

Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School

Victoria Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7XY

Inspection dates 9–10 July 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

- Achievement is not yet good enough in aspects of English, science and the sixth form because progress is not always monitored rigorously enough and in some cases expectations need to be higher.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium, those identified as having special educational needs supported at school action and some students in Year 7 are not always making consistently good enough progress.
- Too much teaching requires improvement and a small number of lessons are inadequate because work is not enabling all students to make progress. Some marking is not good enough and some lessons have parts that are too long and do not allow enough learning to take place.
- Attendance is below average and actions taken to improve it have not been effective enough.
- School plans need to ensure that clearer milestones enable leaders to monitor progress more consistently.

The school has the following strengths

- Students benefit from the very good care they receive at school. They are happy coming to school and feel safe.
- Leaders have started to address some of the areas that require improvement and this is resulting in improved achievement. Progress in mathematics is good.
- The school provides very good provision for student's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.
- The school has worked hard to ensure that students who find school difficult have good opportunities to find support that enables them to still succeed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 49 part lessons taught by teachers of which four were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative from the local authority, staff and students from the school.
- A range of documents was scrutinised, including information relating to teachers' performance, minutes of governing body meetings, monitoring and evaluation records and the tracking of students' progress. An analysis was carried out of students' work provided by the school.
- Inspectors analysed the 63 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, completed by parents and the 80 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

David Bray, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Robert Steed	Additional Inspector
Derek Wiles	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Needham	Additional Inspector
Richard Hartley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Archbishop Ilsley Catholic School is a larger than average school serving the south eastern suburbs of Birmingham. The student population is predominately White British with a significant proportion from an Irish cultural background.
- An above-average proportion of students is eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those students in local authority care, students known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also are below average.
- In 2012, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A small number of students attend external courses provided at Merlin Training, Kingsbury Alternative Provision, South and City College and EBN Academy

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that none is inadequate, less requires improvement and more is good and outstanding by:
 - ensuring that planning always takes into account the different starting points of students and ensures they are able to make sufficient progress
 - increasing the expectations of what students can achieve by ensuring that targets are always high enough
 - marking work more effectively and regularly in order to give good feedback on how to improve
 - ensuring that lessons allow students sufficient opportunities to respond to and use information and skills presented by the teacher.
- Improve achievement in English, science and the sixth form further by:
 - ensuring that data is used more effectively in English and science to ensure all students are making sufficient progress and that monitoring ensures interventions happen quickly enough
 - improve further expectations for learners in some sixth form lessons so their progress is quicker and more achieve the higher grades.
- Improve the progress made by pupils eligible for the pupil premium and the use of the Year 7 catch-up funding by:
 - ensuring leaders at all levels, including governors, have better quality information available about the progress of current students who are receiving support
 - ensuring that the expectations for the progress of these groups is high enough and set out clearly in departmental and whole school plans.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2012 the proportion of students obtaining five or more good GCSE grades including English and mathematics was below average. In 2010 and 2011 the proportion was average and the drop in 2012 was caused by students making less progress in English and science than they should have.
- In English some students have made insufficient progress from their starting points for the last two years. Inspection evidence and the school's current data show that this picture is improving, but there are some students who are still not making enough progress.
- Students taking separate science courses are making improved progress. A proportion taking the core and additional science options are not. In mathematics students have made good progress for the last two years and inspection evidence and the school's data shows they are continuing to do so.
- In 2012 students with special education needs who have statements and those identified as requiring school action plus support made good progress. The progress of those identified as requiring school action support was not consistently good.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similar amounts of progress.
- In 2012 students eligible for pupil premium funding achieved on average one half of a GCSE grade lower in English and one quarter of a grade lower in mathematics compared to other students in the school.
- Students in Year 7 receiving extra support to catch up and reach expected levels are not improving enough in English. Interventions in mathematics have been more successful.
- Early entry for mathematics examinations has not had a negative effect on the proportion reaching the highest grades in the summer examination.
- A few students learning off the school site benefit from courses that are matched well to their interests and make as much progress as their peers.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement because some students are still not achieving grades that are as high as they should be.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school varies widely in quality. There is some that is outstanding but a small amount that is inadequate and too much that requires improvement.
- Data are not used well enough to make sure the work that teachers set matches students' different abilities. Sometimes all students are given the same work to do. Over time, this has led to some students with special educational needs working at school action underachieving. A few students of higher ability have also under-achieved because expectations for their work are not high enough.

- The feedback that students receive on their work does not always pinpoint precisely what they should do to improve it. Sometimes comments are vague and in a few cases work has not been marked for too long.
- In less successful lessons students are not given the opportunity to reflect on their learning or try out ideas because the teacher talks about ideas for a lengthy period of time.
- Stronger teaching was observed by inspectors in a few lessons. For example in a religious education lesson in Year 10 the lesson was organised well so that students supported each other to learn about how the Catholic Church helps immigrants and this helps community cohesion.
- Teaching assistants are mostly effective in supporting students to focus their attention and improve work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils **good**

- Students behaved well during the inspection and school records indicate that behaviour is consistently good. Exclusions have been higher than average but the school has put in place good measures to address this. The use of the St Patrick's Centre for students who are finding it difficult to behave appropriately has enabled them to keep learning prior to moving back to their normal timetable.
- Students respond well to the ethos within the school which is calm and orderly. They are courteous and say they feel happy at school. They benefit from the strong sense of values that the school works hard to promote.
- Students say they feel safe from any threats of bullying. They report that while it sometimes does happen, they say they are happy that the school would deal with it.
- Students have a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet and how to avoid risky behaviour relating to sex, drugs and alcohol.
- Attendance is below average. The school has tried to address this but with only limited success. Persistence absence is higher than average and is a particular problem in Year 7.

The leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Senior leaders have a wealth of data available but this is not used consistently enough to monitor and adjust plans in order to respond to areas that are not improving fast enough.
- Systems to set targets, improve teaching and raise achievement are evident in school plans and actions. This has led to improvements. For example progress in English is better and science is improving. Whilst there are signs of improvement leadership and management are not yet good.
- School development plans, including documents completed by subject leaders, need to have clearer milestones for success and aspirations for progress are not consistently high enough.
- The curriculum meets the interests and abilities of students in Key Stage 4.

- The leadership and management of the sixth form require improvement because not all students make enough progress. The school benefits from a partnership with other local schools which ensures access to a wider range of sixth form courses. Predicted outcomes for this year show improvements.
- The school has particular strengths in how it supports students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. This has helped to bring the exclusion rate down significantly and the partnership with local schools to secure alternative provision is effective.
- The local authority has taken a light touch approach to the school and given minimal support. This has supported a review of the sixth form but has not helped the school effectively enough to identify and remedy other areas that require improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has a range of experience and skills and tried to challenge the school to raise achievement. However, it is not yet challenging school leaders to improve rates of progress effectively enough because governors do not have sufficient information about school data. The impact of the pupil premium is not rigorously checked and this has led to inconsistencies. The governors have not considered sufficiently the use of catch up funding. Governors are aware of how school leaders check on the quality of teaching and have an understanding of performance management. Aspects of this are not strong enough and although governors receive training for their role their effectiveness in ensuring the school improves is limited.

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	103541
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	413387
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1179
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Mills
Headteacher	Glen Alexander
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2009
Telephone number	0121 706 4200
Fax number	0121 707 6597
Email address	enquiry@ilsley.bham.sch.uk

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