

Bonus Pastor Catholic College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100752
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	307472
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter McGregor

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	747
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs P Barber
Principal	Mrs R Holden
Date of previous school inspection	3 November 2003
School address	Winlaton Road Downham Bromley BR1 5PZ
Telephone number	020 8695 2100
Fax number	020 8695 2105

Age group	11-16
Inspection dates	4–5 February 2008
Inspection number	307472

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bonus Pastor has two sites about 400 metres apart. The college is smaller than average, with a higher number of boys than girls. The proportion of students from ethnic minority backgrounds is very high. The number of students with statements of special educational needs is above average, although the overall proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average. The area where the students live is disadvantaged socially and economically. Bonus Pastor is a Mathematics and Computing Specialist College and has achieved Investors in People and Healthy Schools status as well as an ICT Mark. The college is currently led by an interim principal.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Bonus Pastor is a good school with outstanding features. Students' personal development and well-being, the curriculum and the quality of care, guidance and support are excellent. Students aspire to attain the highest possible standards working within an extremely supportive culture.

Students make good progress overall and attain above average standards by the age of sixteen. Achievement is excellent in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. Black African students and boys do particularly well. Where teaching is less effective, potential high attainers and girls do not always achieve as well as they could.

Students' excellent attitudes to learning are apparent in lessons and in their conduct around college sites. Relationships with peers and staff are of a high order. Mutual respect and understanding is apparent amongst students from a wide range of racial backgrounds. Enjoyment of their education is at the heart of students' very positive views. They are extremely successful at adopting a lifestyle which is healthy, safe and sensible. Their contribution to college life is very strong, through the school council and involvement in all the opportunities provided. Students' polite confidence and understanding of the importance of academic success, show how exceptionally well prepared they are for their post-16 careers.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, with some outstanding aspects and a few areas that need improving. Teachers have high expectations, are knowledgeable and relate exceptionally well to their students. Lessons are less effective when the pace of work is not enough or girls' needs are insufficiently met. Marking is not always helpful in showing students how to improve their work. The curriculum is excellent. A balance of academic and work-related courses meets students' aspirations and needs. The experiences offered include outstanding opportunities for residential visits and a wide range of popular and successful clubs and activities. Staff know their students exceedingly well and do all that they can to help them feel safe and secure. They assess and record students' progress regularly, establishing demanding targets for each student in each subject.

The direction for the college provided by the interim principal and her senior team is exceptionally clear and appropriate. Senior leaders have a great passion for excellence, striving for it in what the college provides, in students' examination results and in their personal development. Subject, year and other leaders are aware of their roles in promoting excellence and enjoyment and respond very well to challenges they face. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching and marking is having a positive effect, though some inconsistencies remain. Staff development has a high priority and is resulting in improved teaching. Governors are strongly supportive of the college. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection four years ago.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching and learning are consistently good or better by improving marking, the pace of lessons and the focus on the needs of girls and higher attainers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students enter the college with average levels of prior attainment, achieve well and reach above average standards at the end of Year 11. The proportion of students passing five or more

subjects with grades A* to C at GCSE is above the national average. There is variation between subjects, with high achievement in English, but less success in science. Potential high attainers and girls have not been as successful as their peers in all their subjects. Improvement is already apparent as the college is aware of this issue and is tackling it by sharing good practice. Excellent progress is made overall in Years 7 to 9 because of the students' extremely positive attitudes, coupled with good teaching. Students' attitudes are equally positive in Years 10 and 11, where achievement is good. The targets associated with the college's specialist designation for mathematics and computing contribute to raising standards and achievement by focusing on improving numeracy skills and making maximum use of the good computer facilities. Students' oral skills are very well developed. Those students for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly in the areas of dyslexia, speech and communication, behaviour and autism, make very good progress as a result of the extensive, high-quality support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

A parent's comment, 'This college has an excellent sense of community and student involvement with the world around it', encapsulates the students' outstanding personal development. Students talk of the respect they have for their college and their high quality relationships with each other and staff. They show their great enjoyment through fierce loyalty and good attendance. Racial harmony amongst all the students is exemplary. Students say bullying is rare: 'if it happens it is dealt with immediately and it stops'. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Excellent Christian assemblies are a key factor in this development, being relevant to modern day life. For example, students were involved in acting out, and learning from, the history of the holocaust. The dynamic and vociferous school council is very involved in whole-college issues, such as being consulted in the recruitment process for the next principal. Students eat healthily and participate enthusiastically in sport, key elements in the healthy lifestyles they have adopted. The students' strong appreciation of the importance of workplace skills prepares them very well for the next stage in their lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers are enthusiastic about their subjects and use their strong subject knowledge to question students effectively. They plan lessons well, including a good range of activities. Data projectors are frequently used, though not always to their full potential, and the use of computers in subject lessons is not extensive. Students with learning difficulties are included well by teachers, as are those for whom English is an additional language. Teaching assistants, when their role in the lesson has been planned carefully, help these students to progress well. Almost all students enjoy learning, persevere and make progress. In outstanding lessons, tasks are highly challenging and skilful questioning develops students' understanding and their powers of expression. In a minority of lessons, girls were insufficiently involved, the pace of work was slow at times and tasks were not sufficiently challenging for the most capable students. Some marking provides clear guidance, such as the comment, written legibly: 'To improve the standard of this good work you need to...'. Other work had few helpful comments and some that were made, were not followed up. Homework is not set consistently. Behaviour in many

lessons is very good indeed, where students are highly receptive and concentrate on their tasks. In a science lesson, students followed a potentially hazardous procedure calmly and safely.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

