they are doing or how they can improve their work. In a few lessons, students were encouraged and supported to review their own progress and that of other students.
- In the lessons that require improvement or are inadequate, teachers spend too long explaining and do not allow students enough time to do their individual work or to work together. Consequently, they do not practise their skills and develop their understanding and this limits their learning. These lessons are often undemanding and this sometimes leads to boredom and low-level disruptive behaviour.

- In the few good lessons, relationships are good and students cooperate well with each other and with their teachers. Teachers support good progress by helping to develop students' confidence by giving them clear targets and expecting them to work independently. In these better lessons, students are encouraged to discuss their work and organise themselves and others when working collaboratively.
- Students who have additional needs, including those who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, do not receive the support that they need to be successful in lessons. Some weaker students get extra help in reading and they are making much better progress. Where students do not get the additional help they need, their progress is slow.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- Students conduct themselves appropriately. They say how much behaviour has improved since the new interim leadership team raised expectations of how students should behave. They also told inspectors that teachers have begun to be more consistent in their management of students' behaviour.
- Although an increasing proportion of students show positive attitudes to learning, the majority are too passive in lessons and often depend on frequent prompting from adults to keep them working at a reasonable pace. Consequently, these students do not develop sufficient resilience and independence, skills that are important for their future success.
- Attendance is below average but is improving slowly as a result of the work the school is doing to challenge and support students who do not attend regularly.
- The number of incidents which have resulted in students being excluded from the school for short periods has fallen significantly from levels that were previously very high. Students are confident that the instances of bullying have reduced and if bullying does occur, it will be dealt with promptly and effectively by staff.
- The school's ethos promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most of the different groups who make up the school population get on well together. The school provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of other faiths and cultures.
- Several parents expressed concerns about bullying and many did not judge that behaviour was good. Inspection evidence shows that bullying is dealt with effectively but that behaviour does require further improvement in order to be good.

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- The new interim leadership team has quickly gained an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In the short time that they have been at the school, they have worked hard to begin to improve the school's effectiveness.
- Despite extensive support from the local authority and other partners, there remains much work to do to develop leadership capacity within the school. Improvements are fragile and many systems and procedures are new and not yet fully effective.
- Previous weak performance management meant that leaders at all levels did not scrutinise teaching thoroughly or check the extent to which improvements in teaching were leading to improvements in the standards that students reach. Teachers' targets were not linked to appropriate improvement goals.
- The school has used the funding received from the pupil premium to appoint learning mentors, funding an attendance officer and providing additional booster classes. The school had not monitored the impact of these initiatives and no clear link had been made between the spending and the progress of individuals.
- Until very recently, the quality of teaching was not judged accurately and teachers were not given sufficient support and guidance to help develop their practice. Almost half of the staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that their professional development needs had not

been met.

- The school has developed productive partnerships with other schools, local organisations and with education, care and health professionals to support students' learning and personal development.
- Significant changes have been made to the curriculum and the timetable so that they are now better suited to the learning needs of the students. The use of alternative places to learn is effective and enables students to pursue their particular interests, particularly those that lead to the development of vocational skills.
- Recent improvements have ensured that students are kept safe. The interim leaders have secured rapid improvements to the site and further improvements are planned.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is inadequate. Governors do not have a sufficient understanding of students' performance and the quality of teaching to hold the school to account for the quality of education it provides to its students. Governors were previously too reliant on information provided by the school's leaders.
 - The governing body has not ensured that rigorous performance management, related to rewards for good teaching and the efficient deployment of resources, has led to improved provision and outcomes.
 - Governors have not ensured that the pupil premium has been used effectively to overcome barriers to learning for those students it is intended to support.
 - The governing body has failed to ensure that weaknesses identified by the previous inspection were systematically and successfully addressed.
 - The governing body does ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and policies and procedures are reviewed and updated periodically.
 - Almost half the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire felt that their views and opinions were not sought and the school did not act on the concerns that they raised. Governors accept that they have not routinely sought the views of registered parents and carers.

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	118912
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	401794

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	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	763
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	79
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Smye-Rumsby
Interim Executive Principal	Kim Stoner
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 September 2009
Telephone number	01304 201551
Fax number	01304 202226
Email address	office@st-edmunds-dover.kent.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

