



St Edmund Campion Roman Catholic School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108412
LEA Gateshead
Inspection number 277966
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 2 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Paul Hancock

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Rugby Gardens
School category	Voluntary aided		Wrekenton
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		Gateshead, Tyne and Wear
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 4877638
Number on roll	886	Fax number	0191 4824421
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father Tony Duffy
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Nick Hurn

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 1 March 2006 - 2 March 2006	Inspection number 277966
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Edmund Campion is a Voluntary Aided Roman Catholic school catering for 910 learners from the ages of 11 to 18. There are 114 students in the sixth form. The school became specialist mathematics and computing college in February 2006. A large proportion of learners start at the school with results that are below average. Many are from deprived areas. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There are fewer pupils than normally found without English as their first language or from minority ethnic groups. Attendance is close to average but there is more unauthorised absence than usually found. The performance of the school did not sufficiently improve after the last inspection and a federation between the local authority, the Hexham and Newcastle Diocesan Board, and a local Catholic school was formed four years ago. The aim was to improve performance and raise standards by sharing good practice at all levels.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Edmund Campion is right to think it is a good school. It has improved rapidly since it became a federated school. Results in national tests at Key Stage 3 are a lot better and general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) results have also improved. In 2005, 71% of students gained higher GCSE grades compared with 21% in 2001. It is too early to judge the impact of becoming mathematics and computing college.

The school now has strengths in all key aspects of its work. The outstanding leadership of the executive headteacher and highly effective leadership and management from the acting headteacher and senior management team have been instrumental in improving the school's performance. The school rightly thinks their capacity to improve is excellent.

Teaching and learning are good but quality is not consistently high enough to further raise achievement. The school knows this is a barrier to improvement. Another barrier is the wide variation in the quality of monitoring by middle managers. The school is already taking action in both areas. Resources are effectively deployed to achieve good value for money. The accommodation is poor and a new school building is due to open in September 2007.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

Inspection confirms the school's judgement that the sixth form is good. Results have risen in the last three years and the teaching is good. Leadership and management at all levels in the sixth form are good overall. Recent improvement has been achieved by the outstanding leadership of a new leadership team. They have recently implemented many initiatives which have yet to make a full impact on students.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor and evaluate achievement and standards in all subjects more rigorously.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges achievement and standards to be good. Results in national tests at Key Stage 3 have significantly improved in the last three years and are well set to improve next year. Standards in 2005 at the end of Year 9 were average in mathematics and science and just below average in English. Many students make good progress from low starting points.

GCSE results have significantly improved and 71% of students gained higher grades in 2005 compared with 21% in 2001. This is above the national average. Overall standards reached at the end of Year 11 in 2005 were average and were higher in GCSE

art, science, geography and vocational courses. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds make very good progress and achieve very well. The progress of all students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

The improving trend in standards is seen in the quality of the work by students being done now. The school has set challenging targets and tracking indicates they will be met. Students in the sixth form achieve well and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school evaluates students' personal development to be good and inspection confirms the judgement. Attendance continues to improve and is close to average.

Improving poor behaviour was a key priority when the federation was formed four years ago. Highly effective changes have been made and behaviour is now very good. The calm, purposeful atmosphere in the school shows how the new procedures are having a positive impact. The number of exclusions is falling and students are more included in the life of the school.

Attitudes to learning are also good. Students say that they feel safe and enjoy being in school. They are confident that any incidents of bullying will be dealt with effectively. The school's Catholic ethos supports students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, exemplified on Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent by a candle lit in every tutor group, symbolising the spiritual dimension of the day.

The revised personal, social and health education programme focuses on learning and development through maintaining healthy lifestyles. Students appreciate their opportunities to eat healthily. The well attended breakfast club is a very good example of how students choose to adopt active and healthy lifestyles. New opportunities for students to take responsibility such as the election of class captains are also appreciated.

Students meet regularly with Heads of house to express their views and contribute to discussion of important issues like bullying. Successful charity fund raising helps them to make an effective contribution to the wider community and develop the skills that will benefit them in the workplace. The school rightly thinks the personal development of students in the sixth form is also good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Quality has improved in the last three years and inspection confirms the school's evaluation that teaching and learning are good in the school and the sixth form. Coaching by teaching and learning coordinators has increased staff confidence and contributed to the improvement in standards and behaviour.