An especially strong feature of the college is the rich and personalised curriculum, which aims to inspire all students and raise their aspirations. The excellent new pathway system offers students a wide choice of subjects and is tailored to meet both their interests and needs. Very good links with local colleges enable Bonus Pastor to offer vocational and work-related courses. Early entry GCSE in such subjects as statistics and astronomy, combined with AS levels in Spanish and critical thinking, provide interesting challenges for the more able students. As a direct result of the college's computing specialism, the students have better access to computers and all students now follow an accredited information technology and communication (ICT) course. The curriculum is under constant review and is tailored to meet the needs of each year group, always including a focus on health, safety and financial awareness. Recent developments include dedicated days for personal, social, health and citizenship, an approach much appreciated by the students. The resulting time made available has enabled drama for Years 7 to 9 to be introduced. Clubs available include many sports, music and academic activities, including very popular Saturday morning lessons. The Year 7 residential experience (part of the students' high quality induction programme), retreats, and an excellent range of trips and visits, from BBC News Days to skiing, all contribute to an excellent educational experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Staff are fully committed to students' pastoral and academic care. During registration periods, tutors ask students to present news, views and ideas, and students participate in interesting and captivating assemblies. In a highly successful assembly, talented individuals were praised by their peers, as all learnt to appreciate each other's worth. Systems for checking on attendance are thorough and successful, resulting in low unauthorised absence. Rigorous systems ensure child protection procedures are in place. Mentors and other staff work closely with students with identified needs, providing very good support. The highly inclusive environment generated in the college is a key contributory factor in its success in promoting an enjoyable education. Most parents returning their questionnaires about the college reported how helpful staff are, although a small minority found communication difficult at times. Students' work is assessed half termly and individual progress checked against that expected. This excellent system enables underachieving students to be identified early and for the right support to be provided. Students know the National Curriculum levels they are aiming at in all subjects in Years 7 to 9 and the GCSE grades they are working at as they move through Years 10 and 11.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The interim principal, who has been in post for a short time, is an outstanding leader and has exceptional vision and drive. She is well supported on both sites by a dedicated senior team. The college is committed to providing a rewarding and academically successful experience for every student. Although aspects of central leadership are of high quality, the college is aware of inconsistencies in the way intended improvements are followed up. The targets set are sound

but the degree of challenge is not as high as it could be in some areas. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Subject leaders evaluate the performance of their departments effectively and are working hard to make changes where weaknesses are identified. Departmental reviews feed into the whole-college evaluation, which is a generally accurate and effective working document, although over-graded in one or two areas. The college manages its finances efficiently, providing good resources which are mainly used well. Specialist status is resulting in stronger, helpful links with parents -for example through a mathematics evening - and with the local community. Governors are informed and have a good understanding of the college. Minutes indicate insufficient questioning of some aspects of college life. The college provides good value for money. It has very good capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 February 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Bonus Pastor Catholic College, Bromley, BR1 5PZ

Thank you for welcoming us to your college and for making our time with you so enjoyable. We really liked it that so many of you wanted to tell us how much you enjoy being at Bonus Pastor.

Our report says that your college is good, with quite a number of outstanding aspects. Only a few things need to be improved. You are making good progress in your work so that by the time you leave at age 16 you get good GCSE grades. You do really well in Years 7 to 9, and in English and maths but have not done quite as well in science. Boys are getting higher GCSEs than girls in some subjects and those of you who find work quite easy do not always get as high grades as you are capable of. You all get on together really well. Your behaviour is usually excellent and you look after one another. You enjoy sport, eat healthily and you play and work in a really safe and sensible way. You are confident and very polite to visitors like us. Your school council members are very good at letting the principal know your ideas.

The teachers provide you with an excellent range of subjects, interesting visits and lots of after-school clubs. They check very carefully how much progress you are making in your work, so they can give you more help if you need it. Lots of you like coming to the Saturday morning lessons the college puts on for you. All the staff care greatly about you and try to make sure you are very happy at the college.

Your interim principal is very good at her job and she is working with all the staff to help you be more successful. We have asked her to help teachers so that girls do as well as boys and those of you who find work easy do even better. They will write more helpful comments on your work so that you know how to improve it.

With best wishes for the future,

Peter McGregor

Lead Inspector