

Trinity Catholic College

Saltersgill Avenue, Middlesbrough TS4 3JW

Inspection dates

26–27 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Over time, leaders and governors have not secured consistently good teaching across the school and in the sixth form. As a result, pupils and students have not achieved as well as they are capable of doing.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those who are students in the sixth form, do not make consistently good progress. This is because plans have been lax. Leaders and governors have not evaluated the impact of funding and their actions with sufficient stringency.
- Middle leaders have a clear view of what they need to do to improve their subject areas; however, the effect of their work to date is limited and remains inconsistent.
- The quality of teaching and assessment across the school and in the sixth form is too variable. In some instances, it is inconsistent within subject areas. As a result, pupils do not make good progress over time, especially those who are disadvantaged and boys.
- Despite some marginal improvement, attendance continues to be too low and persistent absence too high. Consequently, some pupils and groups of pupils do not attend as regularly as they should. This is having a detrimental impact on their achievement.
- In the main, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes when they are at school. However, such positive attitudes are not yet contributing to pupils' improved learning and progress over time.

The school has the following strengths

- The newly appointed headteacher has reshaped the culture of the school. Staff and pupils appreciate this. They comment positively on improved levels of communication and heightened expectations.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well cared for. As a result of effective leadership in this area, pupils' knowledge and skills are steadily improving, along with their levels of attendance.
- Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the barriers facing some of the most vulnerable young people in their care. There is a firm commitment to develop and foster a strong community spirit in the school.
- The curriculum and the Catholic ethos of the school contribute to pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' personal development and welfare are strengths of the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve and strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - sharpening improvement planning, especially the strategy plan to improve disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and attendance, so that there are clear milestones for improvement that aid leaders' and governors' checks on the impact of actions
 - ensuring that all middle leaders are suitably trained so that they have the skills to consistently check on, and improve, the quality of teaching and, subsequently, pupils' outcomes in their subject areas
 - embedding systems to address weaker teaching
 - increasing expectations of pupils so that their positive attitudes to learning contribute to building their resilience and taking responsibility for driving their own learning forward.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, both in the main school and in the sixth form, and consequently raise standards and achievement, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving across the curriculum
 - reviewing and refining assessment practices so that pupil information is accurate and used to plan learning that challenges pupils of different abilities to learn well over time
 - ensuring that teachers' questioning skills are developed so that pupils are given opportunities to extend their ideas and think deeply
 - ensuring that teachers consistently tap into, and consider, pupils' starting points and prior learning, so that they can extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding
 - providing further opportunities for teachers to improve their practice by learning from one another and sharing good practice among the trust and wider partnerships.
- Continue the drive to improve attendance, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, by evaluating existing strategies that are having the most effect and those that need to be changed or amended.
- Improve students' outcomes in the sixth form, especially in academic subjects and for disadvantaged students, by closely monitoring the quality of teaching and acting swiftly to eradicate inconsistencies, so that students experience consistency and equity across the subjects they study.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, school leaders, including governors, have not been able to secure consistently good teaching across the school and in the sixth form. As a result, pupils' and students' outcomes have not been good enough. Therefore, the effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement because the pace of change has been too slow.
- The new headteacher, ably supported by a consultant headteacher, recognises that there are key areas across the school that need to be addressed with urgency and has quickly taken decisive action to tackle them. However, a number of these actions are in their infancy and have not yet had a significant effect on the overall quality of teaching, in part because they have not had sufficient time to do so. Nevertheless, the new headteacher has reshaped the ethos of the school and both staff and pupils commented positively about the new culture, improved levels of communication and heightened expectations.
- There has been a restructuring and realignment of roles and responsibilities at the most senior level in the school. This has brought about a clarity of roles and lines of accountability are now clear.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders have quickly pinned down the strengths of the school. They do not shy away from those areas that need the most attention. Leaders have used this information to put in place a candid and focused improvement plan. The improvement plan clearly focuses on those actions necessary to raise standards and aspirations across the school and in the sixth form. However, leaders acknowledge that they need to sharpen the improvement plan, so that there are clear milestones for improvement to help them and governors with their checks on the specific effect of leaders' actions.
- The school receives significant additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. This funding does not lead to the improvements in disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and attendance that are intended. Leaders, including governors, recognise that this is a key area for them, given the high proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school. They accept that they do not currently have a clear picture of the effect that their strategies are having. Nonetheless, leaders have taken a more strategic view and are beginning to put a plan in place to address such issues.
- Middle leaders, although roles are inconsistent between different subject areas, are clear and enthusiastic. They fully recognise the responsibility they have to improve the quality of teaching in their subject areas. This is particularly evident with the directors of English and mathematics. Middle leaders are aware of the increased accountability structures in place; however, they are yet to have a demonstrable effect on improving or sustaining improvements in pupils' outcomes in their subject areas. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes within subject areas continue to be variable and inconsistent.
- The school's curriculum is increasingly meeting the needs of different groups of pupils. For example, pupils can access a wide range of subjects as well as follow different extra-curricular activities and intervention sessions. Leaders are conscientiously

