

The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Greenford Road, Greenford, UB6 9AW

Inspection dates

14–15 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher is relentless in his ambitions for the school. He drives a determined culture of high aspiration for all students, shared by all staff.
- Governors provide robust support and challenge for the school. They are impressively effective in their scrutiny of the school's work in almost every aspect.
- Most groups of students make at least good progress, including those with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- Standards in English are exceptional for all students.
- In most subjects, teaching is good. Occasionally, it is outstanding. This is the result of teachers' excellent subject knowledge and high expectations.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary. A serene, ordered atmosphere of warm mutual respect is the norm in this very large school. Students are very safe and nurtured.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding.
- The sixth form is good. Examination results continue to improve because of a culture of strong support and ambition for young adults.
- Parents are unwavering in their belief in the school. They know they have chosen the right school for their children and are very supportive of all its work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not yet outstanding.
- Leaders have yet to secure consistently challenging assessment across every subject. As a result, the progress made by students is not uniformly good in all areas.
- Aspects of the school's growth plan lack precision. This makes it difficult for leaders to assess accurately the pace of improvement in some parts of the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 45 lessons. They observed nine jointly with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.
- Students' work in books was scrutinised.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, groups of students and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors met with three members of the governing body.
- Inspectors listened to students read.
- Inspectors considered the views of 167 parents through the online Ofsted questionnaire. They also met with a group of 10 parents.
- Inspectors considered the views of the Ofsted staff survey questionnaire completed by 47 staff.
- Inspectors evaluated a wide range of documentation. They scrutinised the school growth plan, minutes of governors' meetings, records of students' achievement, attendance and behaviour, and internal and external reviews of the school's performance.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection.

Inspection team

Debbie Clinton, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Veronica Young	Additional Inspector
Michael O'Sullivan	Additional Inspector
Julie Miriam	Additional Inspector
Roy Blatchford	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School is much larger than the average-size secondary school, with a very large sixth form.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than the national average. The largest ethnic group is White British.
- The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average, as is the number supported at school action plus. The proportion of students supported at school action is well below the national average.
- The proportion of students eligible for pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- No students are attending alternative educational provision.
- The headteacher has recently joined the Steering Board for the Ealing Teaching Schools Alliance.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure students make more rapid progress by:
 - using the most effective marking strategies in every subject
 - adjusting students' target grades more rapidly at the half-termly assessment points to check that they are sufficiently challenging.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels insist on consistently high expectations of teaching by:
 - improving the performance of weaker subjects in Key Stage 4 to the levels of those with the very best rates of achievement, for example through ensuring that outcomes in mathematics match that of English.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher models determinedly the very high expectations he has of others. He is unwavering in his belief that all students can achieve highly. He promotes this vision with a calm serenity which is tangible throughout the corridors of the school.
- Ably supported by his senior and middle leadership teams, the headteacher has ensured that high standards have been maintained over time.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because of the determined drive, shared by all staff, to develop thoroughly rounded young people. As one member of staff put it, 'There is something very special and unique about this school. Some call it the "Wiseman spirit"; all would agree that it bonds every adult and child together in a very special way. It is a privilege to be part of.'
- Leaders have imbued the school with the highest expectations of social behaviour. High levels of respect and courtesy between and amongst staff and students are the norm. Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to help students understand and respond to risk.
- Senior leaders did not have, until recently, accurate systems in place to measure the quality of teaching. Leaders of faculty areas work in coaching partnerships and regularly meet with their senior line managers to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and the progress that students are making. This approach has proved especially effective in English and is now being used to secure rapid improvement in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students and those with weak literacy skills respond positively to skilful staff intervention. As a result, they make good progress over time.
- Leaders provide effective, focused support for newly qualified teachers. Training and professional development are well matched to individual teachers' needs.
- The school's growth plan sets out the key areas for improvement and is underpinned by more detailed intent and faculty plans. Although the priorities are appropriately targeted, there is a lack of precision in the success criteria for some actions. As a result, it is more difficult for leaders to measure accurately the impact of actions on the achievement of some groups of students at key checkpoints in the year.
- The school has recently devised a Key Stage 4 qualifications package which is almost exclusively GCSE based. This change has been accompanied by a increase in the length of Key Stage 3 curriculum time in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These decisions are beginning to have a positive impact on achievement levels in most subjects.
- Leaders are right to celebrate the school's very effective careers information, advice and guidance. Increasing rates of sixth form entry into universities is a clear indicator of the success of such work. The contribution individual subjects have in all careers and work-related learning could be made more obvious to students through creating subject learning displays in faculties which focus on these vital areas.
- The school celebrates its cultural and ethnic diversity with passion. Students say they enjoy being part of such a diverse community and evidence of this was clear to inspectors. Students are proud of the fact that the term 'gay' is never used in their school pejoratively.
- Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work. The school evaluates how successful it has been in enabling all students to achieve in its self-evaluation. This is shared with all members of the school community, as part of a coherent and helpful approach to providing information for parents. Parents are fully aware of the school's priorities and, in particular, appreciate the determined focus upon improving students' attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers' performance is now more closely linked to students' achievement. The headteacher is forensic in his scrutiny of staff performance before he makes recommendations about pay progression to the governors. He is particularly effective in his evaluation of senior leaders' performance.
- The school has commissioned a number of external reviews. This support has provided some useful analysis of the school's performance, which leaders and governors are using to drive improvements. For example, the local authority has provided some helpful evaluation of the work of the mathematics faculty. Whilst inspectors did not agree with all the judgements contained in this review, the action points for further improvement are appropriate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body brings together an impressive range of skills and experience, including from education, business, financial management, human resources and the local community. The school's strengths and weaknesses are very well understood by governors. They provide regular challenge to school leaders and set high expectations for success. They make use of a range of information to assess the performance of the school. Governors have taken effective action to improve their own skills, including regular training in the use of achievement information and safer recruitment. They scrutinise

