

# Mount Carmel Roman Catholic Technology College for Girls

Holland Walk, Duncombe Road, London, N19 3EU

**Inspection dates** 27–28 March 2014

|                                |                      |      |   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|------|---|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
|                                | 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.

- Students make good progress. In 2013, the proportion of students who gained five or more GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was above average.
- Results dipped in 2012. The school took decisive action and consequently there was a 22% rise in the number of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, the following year.
- Progress across the school is good for most groups of students, and it accelerates in Key Stage 4.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Leaders have had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching in all subjects, including English and mathematics.
- Students show a great deal of respect and care for each other. They mix well in this racially harmonious community. They feel safe and are polite and well mannered. Around the school their behaviour is thoughtful and friendly. They have very positive attitudes towards their learning and show great pride in their school.
- Leadership is strong across the school. Senior leaders work well in partnership with middle leaders and the local authority. Governors are effective in holding leaders to account.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching quality is inconsistent. Additional adults are not always given enough guidance on how to support learning. As a result, students do not make equally fast progress in all subjects.
- Teachers' marking does not always provide clear guidance for students on what they need to do to improve. Students are not always given time to respond to feedback.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 22 lessons or part-lessons. Some observations were made alongside senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of other short visits to classrooms. A joint work scrutiny of English work was conducted with the vice principal.
- Inspectors observed students read with their reading buddies and talked to them about their reading. They observed an assembly and behaviour on corridors and in the playground.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and records on behaviour, safety, attendance and exclusions. They also looked at information on individual students' progress and anonymised records of teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.
- Inspectors met with students and interviewed a sample of staff. They also spoke to members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were obtained through the school's surveys. Written comments from 38 members of staff were also considered.

## Inspection team

Brian Netto, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Anne Turner

Additional inspector

Fatiha Maitland

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Mount Carmel is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. Over half of these speak English as an additional language. The largest minority ethnic groups are from Black African and other White heritages.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for students looked after by the local authority, those known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The number of students who join and leave the school at other than the usual times is well above average.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is managed by the governing body.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision at Southgate College and Westminster Kingsway and City and Islington College.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, the school has undergone an extensive refurbishment. The school has appointed a new principal who takes up post in September 2014. There have been significant changes and a reduction in staffing, including at leadership level. The number of students attending the school has dropped significantly.

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

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better in order to accelerate progress further, by:
  - making sure that activities take account of students' prior knowledge to meet their needs and interests
  - more consistent contributions from additional adults in meeting these needs
  - ensuring teachers' written comments consistently indicate clearly how students might improve their work and giving more opportunities for them to respond to the advice so that they can improve their learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 4 have improved substantially since the dip in 2012. In 2013, 63% of students gained five A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, which is above the national average.
- Students join the school in Year 7 with standards well below those found nationally. The majority of students who completed Key Stage 4 in 2013, including the most able, Black African and other White heritages, those who are disabled and those with special educational needs made better-than-expected progress in most subjects. Information on students' current progress indicates that most are on track to make expected and better-than-expected progress in most subjects.
- Students funded through the pupil premium are given very well-targeted support. As a result, they make good progress in line with that of their peers. In 2013, their attainment in English was equal to their peers', and in mathematics just one third of a GCSE grade behind.
- Students who join the school at times other than the usual make good progress, especially at Key Stage 3. Many speak English as an additional language. Effective induction into the school and well-targeted support help them to settle and they acquire new skills quickly. The support provided for literacy is strong. There is a focus in many lessons on helping students develop vocabulary. Students from Key Stage 4 help younger students to improve their reading skills. As a result, students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up fund make good progress.
- The school enters students early for mathematics GCSE but there is no evidence that this depressed their achievement. In 2013, the proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades was in line with the national average.
- A small number of students in Key Stage 4 take courses at local colleges. This helps them to achieve well by the end of Year 11, and gain additional qualifications.
- The school runs after-school lessons, Saturday classes and special revision programmes during holiday periods. Many students in Key Stage 4 benefit from these sessions which help them make good progress. Their good attendance at these also shows their strong ambition to be successful.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and there is some that is outstanding. This was reflected in the learning observed in English and mathematics and other subjects, and also in students' work.
- Teachers prepare students well in Key Stage 4 for their examinations. For example, good subject knowledge helped students in Year 11 to understand the social context for the play *An Inspector Calls*. They were able to compare the economic challenges from the past to those of today. Careful planning helped the students understand what they each needed to do to achieve high grades.
- Teachers make good use of examination criteria to help students understand what is required of them to be a successful learner. More-able students in Year 11 work closely with their peers to help them improve their learning in chemistry, and this helped them recognise what a high grade examination answer looked like.
- Learning is at its best when teachers use their subject knowledge to interest and engage the students. Skilful questioning helps to probe and deepen students' thinking, and helps them to reshape their ideas. For example, students in a Year 9 art class were able to produce outstanding backgrounds to their self-portraits using a range of different techniques and materials. Similarly, Year 7 students created highly imaginative designs for eco-bags during a textiles lesson. On both occasions students gave careful thought to the teacher's questions and guidance.
- The school employs a team of teaching assistants and other support workers. Much good support is provided in lessons and through one-to-one tuition, and as a consequence students