planning the curriculum so that it provides broad opportunities for pupils to access 'guided pathways' that link with their needs, abilities and aspirations. Consequently, achievement is improving in Years 7 and 8. The curriculum is also geared towards pupils gaining an age-appropriate awareness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, as well as British values. As a result, the curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development and welfare.

- The actions of the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) are leading to improved outcomes and attendance for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The SENCo is well informed about the pupils in her care and she is thorough in her approach to identify and monitor the effect of strategies on individual pupils. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities follow a bespoke, personalised curriculum that meets their individual needs and interests. As a result, pupils' knowledge and skills are showing steady signs of improvement. Funding is also being used well, so that levels of attendance improve, and persistent absence reduces.

Governance of the school

- Governors show a strong commitment to the school. They are aware of their responsibilities and take an active role in the life of the school. For example, governors receive, from leaders, appropriate information regarding pupils' welfare and achievement.
- Governors have conscientiously developed their skills so that middle and senior leaders are challenged. Despite this challenge, governors have not given sufficient emphasis to, or been stringent enough in, their evaluation of leaders' actions to improve pupils' outcomes and attendance. Consequently, their support and challenge have not contributed to, for example, the improvement over time of disadvantaged pupils' outcomes and attendance.
- The chief executive officer (CEO) and chair of directors of the trust are both highly ambitious. They are resolutely determined to provide the school with sufficient support and resources, so that standards improve at a much quicker pace. They have brought together a group of directors who have a wide range of skills and experience and are adamant that such structures will lead to the young people receiving the best possible Catholic education they can offer.
- The trust has supported the school well, especially through providing external leadership support that is contributing to improvements in sharpening senior and middle leaders' strengths and skills. It is determined that such support will continue.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a well-established culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are trained appropriately and they understand their duty to protect pupils, particularly those that are vulnerable. Processes for safeguarding pupils and practice go hand in hand. As a result, routines are clearly established and there is constant reinforcement from leaders so that staff are updated on safeguarding issues or concerns.
- The designated safeguarding lead works well with other staff and with a wide range of

external agencies. This helps to ensure that pupils at risk of harm have access to the support they need.

- All incidents are recorded appropriately and securely so that leaders can monitor actions and follow up on incidents or issues where necessary. The designated safeguarding lead and other leaders tenaciously check and follow up on concerns, so that pupils are safe and feel safe.
- Pupils informed inspectors, both in meetings and through the Ofsted online questionnaire, that they feel safe at school. Pupils could explain how they are taught to be, and keep, safe, including when at school and when outside school. They spoke about how to stay safe online, how to look after each other and how the curriculum supports their understanding of how to be responsible citizens.
- A number of parents, through Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View, stated that their child is happy at the school, is safe and that their child is well looked after at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because it is too variable across the school and inconsistent within subject areas. Consequently, teaching is not ensuring that pupils across a range of subjects and year groups, particularly those who are disadvantaged and boys, are making good progress over time.
- The quality of assessment across the school and within departments is inconsistent. As a result, teachers are not planning activities that challenge pupils sufficiently, or meet their needs, based on their starting points or prior learning. This is leading to variability in the rates of progress made by different groups of pupils because they are set work that is either too hard or too easy.
- Teachers' questioning is variable. When questioning is most effective, teachers use it to develop and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, when it is not used well, teachers accept superficial responses from pupils and they do not require pupils to think deeply about a concept or idea. For example, such variability was observed in art, modern foreign languages, geography and history.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics and science is evidently improving and this is contributing to the better progress current pupils are making. However, inconsistencies remain. For example, many teachers demonstrate high expectations of what pupils can achieve and aim to tackle misconceptions in pupils' learning quickly. Unfortunately, this is not the case in all year groups and subjects.
- Where pupils make evident gains in their knowledge and understanding, it is because teachers plan learning that aims to engage and motivate pupils. There was evidence of this in subjects such as English, drama, physical education (PE) and computer science; however, it remains inconsistent across the school and within departments.
- Staff are appreciative of professional development opportunities they can engage in. They say how this is contributing to improved practice. Staff also appreciate the opportunities sought to share good practice in the school, and across the trust and wider partnerships. Although in their infancy, such opportunities are contributing to

