

# St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120717
<b>Local Authority</b>	LINCOLNSHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	313726
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI

This inspection of the college 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>	
College	662
6th form	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr C Briggs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Kerridge
<b>Date of previous college inspection</b>	9 February 2004
<b>College address</b>	Western Avenue Lincoln Lincolnshire LN6 7SX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01522 871400
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<b>Age group</b>	11-18
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 January 2008
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the college

Saint Peter and Saint Paul's Catholic High School is a smaller than average sized comprehensive school located near the centre of Lincoln. The number of students on roll has grown in the last two years, particularly in the sixth form where numbers have increased by around 30%. Students' attainment on entry is slightly lower than average. A much lower than average proportion of students is eligible for free school meals. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is greater than that in similar schools. The majority of students are White British and speak English as their first language although there are a growing number of students of minority ethnic heritage. The largest minority ethnic group consists of students of European origin, mainly of Polish heritage, who now make up 8% of the total cohort. The proportion of students who speak English as a second language has also increased. The school gained specialist status for science in September 2003. It received Investors in People (IIP) status in 2006 and gained the Healthy Schools award in 2007. The shared sixth form arrangements, reported at the last inspection, have ceased. Since September 2006, the school has worked in partnership with the North Hykeham Sixth Form. Previous staffing difficulties in some subjects have been largely resolved and the school workforce is now more stable.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the college

### Grade: 2

This is a good and inclusive school. The headteacher, staff and governors are committed to providing an education that meets the needs of every individual within a Catholic Christian framework. The school uses its specialist status in science well to promote learning and raise standards and has a good capacity to improve further. Standards overall, while broadly average, are improving. The proportion of students gaining five or more good GCSEs improved significantly in 2007, although the proportion gaining five or more A\* to C grades including mathematics and English improved only marginally and remains a key challenge for the school.

Students' behaviour, both in lessons and around school, is good and most display very keen attitudes to learning. As a result, and in combination with much good teaching, many students make good progress in lessons, particularly through Years 10 and 11. In some lessons higher ability students do not always make the progress they are capable of, as often these lessons are too teacher led and the work is not sufficiently challenging. The school's self-evaluation recognises that it needs to increase further the proportion of good and outstanding lessons and is developing an appropriate range of strategies to do so. Attendance has improved and is now broadly in line with that of similar schools. In a significant number of lessons, learning is enhanced by teachers' effective use of information and communication technology (ICT). The teaching and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language are good and consequently these students make good progress in relation to their starting points.

The school acknowledges that communication with parents is currently satisfactory. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school's work, although a significant minority raised concerns about the quality of some teaching, staff absence and aspects of student behaviour. Clear actions to improve each of these aspects feature in the school's improvement plan.

The curriculum is good and supports relevant learning opportunities. Students value the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are on offer. Students' personal development is good, as is the care, guidance and support they receive. Students adopt a high moral stance and express their opinions in a mature manner, as was observed in formal and informal discussions. Good links with local primary schools and well run taster days result in a smooth transition for students from primary to secondary education.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The school's self-evaluation process, though still developing, is used very well to identify and drive improvement. It shows that managers have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Inspectors agreed with most of the judgments made by the school, although its evaluation of some aspects of the sixth form were overgenerous. There is clear accountability at senior management level with regard to monitoring and evaluation procedures, although this is not the case for all staff with leadership responsibilities, particularly in the sixth form. As a result, the monitoring of performance is not always consistently applied. Best use is made of the resources available and, as indicated by some key improving trends, the school provides good value for money.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 3

The school has a satisfactory sixth form, a judgment consistent with the school's own evaluation. The sixth form is inclusive and has a very positive ethos. The curriculum is satisfactory and

developing. The range of courses has increased through the school's participation in the North Hykeham sixth form partnership, although the number of vocational options is limited. Students enjoy their studies and the good range of enrichment opportunities. Their personal development is good. Students make a particularly good contribution to the school and wider community and provide good role models for younger students.

Students' achievement is satisfactory and examination results are broadly average. This is due to satisfactory teaching and learning. There is much good, lively teaching, but in some lessons teaching does not involve students actively enough and does not encourage the development of students' independent learning skills. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Academic guidance procedures have been strengthened to ensure that students are guided to take courses which best suit their abilities and aptitudes. Leadership and management, although satisfactory, are in a stage of transition. The new management structure and the procedures for assuring the quality of teaching and learning have yet to be fully embedded.

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

- Raise the proportion of GCSE students gaining five or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics.
- Share the very best teaching and assessment practice across all key stages to ensure all students are sufficiently challenged to meet their potential.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation procedures are implemented consistently by all staff with leadership responsibilities, particularly in the sixth form.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Overall achievement is good in the main school and satisfactory in the sixth form. Attainment on entry to Year 7 is slightly lower than average. However, by the end of Year 11 standards are broadly average. Students make slower progress in Years 7 to 9 across most subjects compared to Years 10 and 11, where their rate of progress increases and is good. Improved intervention and recent changes to structuring of the core subjects is beginning to impact through Key Stage 3. As a result, there are indications that students' progress in mathematics has improved notably this year and that students are performing at least in line with expectations. Across both key stages the school has strategies in place to further raise achievement in mathematics, science and English, particularly for higher ability students.

