



# St Edmund Campion School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number 103537  
LEA Birmingham

Inspection number 274781  
Inspection dates 26-27 April 2005  
Reporting inspector Mr R Drew

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

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Type of School	Comprehensive	School address	Sutton Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Erdington
Age range of pupils	11-18		Birmingham
			B23 5AX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4647700
Number on roll	982	Fax number	0121 4647702
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M McCormack
Date of previous inspection	17-21 May 1999	Headteacher	Mr K Ash

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Age group	Published	Reference no.
11-18	May 2005	274781

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## Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the staff of St Edmund Campion School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Edmund Campion is a Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Secondary School, serving the 11-18 age range. The pupils are largely drawn from the inner suburbs of north-east Birmingham and there are 982 on roll.

The pupils' standards are broadly average on entry to the school and are rising. A significant minority of pupils are socially and economically disadvantaged; currently 24 per cent are entitled to free school meals. This is higher than in most schools, although numbers were much higher in the recent past. The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is greater than in most schools. A very small number of children are in the care of the Local Authority. The intake is very largely of White British or White Irish origin, with about 20 per cent of pupils from a range of ethnic minorities, especially Black Caribbean or mixed White and Caribbean origin.

Language College status was granted from September 2005.

Extensive building work, not yet finished, has recently ended the school's long period on a split site, but continues to disrupt school life.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of its main strengths and weaknesses.

Standards are average and progress is satisfactory in the main school, although there are examples of underachievement. The upward trend in GCSE results is much stronger than nationally. After a period when improvement was too slow, current standards and rates of progress in Years 7 to 9 are also rising.

Learners' personal development is satisfactory, but the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in some lessons holds back their progress and that of others. Inspectors agree with the school that attendance needs improving and levels of exclusion need to be tackled more effectively. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with a significant proportion of teaching that is very good. Care for pupils is very effective and a strength of the school. There are satisfactory links with the community and parents, helping to ensure learners' well-being.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with much that is good. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall and standards at GCSE have improved greatly. The school is strongly committed to an inclusive approach and is good at supporting a wide range of different groups and abilities. Given its existing track record, improvements in the quality of teaching and recent good appointments and initiatives, the school's capacity to improve is good. Value for money is satisfactory.

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

The sixth form, while small, is a strength of the school and is both very effective and efficient. It is well organised and led. Standards are below average, but students make very good progress across the wide range of courses provided. High-quality liaison with other schools and colleges broadens provision and maximises equality of opportunity.

Teaching and learning are good, with some excellent practice. The progress of students is tracked and recorded very well to keep a continuous check on how well they are achieving throughout their courses.

Self-evaluation is excellent. It identifies strengths and weaknesses with great rigour. It provides a convincing picture of its successes and a clear statement of practical action being taken to ensure further improvement.

## **Grade: 2**

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Take action to reduce radically the negative impact of poor behaviour by a minority of pupils.
- Further strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management in mathematics and science, turning adequate progress at Key Stage 3 into good progress, providing the spring-board for improved GCSE performance.
- Implement specific strategies to raise the attainment of girls in mathematics and science and of Black Caribbean boys across the curriculum.
- Take further action to raise attendance levels.
- Provide, as planned, a unit to reduce exclusion levels and improve the success of re-integrating excluded pupils into lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

Pupils in the main school are currently reaching broadly average standards and achievement and progress are satisfactory. The school's 2004 results are now close to the national average for all schools, and the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C passes has risen from 31 to 49 per cent since 1999. Rigorous reviews of the work of departments, extensive use of target-setting and ongoing assessment have been major factors in bringing about this substantial improvement. Results in media studies have been consistently above the national average. Results in art and design, history, French and English literature are considerably better than pupils achieved in their other subjects and show what is possible.

The school's prime focus until recently has been on raising GCSE results. The school is now responding well, although later than would have been ideal, to giving the same emphasis to raising standards in Years 7 to 9.

The substantial minority of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and achieve well in relation to their capabilities, because provision for them is well organised and support staff are well trained and effective.

Some underperformance by girls, particularly in mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9, has been identified by the school and confirmed by inspectors. Similarly, Black Caribbean boys are known by the school to be underachieving. In the past, shortcomings in the effectiveness of the mathematics and science departments depressed results. Current leadership of mathematics and science is giving better direction in tackling such issues, but further specific and more effective action is required. In recognising that lower ability sets at GCSE have not made as much progress as pupils overall, and that too few A\* grades are achieved by higher attainers, the school has begun to take positive steps to address these issues.

Students join Year 12 with a much wider range of GCSE results than is usually the case. Whilst examination results are below the national average overall, students make very good progress as a result of good and sometimes excellent teaching.