- information about the quality of teaching and students' achievement in relation to national averages.
- Governors monitor the impact of pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding closely and challenge leaders to account for its impact on students' achievement.
 - The Chair of the Governing Body is a National Leader of Governance. As a result, she has joined another school governing body. This helped to inform governors' recent review of its committee structure, which is now even more closely aligned with the school's growth plan. Governors are scrutinising middle leadership more closely, supporting the headteacher in reducing variations between the performance of different subjects. The Chair of the curriculum committee ably leads his team in its frequent, searching scrutiny of subject achievement and students' progress.
 - Governors regularly review their statutory obligations, including those relating to financial management and safeguarding, which ensures they continue to meet statutory requirements. Along with the headteacher, they lead the school's annual review of teachers' pay with clarity and skill.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Their superb behaviour makes a huge contribution to the calm, happy atmosphere found all around the school. For instance, students showed good resilience to adverse weather and conducted themselves admirably at rainy breaks during the inspection.
- Students display excellent attitudes to learning in almost every circumstance. They are almost always well equipped for their lessons and they move between lessons with calm purpose. On very rare occasions, a few students engage in some silly behaviour in lessons; this gets in the way of their learning.
- Students are unfailingly proud of their school. They wear their uniform smartly and with tangible pride. They respect themselves, are tolerant and respectful of others, and their excellent relationships support their learning, progress and first-rate personal development.
- This is a school which does not tolerate the dropping of litter. As a result, it is more often than not clean and tidy. However, some areas did become less tidy after students' breaktimes, because staff are not always consistent in the expectations they set for tidy classrooms.
- Exclusion rates are reducing rapidly, along with internal seclusion which is hardly ever used. Students are clear about what is poor behaviour and state that staff deal with it well on the rare occasions when it occurs.
- Attendance is improving at an impressive rate and overall levels are above the national average. Leaders pursue any absence with commendable zeal; this has resulted in improved attendance for all groups of students, including the most disadvantaged.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students have an excellent understanding of their own safety, and of risk. For example, they are fully aware of the risks involved in using the internet. Sixth form students work hard as lunchtime prefects and the quality of their training is evident in their care and support for Year 7 students as they settle into the routines of a very large school.
- Students universally trust the staff to keep them safe. They state that, should they feel concerned or unsafe, they would know exactly who to talk to and that they are sure of an appropriate response. School records show that bullying is very rare and dealt with firmly when it happens.
- Child protection case files indicate that the school is vigorous in securing the highest possible standards of care for vulnerable students. Such high quality care is underpinned by rigorous and regular safeguarding and child protection training for all staff.
- Staff and parents indicate that the school routinely ensures excellent standards of behaviour and safety and inspectors agree.

