

# All Saints' Catholic High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107160
<b>Local Authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	309335
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Katrina Gueli HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1257
6th form	247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr P Doherty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr R Sawyer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Granville Road Sheffield South Yorkshire S2 2RJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 2724851
<b>Fax number</b>	0114 2765371

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<b>Age group</b>	11-18
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

All Saints' Catholic High School is a large, voluntary aided, Catholic secondary school in the centre of Sheffield. The school was originally designated as a sports college in September 2001 and was successfully re-designated in January 2006. There is wide community use of the sports facilities beyond the school day. The school was also awarded Training School status in September 2004. A below average proportion of students are eligible to take a free school meal. The school has a population that is more stable than that typically seen. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is broadly average, although the number of students for whom English is not their first language is below average. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school has an integrated resource unit for eight students with physical disabilities. The school has gained Investors in People status and received a British Educational and Communications Technology Agency (BECTA) project award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

All Saints' Catholic High School is a good and improving school. It provides a calm, caring environment where students achieve well and develop good personal skills and qualities. Teachers have high expectations for both students' academic progress and their behaviour and all staff are highly committed to ensuring the best outcomes for students.

Good leaders and managers have been effective in ensuring that teaching is good, tracking of progress is rigorous and the care and support that students receive are of a high quality. This is clearly improving students' outcomes and the school has a good capacity to improve further. The curriculum has been developed significantly, with increased choice and flexibility ensuring that individual needs are well met. Students are gaining confidence in assessing their work themselves but are not always sure what they need to do to improve.

Standards overall are above average. Internal data from the school's own monitoring indicate that the current standard of students' work in Year 9 is above average. Progress in many lessons is good and students are achieving well. A similar picture is seen at Key Stage 4 with above average standards and most students on track to reach challenging targets. Standards are continuing to rise above those seen in previous years. This represents good achievement. Good progress is being made towards the school's specialist subject targets.

Students' personal development and well-being are good with outstanding features. Innovations such as vertical tutor groups including students from Years 7 to 11 and the house system contribute well to very good relationships and to the safe, supportive learning environment. Behaviour is good and the majority of students show good attitudes to their work. However, some students are passive in lessons rather than being actively involved in their learning and this reduces their rates of progress. Students' good use of the excellent sporting facilities developed through the specialist college enhances their adoption of a healthy lifestyle. They make an outstanding contribution to the community through charitable work, supporting each other and through their enthusiastic participation in a wide variety of in-school events.

Extra-curricular opportunities are outstanding. For example, the excellent, productive external links that have been made as a result of specialist college activities which make a very valuable contribution to students' learning and personal development. Positive relationships have been established with the local community, which makes full use of the excellent sport facilities. The staff in the physical education department have been instrumental in pioneering and furthering aspects of students' assessment. This has led, for example, to the development of the All Saints' 'learning athlete' programme, aimed at enhancing students' self-esteem, confidence and learning skills across the whole curriculum.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 1

This very successful and popular sixth form has grown considerably in size since the time of the previous inspection. The quality of provision in the sixth form has improved rapidly, standards are above average and achievement is outstanding. The highest performing subjects in 2007 were history, geography, religious studies and sociology.

Students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They enjoy being part of a welcoming and friendly sixth form and really appreciate the way in which teachers give up their time to support them. They make a very good contribution to the community through helping

younger students with their reading and mathematics, their roles as prefects, acting as sports ambassadors, and by taking part in many events to raise money for charities. Their relationships and attitudes to learning are very good.

Teaching and learning in the sixth form are outstanding overall. In the best lessons, challenging questioning encourages students to discuss issues and a range of approaches ensures maximum progress. The introduction of the 'student ambassador scheme' has enabled subject areas to receive effective feedback on the quality of teaching and learning provided and subsequently to improve the quality of provision.

The curriculum is outstanding. Students can choose from an extensive range of A-level courses and additional vocational options. They also benefit from the very good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities especially in sport where for example, the provision for talented students has been enhanced by the newly developed Sports Academy.