some improved practices and staff development.

- Teachers have a wealth of strong subject knowledge. When it is used skilfully, teachers adapt to tackle misconceptions and address pupils' needs quickly.
- In the main, teachers make a conscious effort to improve pupils' literacy skills by modelling for them the use of subject-specific vocabulary.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are self-assured and show confidence when talking to each other and adults and when responding in classrooms. They have noticed and comment positively on the higher expectations that are beginning to be placed on them.
- Pupils are thoughtful and show respect for each other, staff and visitors. Relationships between adults and pupils are highly positive and these are driven by the Catholic ethos, which permeates all aspects of school life.
- Pupils have an accurate awareness of different faiths and cultures and are not fazed by people being different – in fact, pupils positively believe difference should be celebrated. Pupils are proud of their school and want to be positive, responsible role models. One pupil commented, 'If you can't do it at school, then you shouldn't do it outside of school either.' This exemplifies pupils' views that they are part of a 'big family'. Pupils genuinely believe that the school allows them to 'learn from their mistakes'.
- Leaders' clear understanding of the barriers pupils face demonstrates their firm commitment to fostering a tangible community spirit where everyone is valued and respected.
- Pupils report, and inspection evidence would support, that incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils acknowledge that bullying sometimes does take place; however, they also acknowledge that, if it does, an adult will deal with it effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The school is, in the main, a calm and orderly environment. Pupils are well supervised at break- and lunchtime and when leaving the school site. Staff regularly meet and greet pupils as they enter classrooms. This sets the tone for learning well. Despite this, pupils are not yet using their positive attitudes to drive forward their own learning.
- Pupils commented on how behaviour is improving. School records support this view, particularly as the rate of fixed-term exclusions has fallen. The use of the inclusion centre in the school is supporting this work, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- A minority of pupils access bespoke alternative provision. Where this is the case, pupils settle into their new provision quickly and, because of this, demonstrate positive attitudes and attend regularly. Leaders are in regular contact with providers and check

on pupils' attendance, and their academic and pastoral development.

- In a small minority of instances, some pupils fuss and their attention wanes in lessons. Teachers' actions to deal with this and to adapt learning to engage and motivate these pupils are variable.
- Overall, levels of attendance and persistent absence are simply not good enough. They remain a concern for leaders, including governors. This is especially true for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Attendance is not improving rapidly enough and, as a result, pupils who are absent a lot do not achieve well over time. However, leaders are beginning to examine the reasons why groups of pupils and individual pupils are absent. This work is in its infancy, although there are some green shoots of improvement for individual pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Both historically and currently, pupils do not make consistently good progress across a range of subjects and year groups. Consequently, outcomes require improvement.
- Overall, progress measures in 2016 and 2017 were significantly below the national average and in the bottom 20% nationally. This was particularly prevalent for disadvantaged pupils and in mathematics: attainment overall, and for disadvantaged pupils, and in mathematics, was significantly below the national averages.
- Provisional 2018 outcomes indicate that attainment has marginally improved and that outcomes in mathematics have improved as a result of improved teaching in this subject. However, progress overall and for disadvantaged pupils has remained static.
- Leaders are realistic and well aware of the reasons why outcomes have not improved sufficiently over time. For example, weak teaching and poor attendance have been identified. They are resolute to drive standards up through closer monitoring of teaching. Leaders acknowledge the need to check the reliability of pupil assessment information, so that targeted intervention can take place. This is so that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are addressed swiftly. Nevertheless, leaders' actions are in their infancy and the impact, although evident, is limited.
- The work of pupils currently in the school shows that they are making variable and inconsistent progress across a range of subjects and year groups. For example, inspection evidence indicates that achievement in Years 7 and 8 is improving. However, in Year 9 and Year 10, it is far too variable. In these year groups, boys lag behind girls and disadvantaged pupils lag behind other pupils.
- School information and inspection evidence show that the progress and learning of disadvantaged pupils are variable between year groups and subjects. Improvements that are evident are in their infancy and are only evident because leaders are beginning to grasp pupils' barriers to learning. At present, this is not filtering into classrooms and influencing teachers' planning, so they can meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils.
- School information and inspection evidence show that the progress and learning of the most able pupils are inconsistent between year groups and subjects. For example, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, there is some conscientious effort to challenge the most able pupils. However, this is inconsistent across year

