

# St Joseph's College

Beulah Hill, London, SE19 3HL

## Inspection dates

22–23 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b> <b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
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

- Over time, students have not experienced enough good teaching. As a result, students' attainment in some subjects has been below average in the past two years.
- Achievement requires improvement because students' progress is not rapid throughout the school and a number of the more able students do not all make good progress.
- Not enough teaching is good or better. In some cases, teachers' expectations of what students are capable of, in terms of quality and quantity, are not high enough.
- The sixth form requires improvement. There is too much variation in the results students achieve in different subjects, and too few students gain the highest grades at A-level.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback is too variable and it does not always provide students with the guidance they need to improve their work.
- Behaviour for learning requires improvement because when teaching is not good, students do not manage to stay focused and concentrate in some lessons.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students' achievement in mathematics is good and standards in English are rising steadily in all year groups. Students' expected progress in both subjects is higher than the national average.
- Leaders, including governors, have put the right things in place to raise standards in the school. They have the support of most staff. Consequently, this is an improving school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and has a positive impact on the school community in which most students feel safe and valued.
- The proportion of good teaching is increasing steadily.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 31 teachers and visited 33 part lessons, of which four were observed jointly with school leaders.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, the school's link adviser from the local authority and school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's progress-tracking data, planning and monitoring information, self-evaluation summary, safeguarding policies and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors took account of 32 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the outcomes of the school's own parent and staff surveys.
- Inspectors talked to students about the school's work and listened to some students read.

## Inspection team

Nasim Butt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Brian Lester	Additional Inspector
Joseph Skivington	Additional Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional Inspector
Samuel Ofori-Keyereh	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in June 2012. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory.
- This school is broadly similar to the average-sized secondary school. It has a medium-sized, mixed sixth form, and specialist status for mathematics and computing.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for students eligible for free school meals) is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is slightly below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- About 40 students are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Students come from a range of ethnic backgrounds, the largest of these being from Black African and Black Caribbean heritages. Just under one-fifth of students are of White British heritage.
- An above average proportion of students speak English as an additional language. There are very few students at an early stage of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 11.
- The school does not use any off-site alternative provision.

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

- Improve teaching so that all groups of students in all subjects make good or better progress, and show greater focus and concentration in lessons, by:
  - making sure that the level of challenge and expectation in lessons is consistently high
  - ensuring that teachers use the information about students' progress effectively to enable students, particularly the most able, to make at least good progress
  - refining marking so that it is consistently good in showing students how to improve their work, and ensuring that they act upon the comments made.
- Raise achievement in the sixth form by tackling areas of underperformance and by increasing the proportion of students gaining the top grades in examinations.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership by:
  - raising expectations by making all students' targets more challenging and thereby raise achievement
  - ensuring that improvement plans give greater emphasis to the progress made by all groups of students and that leaders check more frequently on the improvements being made.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because students do not make as much progress as they should in some subjects, particularly humanities and religious education, where both standards and progress are below average. In addition, too few of the most able students gain the highest GCSE and A-level grades in most subjects.
- Students who took their examinations in 2013 started in Year 7 with above average attainment. By the end of Year 11, an above average proportion of them attained five or more GCSE A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, representing average progress over time.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement because there are several subjects in which too many students are not making good progress over time. The proportion of students who complete their A-level courses is in line with the national average; most go on to some form of higher education or training afterwards. However, the proportion of students achieving A\* to C grades at both AS and A-level is too low.
- Students' attainment in mathematics is above average and progress is consistently good, both in the main school and in the sixth form, reflecting the school's specialist status. There is an improving trend in students' attainment and progress in English. The school data show that current Year 11 is on track to attain above average standards and achieve well. This was confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of work.
- In 2013, achievement was good in the separate sciences and core science, as well as Spanish and Mandarin. Having been accredited as 'The Confucius Classroom', Mandarin has a special status in the school and students achieve particularly well.
- The school has followed a policy of entering students for GCSE mathematics before the end of Year 11. This has not limited students' capacity to gain the highest grades in this subject because the percentage of A\*/A grades is above the national average. Indeed, a high proportion of students go on to study mathematics at A-level and achieve well.
- The school has used additional Year 7 catch-up funding to give additional support to boost these students' literacy and numeracy skills. School data shows that these students are progressing well.
- The gap between the attainment of those eligible for the pupil premium and other students is narrowing as their progress is improving. This is because school leaders are becoming more effective at promoting equality of opportunity. These students are achieving about two-thirds of a grade less well than their peers in mathematics and roughly one-third of a grade less well in English. In 2013, students eligible for the pupil premium achieved as well as their peers in English.
- Students who are disabled or have special educational needs make at least similar progress to other students and the picture is improving. Current data show that other groups, for example White British and Black African/Caribbean students are also making better progress this year. There are no significant differences in the rates of progress for other groups, except in the sixth form where girls' achievement is usually better than that of boys.
- As a result of the school's initiatives to promote reading, more students are now reading more widely and, as a consequence, their reading levels have improved.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet securing good outcomes for all students in all subjects. Teaching is weaker in some subjects than others and sometimes within a subject.
- Teachers do not always use information about students' progress to plan activities that provide the correct level of challenge for different groups of students. In some lessons, all students complete the same activities, which limits the amount they learn, especially for the most able students. Sometimes, the least able students do not make the rapid and sustained progress they

should.