There is outstanding care, support and guidance for students. Students entering the sixth form, including those from other schools, quickly settle in because there is a very well-planned induction programme and good individual support. There is high quality guidance for all students, with those making university applications benefiting from effective links with higher education. Tracking of progress is rigorous and the response to identified underachievement is quick and very effective.

The leadership and management of the sixth form are outstanding. Senior leaders have ensured very good improvement in this area since the previous inspection and have a clear vision for the future. They have developed a very effective team of sixth form tutors which has a clear role in tracking the progress of students and ensuring that all students achieve as well as they can. There is a good capacity for further improvement and exciting plans are underway for new, joint post-16 provision with students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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

- Increase the regularity with which students are involved in assessing their work themselves and ensure they have a clear understanding of how to improve further.
- Develop additional teaching and learning strategies to promote students' skills as active, independent learners.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Students enter the school having reached broadly average standards at the end of the previous key stage. Students in the school are currently on track to attain at a higher level than students did in 2007 at both key stages. This is as a result of improvements in teaching and learning, the more rigorous monitoring of students' progress and effective action to increase rates of progress where underachievement has been identified.

The Key Stage 3 results in 2007 were lower than the national average after several years of significantly above average results. The school has now taken successful action to secure better student achievement and raise standards. Extensive tracking of students' progress has enabled the school to gain an accurate indication of likely performance in this year's national tests. Where underperformance is identified, additional support and focused teaching is ensuring that students are on course to meet their targets in 2008.

At Key Stage 4, standards are above average although examination results in 2007 were broadly in line with the national average. In recent years, the school has shown a strong trend of improvement in GCSE examinations with the percentage of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades rising from 48% in 2005 to 60% in 2007. Current attainment information and the good progress seen in lessons indicate that this trend of improvement will continue, with students showing good achievement at Key Stage 4. The achievement of all groups including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly similar to their peers.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The spiritual and moral development of students is outstanding, reflecting the school's strong Catholic ethos, and these features contribute greatly to the very positive and supportive culture within the school. Many subjects make a successful contribution to students' good cultural development.

Students, including the most vulnerable, say that they feel safe, are well supported by staff and that they are treated as individuals. They also add that they feel they are able to talk to someone about their difficulties if they need to. The vast majority of students are confident, articulate and very supportive of the school. Attendance is above average but holidays taken in term time remain a concern. Students respond well to the school's emphasis on adopting a healthy lifestyle and safe practices. For example, they enthusiastically participate in the many opportunities for sport and other extra-curricular activities. These are enjoyed and well attended, including the very successful inter-house competitions.

A few parents expressed concern about behaviour issues and how they impact on learning in some lessons. The inspectors found that behaviour is good overall, with the majority of students being cooperative and supportive of each other. Strategies within the school are continually being developed to meet the needs of the small minority of students with more challenging behaviour, such as placements in the 'Damascus centre'. The school is diligent in assessing the impact this has on their learning. Students make regular and generous contributions to charities and are actively involved in the local community. Their well developed personal qualities and information and communication technology skills, combined with good levels of attainment, provide a good foundation for their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

In recent years, the school has put an emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning. An effective programme of lesson observations, improved use of data, judicious use of external support and a developing system of coaching have all contributed to ensuring that it is good in almost all respects. Students cooperate productively when working in pairs or small groups and attitudes to learning are positive. Some students, however, are compliant rather than active learners.

Common strengths in teaching include the establishment of secure relationships in the classroom enabling students to learn in a purposeful environment, and good subject knowledge that enables teachers to convey the content of lessons confidently. In many lessons, teachers generate a lively pace that keeps students on their toes. The provision of a variety of activities sustains students' interest throughout lessons. In the most effective lessons, teachers' expectations of what students can do are very high and students respond positively to being challenged. However, in some lessons the degree of challenge is insufficient, particularly in mixed ability classes. Teachers are using assessment data more effectively in order to identify possible underachievement and to enable them to set specific learning targets for students. Effective support is provided, for example, by teaching assistants so that all students, including the gifted and talented and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The curriculum makes good provision for students' learning. It is structured to cater for a wide range of abilities and interests, with an appropriate emphasis on vocational and work-related activities. Recent developments include more opportunities for students to work at a pace more suitable to their abilities and take tests and examinations early, where this is desirable. These include successful 'fast track' courses and early entry for languages GCSE and AS examinations. The school has also explored an improvement to the timetable by giving greater time to some lessons in the school day. This has proved beneficial for most subject departments, although occasionally some students find lessons too long. Changes have been made to the structure of the personal and social education programme. Students welcome the guidance they are given within the programme and feel the school works hard to inform them of a wide range of social and personal issues. They also appreciate the very good range of extra-curricular activities on offer with sport and music making a major contribution. Uptake is high and, as a result, these activities extend experiences and develop students' confidence and skills for the future.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

