

Salvatorian Roman Catholic College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102244
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	307947
Inspection date	2 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Emma Ing HMI

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	Boys
Number on roll	
School	699
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P O'Connell
Headteacher	Mr A M Graham
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002
School address	High Road Harrow Weald Harrow HA3 5DY
Telephone number	020 8863 2706
Fax number	020 8863 3435

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. Evidence was gathered from samples of work, lesson observations, various sources of data, a range of written documents including minutes of the governing body and departmental self reviews, discussions with the head teacher, the two deputy head teachers, various heads of department, the inclusion manager and several parents. She also spoke to the head boy, head of the school council, two student peer workers and a number of other students and took into account the views of parents gathered through a questionnaire.

Description of the school

Salvatorian Roman Catholic College is a small boys' secondary school serving the Catholic population of north-west London. It was granted specialist status as a science college with mathematics in 2006.

The socio-economic backgrounds of the students are broadly average. Around half the boys are from a White British background and 15% are from white Irish background. The others are from a range of different minority ethnic backgrounds with significant numbers coming from Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds. The proportion of boys who are at the early stages of learning English is very low whilst an average proportion has learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Salvatorian Roman Catholic College is a good and improving school. The care and support given by staff are outstanding. Students are proud to be Salvatorians. They are very content with their educational experience and are keen to share their view that the school is a warm and happy community. Parents value the kindness of staff and their willingness to give up their time to support and encourage the boys. Most are positive about every aspect of the school's provision. Students come across as poised, confident and articulate young men who readily contribute both to their school community and beyond.

The standards the boys reach have improved steadily in most subjects over the past few years. Overall the progress made by boys and the standards reached are good. Unvalidated data from summer 2007 indicates that almost three quarters of them achieved five or more higher GCSE grades. As the school is aware, students are making better progress in their first three years at the school than they are in Key Stage 4. Nevertheless, the progress that boys make in mathematics and their attainment in this subject are outstanding. In English progress and attainment are both good. In science, where the school has found it harder to raise standards, recent changes and a renewed sense of teamwork has enabled the department to increase the proportion of boys attaining higher levels at Key Stage 3. Boys with learning difficulties and disabilities make very good progress. The school correctly identified that Black African and Black Caribbean boys, whilst performing better than their peers nationally, were not doing as well as others in the school, and have taken action to remedy this, with positive results this summer.

The head boy, his deputy and the prefects perform an important leadership function in the school and are well respected. The school council is active and senior boys take responsibility for the care and well-being of others and the school as a whole. For example, at the time of the visit, one month into the academic year, they had surveyed the Year 7 intake in order to establish how they were finding their new school. An excellent system whereby older boys trained to act as peer workers and befriend, support and work with younger boys enables the very good social development of all involved. The spiritual development of students is good. Most boys behave very well, but there are instances of anti-social behaviour, and in a tiny minority of lessons, there is disruptive behaviour that undermines the learning opportunities of the whole group. The school is responding to these challenges in a number of ways. An inclusion manager has recently been appointed who is working very effectively with some students to enable them to engage better with the school. He has introduced, for example, a process of restorative justice and anger management courses. Senior leaders rightly plan to develop this aspect of their provision further.

Students appreciate the range of sporting opportunities available to them and have pride in their school teams. Although the amount of timetabled sport that they do is less than two hours a week, many undertake sporting activities after school and at weekends. The provision for music, identified as a weakness at the last inspection, has improved.

The school has a sound tracking system in place. This enables staff to identify students that are underachieving and to intervene appropriately. Senior managers are further refining the systems to identify underachieving groups of students across the school. Targets are set, both for groups of students and for individuals but these are not always sufficiently ambitious. However, this is not the case in the more successful subjects such as mathematics.

Teaching and learning are good, but where it is outstanding, it is characterised by a sharp and relentless focus on learning objectives and challenging targets. In these lessons, students know exactly what they have to do to improve and attain a higher standard. Marking of students' work is not consistently of the same standards as not all teachers give helpful feedback to students or make it clear what exactly individual students need to do to achieve well. Parents of children with learning difficulties and disabilities are pleased with the help given by the learning support department. The school provides good support to all students with learning and social issues through a wide range of clubs and drop-in opportunities. However, some parents and students expressed concerns that it is not always possible for students to take home textbooks to support learning appropriately.

Students are confident that they are given enough information to help them to make safe and sensible decisions about the way they live their lives and make appropriate subject choices at GCSE and options beyond Key Stage 4. Sound arrangements for the safeguarding of students are in place.

The curriculum overall is satisfactory. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT), which was an area of concern identified at the last inspection, has improved. There are more computers in school and many teachers use interactive whiteboards. However, the use of these technologies is not well implemented across the curriculum and there is still too little curriculum time for ICT in Key Stage 4. There are opportunities for students in Key Stage 4 to pursue vocational courses both at school and at a local college, but these are not extensive. A wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities are on offer.

The leadership of the school has successfully focussed on raising standards. Leaders have ensured that the care, guidance and support that the school gives are excellent. There is a commitment to meeting the needs of all students, which has been very successful. Recent developments demonstrate a clear understanding of what needs to be done to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, and already a positive difference can be seen. The school is conscious of the importance of engaging parents and offers workshops to help parents support their children in school.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and perceptive in terms of understanding its strengths and weaknesses but is over-generous in many areas. In particular, the school is not yet setting sufficiently challenging targets and students make good rather than very good or outstanding progress. The school is aware that there remain subjects and areas of their work that need further attention. Senior managers have been effective by introducing helpful systems to promote consistently good leadership of departments. Some strong middle leaders work well with their teams to ensure that outcomes are very good for students.

The governing body challenges and supports the school appropriately, and with the head teacher takes an important lead in determining the strategic direction of the school, however they have been remiss in failing to ensure that the school meets its statutory duties with regard to the provision of ICT.

What the school should do to improve further

- Review the curriculum to ensure that sufficient time is created for teaching information and communication technology at Key Stage 4.
- Raise standards further by ensuring that the targets set are consistently challenging, and that all teachers' give regular and helpful feedback to students about what they need to do next to reach these targets.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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

12 October 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Salvatorian Roman Catholic College, Harrow, HA3 5DY

Thank you for welcoming me during my recent inspection of your school. I very much enjoyed watching you at work and meeting many of you. I would like to thank all those of you who took the time to talk to me and share with me your views about your school. My full report on the school is available to you on our Ofsted website (www.ofsted.gov.uk) but I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you the most important findings.

It is clear to me that yours is a good and improving school. It provides extremely well for your social development. I was very impressed with the poise and confidence that you all displayed and by the role the older boys play in leading the school community. However, some of you as well as your parents told me that in a few lessons you tolerate a few pupils behaving badly and disrupting your learning. I urge you all to make sure that everyone knows that this, together with all anti-social behaviour, is unacceptable.

The progress you make with your work is good and you reach good standards. This is because, as many of you told me, the teaching is good and staff at the school ensure that all of you are very well supported. However, not all teachers are good at identifying for you exactly what you need to do to improve and how you should go about achieving the next level. I have asked the school to work on this and also to make sure that you are set challenging targets in all your subjects, as you are currently in mathematics, where the standards you reach are outstanding.

The school provides plenty of good opportunities for you to participate in sport, go on trips and enter competitions. I am concerned, as some of you are, that there is not sufficient time allowed for information and communication technology at Key Stage 4. I have asked the school to provide you with greater opportunities in this respect.

Yours faithfully,

Emma Ing

Her Majesty's Inspector