

Cardinal Pole Catholic School

205 Morning Lane, Hackney, London E9 6LG

Inspection dates 31 January–1 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection because of the drive of the executive and associate headteachers and other leaders to raise expectations of what students can do.
- Many students enter the school with below average attainment but they make good progress because they are well taught so that they achieve well in their GCSE examinations.
- Students make exceptional progress in English and mathematics.
- Teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects and encourage students to try hard and achieve well.
- There are good systems to check how much progress students are making and action is taken quickly to support them if they are falling behind.
- Students' attendance is good. They feel safe in school, enjoy their learning and behave well.
- There are many opportunities for students to attend clubs and extra classes in addition to lessons during the school day.
- The sixth form is good. Students are well taught and make good progress from their starting points to achieve well. In some subjects they make exceptional progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students do not make equally rapid progress in all subjects. Results in some subjects, notably science, are not strong enough.
- Students do not always know what they need to do to improve their work and marking does not always give them clear advice about their next steps.
- Some students do not have enough opportunities to develop their skills in working independently and thinking deeply.
- Some governors do not have sufficient understanding and knowledge of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 part lessons, seven jointly with senior staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive and associate headteachers, groups of staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority. Discussions took place with students from all age groups in the school, both formally and informally.
- The inspection team scrutinised school documents including the school’s own evaluation of how well it is doing, the school improvement plan and statistical information about students’ achievement, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered the five responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) along with a summary of the results of a questionnaire given to parents by the school at parents’ evenings. They analysed the results from 67 completed staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Ann Short Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rukhsana Sheikh	Additional Inspector
Babrul Matin	Additional Inspector
Kevin Morris	Additional Inspector
Alastair McMeckan	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school. There are more boys than girls in the school.
- The school moved into a new building in September 2012.
- The executive headteacher and associate headteacher were appointed in January 2012.
- Over half the students are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, students known to be eligible for free school meals and those from service families. This is much higher than average.
- Almost half of the students speak English as an additional language. Many of these are fluent English speakers with a small percentage in the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is slightly above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs.
- A small number of students in Year 11 attend provision off site for part of the week.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum level expected for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise achievement by:
 - improving students' progress, particularly in science, so that it is as good in all subjects as it is in English and mathematics
 - increasing the numbers of students achieving the highest grades at GCSE.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that teachers:
 - mark students' work regularly, with clear guidance about next steps, so that students always know what they need to do to improve
 - give students more opportunities in classwork and homework to learn independently and read widely
 - set work which helps students to think deeply and to solve problems.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of students join the school with below average attainment. They make good progress throughout the school so that they do well overall in their GCSE examinations where their attainment is above average.
- Results in the key measure of five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics have improved since the last inspection with a big rise in 2012. Detailed information held by the school indicates the upward trend is likely to continue.
- Students regardless of their ethnic backgrounds achieve exceptionally well in English and mathematics. Although GCSE results do not show them making equally good progress in all subjects, current assessment information shows that students' performance in other subjects is catching up. Leaders have a rigorous approach to raising achievement. Achievement in science, though improving, is still not strong enough.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress because they are now well supported through good classroom teaching and through small-group or individual teaching when this is appropriate. Students who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. Additional adults provide good support in the classroom for students who need extra help.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium also make good progress. Average point scores at GCSE show that the gap in achievement between these students and their classmates is lower than the national gap and is reducing this year. The extra funding has been wisely spent to provide a range of support to help these students to achieve well and to participate in the wide range of learning opportunities on offer.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE examinations but only when they are ready. If they do not achieve their expected grades they are given another opportunity to achieve their goals.
- The small number of students who are educated off site for part of the week attend regularly, are kept safe, enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Students make good progress from their starting points, and in some A-level subjects, for example psychology, sociology, English literature and philosophy and ethics, they make exceptional progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has been improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is good in the majority of lessons and some is outstanding.
- Skilled members of staff have been appointed as learning champions. They work with staff who need support and this has helped share the excellent practice which there is in the school.
- Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and explain clearly to the students what they are expected to learn. They use a variety of teaching methods and resources to engage and motivate the students. For example, in an English lesson, pictures of the August 2011 riots made students think before they read a poem examining the behaviour of some young people. Reading the poem aloud together helped them to make rapid progress in identifying the techniques used by the poet.
- Activities are well planned so that the lessons move at a good pace. Learning is usually well matched to the needs of the students. Only in a few lessons are some of the students not set challenging enough tasks.
- Teachers use questioning well to remind students of their previous learning and to check understanding before moving on. Some teachers also use questioning skilfully to make the students develop their thinking but others miss opportunities to challenge them in this way.
- Teachers do not mark students' work consistently well, or mark in the same way. Sometimes

work is not marked often enough. Written comments do not always make it clear to the students what they need to do to improve their work and too often they do not know exactly what their next steps are.