who fall behind quickly catch up with their peers, especially in English and mathematics. However, this support is inconsistent. Planning does not always take into account what the students already know and can do. In some lessons teaching assistants are not clear about what they need to do and this slows progress for some students.

- Marking in most subjects is regular and provides useful information for the students about how well they are doing and what steps they need to take to improve their learning. However, this is not consistent and students do not always respond to this feedback and improve their work.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most lessons proceed calmly and learning is purposeful, particularly where students have strong interests in the subject. For example, Year 10 music students showed considerable concentration during a vocal session, and responded enthusiastically to questions. Just occasionally, in some lessons some students lose concentration so their learning slows.
- Students have positive attitudes towards their learning. They take great pride in their school, and this is reflected in their exemplary appearance and school uniform. Students attend regularly and arrive to lessons punctually and ready to learn. Routines for learning ensure that no time is wasted.
- Students show great friendship and respect for each other. They say that the school helps them understand how to keep safe. They have well-informed views about social issues and appreciate how bullying can take many forms. They have an excellent understanding of the risks of bullying, including cyber bullying, and how to minimise this, and say that the school does all it can to prevent any bullying. When asked how students who are different are treated in the school, one student said that everyone's view was given respect, and that 'our different is normal'. This reflects the strong commitment from the whole community to ensuring equality of opportunity and to valuing all members of the community.
- Students take on many different responsibilities around the school and within the local community. Many act as prefects, some support students to resolve problems, and others are part of the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education). This gives them opportunities to meet with and learn from students of other faiths and members of the different local religious communities.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The breakfast club provides a safe environment for those students who arrive early. Students whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well looked after. These include the many students who join the school at times other than the usual.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school has faced significant challenges during the last two years. The extensive refurbishment of the main building coincided with a drop in student numbers and a subsequent reduction in staff. Determined leadership from the senior team, ably supported by governors and the local authority, has helped to raise standards at the end of Key Stage 4 and improve the quality of teaching.
- Effective partnership working with the local authority helps the school to have an accurate and robust evaluation of its strengths and main priorities for improvement.
- Teachers with additional responsibilities support others and contribute well to improvements in the quality of teaching. They meet regularly and share the best practice.
- The school regularly reviews how well teachers are doing. Much of this is done by senior leaders, who set targets within performance management carefully linked to the attainment and progress of students. This ensures that only good quality performance results in pay awards.
- The curriculum provides a range of experiences so that students are well prepared for life in

modern Britain. The focus on basic skills and literacy is supported by an extensive extra-curricular programme. Students' horizons are broadened through a strong focus on global and moral issues.

- Information from school surveys show that parents are very positive about the school and their children's education.
- The school chooses to buy different services from the local authority. For example, newly qualified teachers receive induction and training alongside teachers from other schools. This effective support is much appreciated by the teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors make sure that all statutory requirements, including those related to safeguarding, are met. They designate different roles to different governors so that they are fully informed about pay progression for staff and how the finances are best used, for example, to meet the needs of the students funded through the pupil premium. They are familiar with the school through a programme of regular visits and this helps to give them first-hand knowledge of how well the students are doing and the impact that teaching is having on their progress. This helps them to both support the school and hold leaders to account. They work closely with senior leaders to apply the performance management criteria so that teachers are held to account for the progress of the students. They have played a significant role in overseeing the refurbishment of the school, in managing the budget during a period when the roll of the school has fallen, and in devising strategies to increase the roll. They also attend regular training events, some of which are provided by the local authority.

## 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> | 100460    |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Islington |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 440925    |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Secondary                           |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary aided                     |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11–16                               |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Girls                               |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 483                                 |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Pamela David                        |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Paul Kehoe                          |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 19 January 2011                     |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 020 7281 3536                       |
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