The quality of teaching is good

- The school's ambition to ensure routinely outstanding teaching is beginning to bear fruit. Teaching over time is good, and sometimes it is outstanding.
- Leaders have invested significant amounts of time into the very best training and development for their staff. This investment is clear in the rapidly improving progress students make in the vast majority of lessons.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and most have high expectations. They plan and deliver

lessons which engage students and deepen their understanding. They adapt their approach in class according to the progress that students are making, and skilfully adjust the level of challenge to extend the most able.

- Homework is set regularly and rigorously. Parents and students confirm this and state that students take great pride in their homework. Inspectors saw much evidence of this in a wide range of subjects.
- Occasionally, teachers do not set work which is sufficiently challenging. In some lessons, tasks were set with too little attention to the ability of the individual students. Leaders are tackling quickly those areas requiring such improvement, for example through the more frequent adjustment of students' individual target grades around which assessments are then set.
- Marking is good in most subjects. Teachers indicate consistently to students exactly how to improve their work. However, they do not insist routinely that students then correct pieces of work themselves. Thus, sometimes, faster and more secure progress is slowed. For instance, in a Year 10 English lesson for students of lower ability, a paragraph of writing on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* was perfectly marked and corrected by the skilled teacher. However, the student was not then required to re-write the piece in full with all corrections made and this slowed his progress.
- Students hold their teachers in high esteem and parents agree that their children are universally happy in lessons. This conducive, respectful atmosphere encourages good, and sometimes outstanding, progress in the majority of lessons. In a Year 9 graphics lesson, astute individual interventions by a skilled teacher, wholly valued by the students, resulted in excellent progress for all in the lesson.
- Literacy is a strength in much of the school. The outstanding work of the English faculty is producing students who are increasingly confident in their literacy, and in all aspects. However, this success has not been replicated to the same degree in mathematics and numeracy.
- The school's investment in high quality training for its teaching assistants has reaped dividends. Teaching assistants are increasingly skilled in their support for teachers and in their abilities to challenge the progress made by all students, including those with special educational needs or disadvantage. As a consequence, students with special educational needs or disadvantage and those who speak English as an additional language make at least good, and often outstanding, progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school in Year 7 with above average achievement. From those starting points, most students attain GCSE results which are well above national averages. The 2014 decline in the proportion of students achieving five A* to C GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, is being tackled rapidly and successfully.
- Attainment in English, science, art and design, business studies and computing is outstanding.
- The vast majority of students make good progress in most subjects. Almost all students make outstanding progress in English and science, and very good progress in French and history.
- Mathematics results declined in 2014, having improved in 2013. The projected improvement in 2015 in mathematics is the result of decisive action taken by leaders in improving the quality of teaching and marking, bringing mathematics teaching in line with the assessment needs of a new GCSE qualification.
- English is a significant strength. The vast majority of students make outstanding progress in English, which is the result of very good, often exceptionally strong, teaching. As a result of such rigorous subject leadership, students' learning and progress in literacy are also at least good, and often outstanding, for the vast majority of students.
- Disadvantaged students make good progress. In 2013, their attainment at GCSE in English and mathematics was above all students nationally. Over the last three years, the gap between the GCSE performance of disadvantaged students and others in the school has reduced rapidly. In 2014, the gap in mathematics narrowed significantly, to under half a grade, and in English it closed completely. Disadvantaged students make exceptional progress in English, science and French. They make satisfactory progress in mathematics.
- Most-able students make at least good progress in most subjects and over time. However, the school is right to focus on the more regular review of students' target grades since, sometimes, these grades provide an artificial ceiling on achievement, especially for the most able who are capable of more.
- The school makes limited use of early entry for GCSE; where it is used, students are making good progress. This is because the students who are selected for early entry are the right ones and they are ready to maximise their achievement early.
- Reading, writing and communication are given a forensic focus for all new students. Wise spending of the Year 7 catch-up funding ensures sharply focused support is provided for those who need immediate