- There are good opportunities for students to work together in groups and develop their skills in speaking and listening. This helps all students to make good progress, including students who speak English as an additional language.
- Although teachers in a number of subjects help students to develop their skills in writing they do not always insist that work is presented accurately. There is not a clear school policy on teaching reading, writing and communication across the curriculum.
- Homework is set and teachers expect it to be completed. However, it is not clearly indicated in students' books what is homework and what is classwork. Homework is not used often enough to challenge students to work more independently and to read more widely.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students enjoy their learning and behave well in lessons. Attendance is above average and there are strong systems in place to ensure that this continues.
- Students behave sensibly around the school building and, although sometimes noisy, they are cheerful and usually respectful of each other and of adults. They are polite and welcoming to visitors.
- The school has a rigorous approach to improving behaviour and students know how they are expected to behave. A variety of rewards and sanctions is used to help ensure that students meet expectations. Information held by the school shows that incidents of poor behaviour have significantly reduced. Exclusions, which are above average, have also been reduced. The school has introduced a number of programmes which are raising self-esteem and improving motivation in the groups where exclusions have been highest.
- Students spoken to during the inspection were clear that behaviour in the school has improved and think that it is usually good. They feel safe in school and believe that any bullying is effectively dealt with and that racism is not a problem.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because staff express mixed views about it, with some indicating that it remains a concern. Some students take too long to move from one part of the building to another and so are late to lessons, especially after break and lunchtime.
- A large majority of the parents who filled in the questionnaire from the school felt that the school deals effectively with any unacceptable behaviour.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership of the executive headteacher and associate headteacher is exceptional. In the short time since their appointment they have driven forward very significant improvements. Their high expectations and ambition for the school are clearly communicated to staff, students and parents.
- Senior leaders and other staff with leadership responsibilities are now making a strong contribution to the improvement of the school. There have been a large number of staff changes and new staff have been appointed who share high expectations for the students.
- The new systems for checking how good teaching is and how well students are achieving make sure that action is taken quickly if students are falling behind. Information about the progress of students is collected and examined regularly.
- There are now strong systems for managing the performance of staff and professional development is linked to identified needs.
- Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of how much progress the school is making and the school improvement plan has a clear focus on what will make a difference to the achievement

of the students.

- The school now makes much better use of support from the local authority which has been reduced according to need and is focused on key areas for improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced at all stages. It promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students well and takes into account students' equality of opportunity. It is reviewed regularly to meet the needs of the students. Many students attend the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them, including the Saturday classes.
- The school has managed the move into one building well without losing the focus on school improvement. Students are very proud of the facilities which are now available to them. One student reported, 'This is a brilliant school, it has been through a transitional stage and I am proud to stay on into the sixth form.'
- The school has worked hard to encourage parents to play a greater part in their children's education and to come into the school more often. Additional curriculum evenings have been introduced and attendance at parents' evenings has improved.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is ambitious for the school. Governors have an understanding of the quality of teaching and achievement in the school and support school leaders in their drive for improvement. Some, but not all, governors have an understanding of performance data. In order to provide more effective challenge to the senior staff the governing body has reviewed the structure of the committees, developed stronger links with the school and appointed new governors. Approximately half of the governors have attended training to improve their effectiveness and all of the governors have attended child protection training this year. The appropriate committees monitor the use of the pupil premium funding and the Chair of Governing Body understands and agrees the links between appraisal and salary structure.

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	100285
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	404721

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	1013
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	130
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Evans
Associate Headteacher	Jane Heffernan
Executive Headteacher	Geraldine Freear
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 March 2011
Telephone number	020 8985 5150
Fax number	
Email address	enquiries@cardinalpole.co.uk

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