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Personal development and well-being**

The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' personal development and well-being. The pupils' development spiritually, morally, socially and culturally is good. The school builds well on its distinctively Catholic ethos to make pupils particularly aware of the spiritual dimension to their lives.

Behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory overall: amongst the great majority of pupils, they are very good. In some lessons, pupils are impressively mature and well motivated. However, a significant minority have a tendency to behave poorly. This is countered well in many situations but it inevitably interrupts learning. Serious misbehaviour is dealt with consistently and well, but there is scope for better handling of initial low-level inattention or minor offences to stop them from reoccurring, or escalating into more serious issues. Attitudes in the sixth form are very positive. Relationships between ethnic groups are good and everyone in the school treats one another with equal respect.

Whilst most pupils attend well and enjoy school, inspectors agree with the school's assessment that overall attendance and exclusion rates could be better. Additional strategies and efficiency are required to further reduce absence, including when pupils are taken out of school during formal tests or examinations. The school's plans for a new unit to support those at risk of exclusion and for the reintegration of pupils returning from exclusion are good and necessary.

Safety matters are promoted soundly by the school. With much building work going on in the school, safe working practices and pupils' welfare have been a live issue and sensibly discussed and dealt with. In lessons, safety procedures in science and design and technology, for example, are observed very well. The school has taken steps to promote healthy eating and lifestyles, and work-related skills are given sufficient prominence. These initiatives have helped increase the take-up of healthy options at lunch times and given pupils a satisfactory awareness of skills needed in the work place. Involvement in the local community is satisfactory, with good examples, such as the support for local charities and the contribution of the Gospel Choir.

**Grade: 3**

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in the sixth form. There is evidence of outstanding teaching in some lessons and a significant number where the quality is good. In these, pupils and students benefit from well-planned sequences of activities and lessons move along at a very good pace. Other features include very good relationships and strong participation of pupils and students which makes for productive learning as they express ideas and raise questions.

Whilst there are inconsistencies in the way teachers deal with low level disruption in lessons, in contrast teachers are generally consistent in using assessment data well across Years 7 to 11. Pupils know broadly the levels to which they should aspire and that acts as an incentive. In Years 10 and 11, invaluable use is made of GCSE questions to focus on standards required.

Amongst sixth-form students, the awareness of how to meet challenging targets is particularly well developed. There are very positive relationships in most lessons. Teachers make it very clear what students have to do to reach course requirements, including the criteria required for high quality work by examination boards. Extensive opportunities are provided for students to participate actively in lessons.

Teaching generally supports pupils with SEN well, and meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils is becoming more common. Teachers are well aware of the data which shows clear underperformance by particular groups of pupils and are responding well, but further guidance is necessary.

**Grade: 3**

## **Curriculum and other activities**

The curriculum is satisfactory. In Years 7 to 9, it provides a broad and balanced range of activities that meet most learners' needs. Religious education and a second modern foreign language have a greater place than in some schools, as befits a church school with Language College status. In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum meets needs satisfactorily, and is improving through the expansion of vocational courses both in school and off-site. Such courses are proving successful at improving the motivation, standards and attendance levels of pupils.

Additional, high-quality SEN support meets this group's needs well. The gifted and talented programme is at an earlier stage of development, but many lessons already include helpful additional challenges for such pupils. In the sixth form, the school has been particularly successful at identifying courses to match students' interests and aptitudes. A wide range of AS, A level A2, AS and level 2 and three vocational courses is offered, helped by effective liaison with another secondary school. As a result, students invariably find themselves on appropriate programmes and their positive motivation reflects this.

A good variety of enrichment activities enhances the formal curriculum and adds to learners' enjoyment and achievement in school. Sports, outdoor pursuits, drama and musical productions and visits to galleries are all offered, as well as booster and revision classes in most subjects.

Safety and healthy living are promoted satisfactorily and the school meets legal requirements concerning the curriculum very well.

### **Grade: 3**

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides very good care and guidance for pupils. Staff demonstrate care and concern for pupils in their whole approach to working in school. Improving systems for reliably monitoring pupils' progress are a good feature of the school and the impact on care of pupils is very positive. Personal development and academic progress are reviewed and discussed with pupils and parents regularly and effectively. Pupils consider themselves safe, well supported and enjoy easy access to good guidance and advice whenever necessary; inspectors support those views. Child protection arrangements are very efficiently organised and staff are well aware of the key people they can turn to for advice.



Pupils find that transfer into Year 7 and choices to be made in Years 9 and 11 are smooth and manageable because of good guidance by the school. A growing number of Year 10 and 11 pupils benefit from being encouraged to try vocational college courses. Transfer into the sixth form and guidance on course choices is equally effective and students know that a careful eye is being kept on their progress and for their benefit.