groups.

- A large proportion of pupils, by the end of key stage 4, go on to sustained education, employment, training or apprenticeships. Careers information, advice and guidance in the school are developing pupils' aspirations and this is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- The 16 to 19 study programmes require improvement because students do not make consistently good progress on academic courses and disadvantaged students' outcomes lag behind those of other students. However, committed and decisive leaders in the sixth form have acted quickly to set higher expectations for sixth-form students and staff.
- Historically, outcomes for students following academic courses have been too variable, although students following vocational courses have achieved well. Students' 2018 provisional outcomes suggest that leaders' and teachers' higher expectations are paying off as students' progress in academic subjects has shown improvement. For example, a higher proportion of students have achieved particularly well in A-level English courses and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students in the sixth form have made variable progress. While disadvantaged students' progress has shown improvement this year, it continues to be inconsistent between subject areas.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is inconsistent. This is because teaching does not consistently meet the needs and abilities of different students. Students were candid in sharing their views on this, and teaching observed during the inspection supports their views. Leaders acknowledge the need to closely monitor the quality of teaching so they can address inconsistencies more swiftly.
- Students' attendance is improving, although some students do not attend as regularly as they should and could. Leaders' actions to address this issue and support students are beginning to have an effect. Students' retention rates are steadily improving as advice and guidance become more bespoke and students access appropriate study programmes that meet their needs and aspirations.
- As part of their study programmes, students in the sixth form undertake well-thought-out work experience. Such experiences are supported by pre- and post-work experience activities that are designed to develop students' personal, social and employability skills. Such skills are further developed through extra-curricular activities, for example sports teams and charity events.
- Students receive effective careers advice and guidance. This helps them make informed decisions regarding their next steps. As a result, an increasing proportion of students access higher education, employment, training or apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	142382
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10053469

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,362
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	165
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governors	Mr Kevin Duffy
Chair of directors	Mr Joseph Hughes
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Granycome
Telephone number	01642 298100
Website	http://trinitycatholiccollege.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@trinity.ncpat.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school, with an average-sized sixth-form provision.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is slightly over half of the school population. It is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The school uses four alternative provision providers, which a minority of pupils attend for part- or full-time provision. These are River Tees, The Keys, Middlesbrough College

and Lingfield Choosing Pathways Programme.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a wide range of subjects and year groups, both in the main school and in the sixth form. Several observations were completed jointly with members of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors also observed an assembly and pupils’ conduct at breaktime, lunchtime and the end of the school day.
- The inspectors held various discussions with senior leaders, other leaders and class teachers. The lead inspector met with a group of governors and the chair of directors for the trust and the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors also met with six groups of pupils, ranging from Years 7 to 13. Inspectors spoke with a number of pupils informally and in lessons.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils’ work in classrooms and they also completed separate work scrutinies of pupils’ work in English, mathematics and science. Discrete work scrutinies took place to evaluate work in the sixth form and for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Inspectors considered a wide range of information provided by school leaders regarding the achievement of current pupils in the school.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation provided by the school. This included: the school’s self-evaluation document; improvement plan; documents relating to safeguarding and child protection, including the single central record; and behaviour and attendance records.
- The inspectors considered the 157 responses to Ofsted’s online pupil questionnaire. The 83 responses to the questionnaire for staff and the 57 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, including the 32 comments made using the free-text service, were also considered.

Inspection team

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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