- Some teachers do not consistently check students' work and ensure mistakes are corrected to help them to understand the concepts being taught. For example, in some lower sets in science and in some geography classes, students' books had not been marked for long periods of time and misconceptions had not been corrected. Lack of useful guidance for students about how to improve their work capped the progress these students could make over time.
- In a small proportion of lessons, the most able students are given extra work that is no more difficult than what they have done before. In these lessons their progress is too slow.
- Teaching in mathematics is consistently good, both in the main school and in the sixth form. Encouraging students to think hard and apply their knowledge and understanding to real life practical situations are important features of this good teaching.
- Most teaching in English is also good; for example, students are challenged through questions that help them to develop their ideas and extend their understanding. Good, and occasionally outstanding, teaching across a range of subjects was seen during the inspection. In some cases this is supported by useful written feedback on work, supporting students' next steps in learning.
- In most subjects teachers effectively explain what specialist vocabulary means and use it when they talk to students. This encourages students to use the correct language in their written work and helps them to understand what examination questions require them to do.
- The school is providing extra help so that students who start school finding reading difficult catch up quickly. Many students have engaged with the school's accelerated reading programme and are making good progress.
- Carefully planned additional support by staff for disabled students with special educational needs and the few at the early stages of learning English is enabling these pupils to make the same progress as their peers.
- The quality of teaching seen in the sixth form was good as a result of recent improvements. However, over time, teaching requires improvement because it is resulting in outcomes that are inconsistent across subjects.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. A small minority of parents, teachers and students who were interviewed or completed questionnaires disagreed with the statement that 'behaviour in the school is good.' Inspectors consider that their concerns are well-founded because teaching is not always good enough to maintain students' focus and concentration.
- The school's revised behaviour policy is encouraging students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to contribute more in lessons. Monitoring indicates that most students are responding and making more progress as a result. In a small number of lessons, not all students are keen learners and they do not concentrate enough to learn well.
- Students wear their school uniform with pride, and almost all come to school dressed smartly. The school environment is clean with very few signs of litter.
- Most students are well organised, bringing the right equipment to lessons and are ready to start learning on time. However, the presentation in some of their books, in particular in some lower sets, is poor and a minority of teachers do not refuse to accept this work.
- Effective use and management of the 'PIER room' (Pupil Internal Exclusion Room) has resulted in a significant reduction in fixed term exclusions over the past 18 months. Students' attendance remains broadly average.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is consistently good and both boys and girls display high levels of maturity.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. A few students expressed concerns about the incidents which led to a high number of exclusions in the past. However, most students say they feel safe in the school and parents who responded to the on-

line questionnaire agree that the school provides a safe and caring environment.

- Students spoke confidently about gender-based and cyber bullying. Knowledge of homophobic bullying was less well developed amongst some of the younger students inspectors had discussions with. Students told inspectors that bullying does sometimes happen but that they are taught how to deal with it in school. They are confident that if they report any bullying to an adult it will be dealt with effectively.

## The leadership and management

## requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as school leaders have not, as yet, had sufficient impact on the weak teaching over time in some subjects, both in the main school and the sixth form. Some early indications of improvements show that the school will improve further in the future.
- The school's planning, for the whole school and individual subjects, has not given sufficient attention to the progress of key groups, and this has contributed to the school's slow rate of improvement.
- Targets set in the recent past have not been stretching enough for the more able students, and not supported by guidance for middle leaders on how to use these to sharpen self-evaluation. This has resulted in lowering expectations, for instance, for what the most able students in particular are capable of achieving.
- The headteacher, who took up his post two years ago, has identified weaknesses accurately. Rightly, raising the teaching quality and supporting students' good achievement are at the heart of his drive to raise standards. To this end, he is developing strong and capable leaders at both senior and subject levels who have the capacity to develop the school yet further.
- Recent appointments of more effective teachers and leaders are helping to improve teaching, with more effective practice and leadership in, for instance, history and science leading to better outcomes. Leaders recognise that more needs to be done to hold teachers to account for the quality of marking and feedback in students' books, which is too variable.
- Teachers' pay is increasingly linked to the how well students do. The school's performance management arrangements also reward teachers who share their expertise with others and help them to improve. However, further work remains to be done in ensuring that individuals receive tailored support to help them improve specific aspects of their teaching.
- Leaders have made changes to the curriculum so that it includes a broader range of subjects and is more engaging and motivating for students. New courses such as engineering and BTEC sport have been introduced; they are proving popular. The study of languages is a strength of the curriculum and students achieve particularly well in Spanish and Mandarin.
- A wide range of provision in lessons and extra-curricular activities, including sport, music and cultural events, successfully promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is also promoted through the school's notable international links with countries such as Ghana.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to improve outcomes for eligible students. Successful strategies include literacy programmes, particularly for those students below age-related expectations in reading. These are boosting students' literacy skills and contributing to the improving standards seen in English.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form require improvement. Additional courses have been introduced that match students' interests and abilities and the number on roll has gone up as a result. However, too many subjects are not performing as well as they should resulting in a significant minority of students not meeting their target grades.
- The local authority has provided useful advice and guidance to the school through a link adviser. It reviews standards and progress and is keen to support the school further.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors acknowledge the weaknesses of the school and have a good understanding of

their role in supporting the school to become more effective. They have better access to key information on students' achievement and are starting to present an appropriate balance of challenge and support to school leaders. For example, governing body minutes show that governors asked important questions about the underperformance in some subjects, including ones in the sixth form. Financial management is strong and resources have been committed to extend the curriculum in Key Stages 4 and 5. Governors are becoming more effective in monitoring the impact of pupil premium funding and are planning to share more information with parents on the school's website. They receive regular reports on the quality of teaching and management of teachers' performance, which informs decisions as to whether or not teachers progress up the pay scale. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Governors make sure that safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that statutory requirements are met. Two minor omissions in the child protection policy were appropriately addressed before the end of the inspection.

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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138221
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	425571

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 converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1149
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	274
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bill Doris
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marco Franchetti
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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