additional help. Consequently, those students make rapid progress and the gap between them and others is narrowing fast.

- A determined focus upon equal opportunities for all is clear in the success enjoyed by disabled students and those with special educational needs. Along with most other students, they make outstanding progress in English and at least good progress from their starting points in all other subjects.
- Such success is mirrored with students from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language. Very effective tracking information shows clearly that these students continue to make at least good progress. Any gaps between their progress and that of others are narrowing across subjects and peer groups.
- The very good, sometimes outstanding, progress made by students with special educational needs is the result of consistently good teaching by skilled, highly trained teachers and teaching assistants. The diagnosis of the learning needs of these students is increasingly astute.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The director of this very large successful sixth form is unrelenting in her ambition for students. Along with her established teaching and support staff, she ensures a broad, holistic education for students of a very high quality. However, standards of achievement are not yet as high as they could be in all subjects.
- Outcomes in the sixth form are accelerating. Having dipped in 2014, higher grade A-level performance is a key target for improvement in 2015, and current data indicate that this is a realistic ambition.
- Most students achieve AS- and A-level grades which are at least in line with national results. The sixth form growth plan is focusing correctly upon improving performance in those subjects where attainment needs to improve rapidly. This increased, close attention by leaders is having a positive impact on students' progress.
- Students are increasingly successful in attaining GCSE mathematics grades where they have not done so in Year 11. In 2014, 60% of those who re-took GCSE mathematics were successful in gaining a grade C or better. This was an improvement on 2013 results and is the result of the improving teaching of mathematics throughout the school. No students need to take GCSE English in the sixth form due to outstanding results in Key Stage 4.
- Retention rates are well above the national average. In a total of 400 students, only four did not progress from Year 12 to Year 13 in 2014. Along with large numbers of applications from Year 11 for places in the sixth form, such success for the school community is laudable.
- Sixth form study programmes are well matched to every learner. Such carefully planned curriculum and qualifications menus result in rapidly improving achievement and very high retention levels across the vast bulk of subjects.
- Along with the rest of the school, sixth form students enjoy excellent careers information and guidance. Such advice is consistently tailored well to individual needs. As a result, many sixth form students are the first in their family to successfully apply to university and such success is repeated year on year. The proportion of students who do not go on to education, employment or training is well below national rates.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Small group and individual tutorials are powerful accompaniments to larger whole-class lessons. Such practice, along with skilled marking by teachers, results in students making rapid progress across a wide variety of subjects.
- Sixth form leaders have responded well to students' requests for wider, more diverse leadership experiences. They have used the highly successful prefect programme to develop more opportunities for leadership training and coaching for students.
- Sixth form students' attitudes exemplify fundamental British values of tolerance, decency and mutual respect. In all of their community relationships, these young adults model warmth and compassion. This is the result of leaders' skilful development of support and guidance which is tightly structured around risk management, safeguarding and increasing maturity and intellectual development.

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	101934
Local authority	Ealing
Inspection number	449425

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.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary Aided School
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	1,886
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	400
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maggie Pound
Headteacher	Michael Kiely
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2008
Telephone number	020 8575 8222
Fax number	020 813 0156
Email address	info@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk

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