## **Grade: 2**

### **Leadership and management**

Leadership of the school is satisfactory overall and there are some strong features. The headteacher has been successful in substantially raising GCSE results over a considerable period, pre-dating the last inspection. He has also overseen the development of pastoral care arrangements which are now a strength, managed the consolidation of a split-site arrangement, which was acknowledged to be hindering pupils' progress, instigated some very good appointments that strengthen the senior management team's effectiveness and engendered a clear Catholic ethos in line with the school's foundation.

Self-evaluation is done well. The school very rigorously identifies its strengths and weaknesses. Appropriate and timely action is taken in most cases to tackle weaknesses but sometimes change is not brought about quickly enough. In addition there are examples of where plans are not specific or effective enough in dealing with issues such as the low level disruption and behavioural problems in some lessons. Leadership on inclusion is good and equality of opportunity is promoted very well, but more specific action is required to deal with the underperformance of some groups to ensure all learners achieve as well as they can. The strengthening of leadership in mathematics and science is already helping in this respect. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good and the monitoring of personal and academic progress of students is highly effective.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are strongly committed to the school and show a satisfactory knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. They do not, however, play a prominent enough role in the school's planning process, or in questioning and challenging constructively, or holding the school to account.

The school is successful in attracting good support from the majority of parents whom it consults and involves well. Links with external agencies are also good, and together, parents and agencies have a positive impact on pupils' progress through school.

Funds and resources are managed effectively. While there has been weaker performance in several subjects in the past, recent recruitment of teachers is helping to bring about improvements. Given the improvements in teaching noted by inspectors, the improved standards in Years 7 to 9, the good appointments recently made to key posts and the imminent end to disruption associated with long-term building work, there is good capacity for future improvement.

**Grade: 3**

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## INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<b>Key to judgements: Grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	<b>NA</b>	<b>NA</b>
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>

### ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	<b>2</b>	

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>3</b>	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
The behaviour of learners	<b>3</b>	
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>3</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>3</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>3</b>	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>3</b>	

### THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well does the provision promote the well-being of learners?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>3</b>	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>3</b>	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	<b>Y</b>	<b>Y</b>

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are taught about sexual health risks	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Procedures for Child Protection meet the requirements of <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i>	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>How well learners enjoy and achieve</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Support is given to learners with poor behaviour and attendance	Yes
Learners' personal and academic development are monitored	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, are consulted when key decisions affecting them have to be made and their views are listened to	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	<b>Yes/No/NA</b>
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop their enterprise and financial skills, and work in teams	Yes
Education and training for all learners in 14-19 is co-ordinated to give experience of work based learning	Yes

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St Edmund Campion RC School  
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29 April 2005

Dear pupils and sixth-form students

Thank you for the pleasant way you received the Ofsted inspection team earlier this week. Particular thanks are due to those we interviewed or stopped to talk to informally, and the large number of you who completed questionnaires.

Our main judgements are these:

- The school has many good features and a few weaknesses, but overall provides a satisfactory education for you, and it is improving.
- The headteacher and staff have been very successful in helping you to improve your GCSE results and have done well to get the whole school on one site.
- The sixth form is a strength of the school: it is very well led and helps you make better progress than we generally see.
- Overall you make satisfactory progress across the main school and, in some subjects, your results are very good: the GCSE media studies course does especially well.
- Generally, Years 7 to 9 have not been making as much progress as you should. This has recently improved, but is still not as good as in the rest of the school.
- The great majority of you say positive things about the school and appear to enjoy being there. You attend well, behave well and make the progress you should. We can say these things are "satisfactory" overall. We can't call them "good" because a minority tend to spoil this picture.
- Teaching in the main school is satisfactory and in many lessons it is good. We also saw one or two lessons where teaching was outstanding. In the main, sixth-form teaching is good.
- Teachers and tutors provide much better care and guidance for you than we usually see.
- You and the staff are good at treating one another fairly; they provide well for all of you.

If the school is going to continue to improve, there are things you and the staff can do:

- Help staff as they deal with the lessons which are sometimes spoilt by some poor behaviour in the main school. Your questionnaire showed you realised this was an issue, and we think you are right. We are saying that small things, such as not listening first time, should stop.
- Improve attendance. Those of you who miss school when you shouldn't are generally hindering your own learning and playing some part in keeping the school's results down.
- Improve mathematics and science results in Year 9 SATs tests. They are starting to do so, but many girls are not reaching the standards they should in these subjects. It is not clear why this is so: you may be able to help explain.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Best wishes for the future.

Robert Drew (Lead inspector)