Achievement is high in those lessons where students are engaged in exciting practical tasks. The teaching regularly encourages individual study skills and everyone is working at a challenging level. Where the quality of teaching is not as high, it is still satisfactory. The progress of the lesson becomes more pedestrian even though the delivery and fulfilment of objectives is effective. The school knows this is a barrier to further raising achievement and is already taking action to make improvements.

Lessons are part of a rigorous assessment process which happens every 10 weeks. Pupils and students are given feedback from teachers and encouraged to assess their own performance and that of their peers. They are closely involved in setting their targets and know how well they are doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the school's evaluation that the curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements and the restructuring over the last three years has resolved the issue over inadequate allocation of time for art and music in Years 7 to 9. The school is aware that the time allocated for physical education in Years 9 to 11 relies on the full entitlement to be covered in extra-curricular activities and is trying to find a way forward.

A wide range of vocational options and alternative provision outside the school caters well for the needs of all pupils in Years 10 and 11. The vocational certificate in community volunteering helps students undertake projects in the community. It has increased motivation, self-esteem and attendance.

There are extensive enrichment opportunities throughout the school. Support for homework and coursework across all subjects is a consistent feature together with sporting and musical activities. The sixth form curriculum is effectively arranged to continue pathways established in previous years should students wish to continue at the school. A wide range of vocational courses is offered alongside traditional and applied advanced levels.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is right to think it cares well for its students. There is a strong pastoral system which is underpinned by the Catholic ethos. Students like the new 10 weekly reviews of their work and appreciate the individual advice from tutors and pastoral mentors on how they can improve. Reports to parents are clear. Very good support is given to vulnerable and looked after students. Effective specialist support is brought in at an early stage. The learning support department has devised very good early intervention strategies such as 'family learning' and sixth form peer mentors. The excited buzz in the department's popular homework club is testament to the highly committed staff that makes the club such an exciting place to be.

The school shows that every child matters through policies, planning and practice. Thorough child protection procedures are in place which are regularly reviewed and

understood by staff. Links with parents and other agencies are good and the school promotes an effective team approach to support students. Careers education and guidance are good and improving. Students feel they receive helpful advice on options after school. Risk assessments are fully in place. The school takes health and safety issues very seriously. There is a senior manager liaising daily with the school bus drivers to ensure appropriate behaviour when students are not directly supervised. Care, guidance and support in the sixth form are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school accurately evaluates leadership and management to be good. Changes in the senior leadership team have strengthened the drive for improvement and seen standards rise. The executive headteacher has brought a vision for the school's future direction and knowledge of the management systems needed for further development. His contribution has been outstanding. Highly effective leadership and management from the acting headteacher and senior management team have been instrumental in improving the school's performance. They strive for equality of opportunity for all students and the best for all students.

The leadership and management of middle managers are good. The quality of monitoring and evaluation varies too widely to make it any better. Action by the school to make improvements that are more consistent across subjects is already in place. Leadership and management in the sixth form are good with some outstanding aspects, for example, the leadership of the coordinator and deputy in the last year.

The school is rigorous when evaluating how well it is doing and what it must do to improve. The acting headteacher has taken a strong and very effective lead in ensuring that the school knows itself well. A good system has been introduced for monitoring students' progress and for taking action to support those who are not achieving as they should. The challenge facing the school is to ensure that routines are implemented with equal consistency.

Planning for the future is done well. There is an appropriate range of good quality resources to support students' learning and they are used well to achieve good value for money. The school's accommodation is inadequate but it is being replaced with a new building. The governors know the school well and fulfil their role as critical friends. They play a full part in forward planning. There have been good improvements since the previous inspection, particularly in the standard of students' work, the pace of their learning and the quality of teaching. The school's capacity for further improvement is excellent.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Mr Nick Hurn

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3 March 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for all your help when we inspected your school on 1 and 2 March. We particularly enjoyed hearing your views and listening to you talk about the work you were doing. Please would you pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and say we took all their views into account.

I thought you might like to know what we thought about your school.

You go to a good school and make good progress.

It has improved a lot in the last three years due to the outstanding and highly effective leadership of the headteachers and the senior management team.

Your test, examination and coursework results are much better.

The school helps keep you safe and the support you receive is especially good.

The school is well set to continue to improve when you move into the new building.

Your teachers and the staff are dedicated and work hard. They want to make the school even better. To help them do this, I have asked if they could:

improve how well you are doing through more rigorous monitoring of teaching and your progress
improve the proportion of good teaching.

Thank you for all your help. You are a credit to yourselves, your parents and your school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector