

# St Joseph's Catholic College

Ocotal Way, Swindon, SN3 3LR

## Inspection dates

3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Students' achievement is inadequate. Too many students do not make enough progress from their starting points. As a result, their attainment is significantly below average and has been declining over the last three years.
- The achievement of those students for whom the college receives funding from the pupil premium is inadequate. The college does not use this funding well enough to raise achievement for this group.
- Overall teaching is inadequate. Too little is good or better. Some staff do not have high enough expectations of what students, including those who speak English as an additional language, can do.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to promote consistently good progress. The work given to students is not well matched to their needs.
- The sixth form requires improvement because students do not achieve well enough in certain courses.
- Leaders do not check whether their attempts to improve teaching and students' achievement have worked well enough. As a result, some of the views they have about the college's effectiveness are inaccurate.
- Members of the governing body have not been effective in holding the college to account for the quality of teaching and the progress that students make.
- The leadership and management of the college are inadequate because its leaders have not taken sufficient action over time to tackle the decline in its effectiveness. There has not been time for recent improvements to have not had enough impact.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students' behaviour is good and they feel safe at the college. Students are courteous and polite. Their attendance is above the national average.
- Relationships between students are very positive. They treat each other with respect.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and reflects the college's caring, supportive and inclusive attitudes.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 43 lessons, of which nine were shared observations with the joint acting Principals and senior staff. In addition, two registration periods were observed. An analysis of students' workbooks in English and mathematics was undertaken.
- Inspectors held meetings with the acting Principals, senior and middle leaders, and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body. Discussions were held with students from Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, and also with a group of students at risk of not doing well.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents including: the college's self-evaluation; improvement planning; monitoring and assessment information; data about students' reading ages and library book loans; records of behaviour and attendance; information relating to performance management and training; the governing body's meeting minutes; and records relating to safeguarding students.
- The inspection team also took account of staff questionnaires, the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the college's own parental and student consultations. An inspector met with a teacher from a feeder primary school that was involved in the Year 6 transition day held during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Peter Humphries, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ian Hodgkinson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jacqueline Jones	Additional Inspector
David Howe	Additional Inspector
Lesley Voaden	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.*

### Information about this school

- St Joseph's Catholic College converted to become an academy school in August 2011. When its predecessor school, St Joseph's Catholic College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- This college is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for groups of students including those known to be eligible for free school meals) is lower than national figures.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average
- The majority of students are of White British heritage, with an above-average proportion of students from minority ethnic groups.
- A higher-than-average proportion of students speak English as an additional language.
- The alternative providers used by the college are Oakfield, New College and Swindon College.
- The college meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.
- Recently, there have been changes to the leadership of the college. Following the Principal's retirement in March 2013, the governing body appointed two internal candidates as joint acting Principals. An external candidate has been appointed as Principal starting in September 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Quickly eradicate all inadequate teaching and increase the amount of good teaching, by:
  - ensuring that work set and the questions teachers ask engage students of all abilities
  - making sure that teachers know how to support students who speak English as an additional language, and that this knowledge is used effectively in lessons
  - ensuring that students' books are marked regularly and thoroughly, improving the quality of marking, giving feedback to students on how to improve, and allowing them time to make improvements and complete their work to a high standard
  - making sure that all teachers use detailed information about students' past achievements to set high expectations and carefully match work to students' needs and abilities
  - sharing the good and outstanding teaching methods that exist in the college with all teachers so that all students benefit from them.
- Raise standards throughout the college, particularly in English and mathematics, and ensure all students make progress which at least matches national expectations at Key Stage 4, by:
  - ensuring teachers both use the college's systems regularly to monitor students' progress

towards challenging targets and use this information effectively so that lessons meet the needs of all students