There is an extremely high level of care, commitment and support from staff in the school, promoting students' personal development and academic progress. Form tutors play a key role in ensuring good outcomes for students. Senior students develop a sense of responsibility by acting as role models for the younger ones.

Transition arrangements and the success of students who join at a time other than the beginning of Year 7 are particular strengths of the school. Good behaviour is constantly promoted and the school is exploring many strategies to deal effectively with the small minority of students who do not adhere to the high standard of behaviour that is expected. A small number of exclusions are however still made because of the school's high expectations and the current sanction system.

Marking and target-setting help students to focus their efforts, though this varies between departments. In some classes, good practice is seen. Students are active learners and they receive quality feedback and guidance that gives them clear information about how to improve. This ensures that they can confidently move to a higher level of achievement. However, this

quality is not consistent across the whole school. Students at risk of underachieving and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and the appropriate provision is made for them, according to their individual needs, to ensure they make good progress. Mentoring in Year 11, for example, has had a significant impact by increasing levels of students' motivation and rates of progress.

The school works well in partnership with parents and external agencies to support the learning and well-being of all students, whatever their individual needs. Arrangements for ensuring students' health and safety, protection and safeguarding are in place and meet statutory requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Leaders and managers have worked hard to ensure that the school is one in which students can achieve well, enjoy their time and develop good personal qualities. A large majority of parents are strongly supportive of the school and the contribution that it makes to both the academic and personal development of their children.

Changes to leadership structures have increased levels of accountability while maintaining a culture of support for professional development. Systems of performance management are clearly linked to raising standards and data are being used with increasing effectiveness to promote progress. Targets set are challenging and reflect the high expectations that the school has of its students.

Systems to check how well the school is doing and what it needs to do to improve are well embedded and involve both middle and senior leaders. Actions taken to address areas for development are carefully chosen and effective. The use of the 'Plan, Do, Study, Act' development cycle has been central to securing recent improvements and developing innovative practice. Other approaches including coaching, high quality professional dialogue following lesson observation, regular sharing of good practice sessions and joint planning time in departments have improved teaching and increased rates of students' progress. Governors know the school well. Committees and the full governing body both play a key role in holding the school to account with incisive questions and robust discussions. Resources and partnerships are used constructively to ensure students' well-being and promote their achievement.



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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	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	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
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	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
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	2	

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	1
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	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	1
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	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**

You may remember that I visited your school recently with a team of inspectors. We would like to thank you for sharing your views about the school. We found that All Saints' is a good and improving school.

The school is a friendly, safe environment in which you are making good progress and achieving well. Teachers have high expectations and are very committed to helping you to do your best. Most of you have positive attitudes to learning and try hard in all your lessons. Teaching and the curriculum are good and these features, combined with your efforts, are improving your levels of attainment. You receive high quality care and support and this also helps promote both your academic progress and your good personal development and well-being.

You value highly and enjoy thoroughly the extra-curricular opportunities that the school provides especially in sports and music, and many of you are regular participants in these activities. The leaders and managers of All Saints' are effective and they are being successful in improving many aspects of the school for example, the sixth form which is outstanding.

Although much work has already been done to help you achieve your best at All Saints', there are a couple of things that we have identified that the school could focus on to help it improve even further. These are to:

- provide more opportunities for you to be involved in assessing your own work and make sure you always know what you need to do to improve further
- help you to become more actively involved and independent when you are learning.

You have an important part to play in ensuring the future success of your school by continuing to attend regularly and maintaining your good attitudes and standards of behaviour.