- accelerating progress in Key Stage 3 so that students are well prepared for the challenges of GCSE work.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in driving up students' achievement, by:
  - sharpening how leaders and governors use information about students' progress to check whether their actions to improve the school have worked , and to plan appropriate strategies to raise standards
  - ensuring the school's improvement plans reflect a greater sense of urgency in tackling underperformance and clearly identify: who is responsible for monitoring specific actions and how this checking will be done; measurable targets against which progress can be tracked; specific deadlines for reaching these targets; the resources needed to support the college's actions to raise standards; and what will happen if the targets are not met.
  - evaluating how well the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up grants are used to raise the standards of students who might not make the progress expected of them
  - setting specific , measurable targets with clear deadlines for teachers that enable leaders and governors to hold staff to account more effectively carrying out a review of the sixth form to ensure the curriculum and teaching meet the needs of all students.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Most students who join the college in Year 7 have achieved above-average standards in their primary schools. Standards do not improve by the time they leave Year 11. GCSE examination results remain low in comparison with the national averages. Work in students' books confirms that standards in Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 are low.
- There are some subject areas where students' attainment is improving, for example in Italian and business studies. However, improvements are not happening fast enough in all subjects and classes to enable all students to make at least the expected rate of progress.
- Overall, students who are disabled or who have special educational needs achieve standards that are below average. Students supported at school action plus (those who receive help from outside agencies) achieve the same level as other students in the school. However, students at school action (those who get support provided only by the college) achieve a GCSE grade lower.
- On average, students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding achieved around half a GCSE grade lower than other students in the 2012 examinations. Recent college data indicate that this gap is not closing. Progress and attainment for this group is significantly below national averages.
- Students do not make enough progress in Key Stage 4, particularly in mathematics. Attainment in English has declined since 2011. Progress in this key stage has been too slow for students from particular groups, including White British, those eligible for support through the pupil premium, students who are disabled or have special educational needs, and students from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language.
- Whether students make enough progress in lessons depends upon teachers' use of assessment and tracking information as they prepare lessons. Some staff use this information well so that activities are matched closely to the next stage of learning and students make the progress that is expected of them. This is not commonplace or is confined to specific subjects. Where teachers do not consider students' differing needs, and particularly when this results in all students being given the same work, progress is limited.
- Students' progress in English and mathematics is inadequate, although it is better in English than in mathematics. Students who speak English as an additional language, however, make significantly less progress than they should in both subjects and, indeed, overall across the curriculum. This is because their particular needs are not catered for in lessons.
- School data indicate that the students' progress in reading is inadequate. Students do not read often enough or a widely enough.
- The programme in Year 7 designed to help students reach the expected standards in reading and writing has not had sufficient time to improve students' literacy skills.
- The college enters students early for GCSE examinations in English and mathematics. Students who did not achieve the grade expected of them are not always required to re-sit the examination. This adversely affects the achievement of a minority of students.
- In the sixth form, attainment at A and AS level is below average. Generally, students who sit these examinations make the progress expected, given their GCSE results. A large number of students who start courses in Year 12, however, do not carry on to Year 13. When they visited Key Stage 5 lessons, inspectors evaluated the standard of work and found that the quality varied from subject to subject. Overall, then, achievement in the sixth form requires improvement.
- The small number of students who follow more practical subjects off-site gain experience which helps them acquire the skills necessary for employment or further training.

**The quality of teaching is inadequate**

- Teaching overall is inadequate because it is not helping students to make sufficient progress, particularly in English and mathematics, or to make up for previous underachievement. During the inspection, teaching in too few lessons was good or better, and in far too many lessons, it was inadequate. Teachers often give the same work to all students, regardless of their abilities or needs. This was particularly the case for students who speak English as an additional language.
- The quality of support for disabled students and those with special educational needs, and for those at risk of underachieving, is variable. The school's monitoring of this is not rigorous enough. Of the lessons observed, only a small number had teaching assistants supporting students with special educational needs.
- Inadequate lesson planning, feedback and assessment restrict the progress students make.
- Extra help to develop students' literacy skills is disrupted because the member of staff responsible for delivering this support is used to cover the lessons of absent teachers. This is holding back a significant minority of students' progress in literacy.
- Teachers do not consistently provide sufficient opportunities for students to develop their literacy, communication and numeracy skills in all subjects.
- There is a lack of consistency in teachers' marking across the college. It does not always show students what they have to do to improve their work or follow up whether students have acted on suggestions for improvement. Teachers do not involve students sufficiently in the assessment of their own work to help them understand how they can do better in their examinations.
- Teachers do not consistently ask students enough challenging questions in lessons to check or extend their understanding of the work. This means that students who have misunderstood the work do not have their mistakes corrected.
- Teachers regularly assess students' attainment at the end of a series of lessons. However, they do not use the information gathered well enough to make sure that work in subsequent lessons matches students' different levels.
- Where teaching is good, teachers have strong and very confident relationships with students, and they effectively encourage students to think for themselves and give clear and full responses. As a result of this lively teaching, students become interested in the lesson and work with enthusiasm. This was clearly seen in an effective, fast-paced Year 10 religious education lesson, where students confidently spoke with great feeling as they explored their beliefs and experiences.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the college should not appoint newly qualified teachers. This will be reviewed during the first monitoring inspection.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Students' attitudes to learning in the very large majority of lessons are good. Most enjoy lessons, are well motivated and eager to learn. Students have good relationships, work well in groups and independently. They show respect for teachers and each other and work together in a highly cooperative manner leading to improved understanding of their work and increased confidence in tackling more challenging tasks.
- There is a friendly atmosphere around the college and students talk very positively about their experiences at St Joseph's. Students feel safe. The large majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire and the college's own questionnaires said that their child was happy and felt safe at St Joseph's Catholic College.
- The college has good systems for rewarding good behaviour and for supporting those few students who find it more difficult to behave well over time. The college involves all students, and rightly prides itself on not giving up on any student, as 'all are valued'. Of particular success

is the way in students are looked after in small teams with managers who are sensitive and alert to any concerns that might arise.

- Staff have regular training on safeguarding, child protection, meeting medical needs, risk assessments and care plans and have put in place support groups to help those students most in need. An example of this is the 'young carers group' which has supported students in improving their attendance and reducing the number of negative behaviour issues. As a result their attainment has improved.
- Students' The college's stance on not authorising any term-time family holidays and the vigilance of the attendance officer who quickly responds to any attendance concerns has resulted in student attendance being well above national averages and increasing year-on-year. The numbers of students who are persistently absent are below national figures. The number of students leaving the college who are not in employment, education or training are low and below national figures.
- The number of students who are temporarily excluded is below national figures and there have been no permanent exclusions in the last three years. Through a range of support systems, assemblies, lessons and form group activities students know exactly what is expected of them and the consequences of behaving poorly in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is recognised and rewarded. Staff and students say that behaviour is good.
- Students demonstrate self-control, consideration and behave appropriately outside lessons, including at break and lunchtimes, making good use of the range of enrichment activities on offer.
- Students talk very confidently about who they would go to if they were worried or concerned at any time. They have a good knowledge of different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, and comment that any problems are always sorted out quickly. School records show that the number of bullying incidents is low. This was confirmed by the students who also stated that the use of homophobic language was uncommon and if used quickly dealt with by staff. Students also said that incidents of prejudiced behaviour are rare. As one student explained 'integration is the really great thing about St Joe's'.
- The college has good working relationships with the other establishments where a small number of students receive part of their education. Well-established systems are in place to ensure that attendance of these students is monitored closely.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because when teaching is inadequate and students are not challenged in their learning, there are occasional instances of low level disruption in lessons.

## The leadership and management

## are inadequate

- Leadership and management are inadequate because the college's leaders have not done enough to make sure that improvements to teaching, attainment and the progress of students have been rapid enough.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching but have not effectively eradicated ineffective teaching. Although teachers have received training on how to improve their teaching, it has not been successful. This is because not enough attention has been given to ensuring that the techniques used in teaching make a positive impact on the progress that the students make.
- Senior leaders' assessments of the college's performance are far too generous. The self-evaluation is too descriptive and does not strongly evaluate the effectiveness and impact of actions on the progress and attainment of students.
- The college's long-term plans, which set out how the school intends to raise standards, lack a sense of urgency, do not have clear and specific details about what the college wants to achieve, and by when. College plans do not make clear which senior leaders will monitor the impact of the actions on ensuring students make the progress expected of them.
- The college has used the pupil premium funding in a variety of ways, including subsidising the purchase of text books and educational equipment, as well as assistance with the costs of curriculum trips and activities. However, the college does not have an accurate view of the

impact of these actions and resources on the achievement of those students whose circumstances might put them at risk of underachieving. This is not good enough because standards remain low for these students.

- Although poor teacher performance is being rigorously tackled, as yet not all teachers are held rigorously to account for the performance of students they teach. The setting of targets for teachers is used to ensure that they are not financially rewarded unless they have clearly met objectives. However, the targets are not always linked to student progress but rather to practical tasks such as writing schemes of work. As a consequence the improvements in student attainment and progress are not consistent.
- The recently introduced programmes to improve literacy skills are not being measured accurately enough to ensure that they are impacting positively on student progress.
- Some year 11 students are recruited to inappropriate courses in the sixth form because they do not get appropriate advice and guidance to ensure the chosen courses meet their needs and aspirations.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively in a variety of ways, including through a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Leaders do not promote equal opportunities adequately as students for whom the pupil premium is allocated make less progress than other students, as do students who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding students are met. All personnel checks are carried out thoroughly and safeguarding records are well kept.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has worked quickly to appoint a new Principal. Although the governing body members understand the need for improvements in mathematics and the development of literacy across the college, they do not have the depth of information required to make sure that the actions being taken are bringing about improvements quickly enough. They are unable to specify where the pupil premium funding is being used to close the gaps in learning between groups of students or supporting those who are at risk of falling behind their peers. The governing body has yet to ensure that the salaries teachers receive are more closely linked to the progress made by the students they teach.. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They attend relevant training and are thorough in making sure that students are 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136980
<b>Local authority</b>	Swindon
<b>Inspection number</b>	411758

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,262
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	177
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Lake
<b>Joint acting Principals</b>	Ben Slater and Neil Hathaway
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 714200
<b>Fax number</b>	01793 714270
<b>Email address</b>	info@stjosephs.swindon.sch.uk

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