In 2007, the proportion of students achieving five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE improved markedly from 47% to 60% to be in line with the national average. However, although the proportion gaining five or more good GCSEs including mathematics and English improved, it remained below that of similar schools. There are some variations in performance between subjects at GCSE. The proportion of students gaining grade C or higher in science was significantly above average in 2007. The majority of students whose first language is not English or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support and make good progress.

In the sixth form, most students achieve in line with expectations. However, in 2007 the proportion of students gaining A to E grades on AS-level courses dipped to below average.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good and a strength of the school. The school pays very close attention to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritual and moral development is a particular strength. There are many examples of high quality spiritual occasions such as whole school assemblies, celebration assemblies and acts of worship. Students grow increasingly knowledgeable about cultural differences and this is enhanced by the fact the school has almost 100 students who are originally from a foreign country and bring with them many examples of their own cultures.

Most students enjoy lessons and value the help they get from their teachers. As a result of increased monitoring, attendance is now satisfactory and improving. Students feel safe, including when using the Internet. Students are relaxed and courteous and the majority treat one another with consideration. The school takes bullying of any kind seriously, and acts effectively. The frequency of exclusions is decreasing. Students have a lack of voice at the moment as the school council is in the process of being reorganised and is at an early stage of development. Students are active in raising funds for the school and for national and international appeals. Students are soundly prepared for their economic future through work experience and work-related learning, and there is good contact with a local employer. Students are generally well informed about healthy life-styles. They say that they like the idea of being informed in advance of the menus available. Many are regularly involved in various sports activities and understand the value of exercise. A wide range of extra-curricular activities and personal, social and citizenship education help to promote students' development.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are good. Most lessons are well planned and paced appropriately to match students' abilities. Students demonstrate very good attitudes to learning in the classroom and consequently many make good progress. In lessons which are only satisfactory, students' attitudes to learning are still very good, but the progress they make is hampered by a lack challenge and often, too much teacher-led activity. One very positive impact of the school's specialist science status has been an increased use of ICT in lessons. This has been used particularly well in subjects such as art, science, and food technology to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. There are good systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Regular formal and informal observations by senior managers are effective in identifying where teaching is good and where it could be better. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the sixth form because although some aspects are good, not enough lessons sufficiently extend students' independent learning skills to enable them to make consistently good progress in all subjects.

Assessment is satisfactory and improving, with the recent introduction of more comprehensive tracking and monitoring of students' progress. There is very effective use of assessment in

some subjects to support students' learning, but the very best practice in both assessment and teaching is not always effectively shared between departments.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum in the main school is good. It meets the needs and aspirations of students of all abilities well and is increasingly effective in promoting their achievement and aspirations. As part of the drive to raise standards, the school has increased the time available for the teaching of English, mathematics and science. The early indications are that this is having a positive effect. A comprehensive mix of academic and vocational courses is a particular strength of Key Stage 4. This, together with the opportunity to study two modern foreign languages to GCSE and the good range of enrichment activities, is contributing to students' progress. Alternative provision for those less suited to academic courses helps to promote positive attitudes to school. Reflecting the school's science college status a wide range of science courses caters for students of all abilities in Years 10 and 11. The increased use of technology is having a positive impact on the development of students' ICT skills. Curriculum provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for students with English as an additional language is good. In the sixth form the curriculum is satisfactory. In partnership with the local sixth form consortium it offers a good range of academic subjects but the range of vocational courses is narrow.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. The school provides a safe and supportive environment. Child protection requirements and health and safety procedures are well established and understood by all staff. Every student is well known to staff and treated as an individual. Vulnerable students, those identified with additional learning difficulties, and those whose first language is not English are particularly well supported by the inclusion team. Learning support assistants effectively support students and track their progress in detail. Bilingual staff are particularly well used in supporting and guiding students. Gifted and talented students are provided with opportunities through the school's specialist science status and a wide range of enrichment activities.

The Magdalene Centre and Augustine Centre work effectively with students who have social or emotional learning issues. The school is a pilot school for social and emotional aspects of learning. Good transition arrangements for new students and those moving from primary schools to Year 7 ensure that they are well prepared for change. Students speak highly of the induction processes they went through, especially about the support from student mentors. Older students receive appropriate advice when choosing options and making career choices.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, with good support from the senior leadership team, ensures that this is an inclusive school with a strong Christian ethos and a clear sense of direction. Since taking up his appointment, he has provided a clear and accurate agenda for improvement. This is based on systematic reviews of performance by senior leaders, together with rigorous evaluation procedures. The management structure has recently been reorganised to enhance support for teaching and learning and increase accountability for performance. This structure is in the early stages of implementation and while senior leaders have a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities with regard to the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, this understanding is not yet shared amongst all staff with leadership responsibilities. The school is aware that in order to sustain the drive for improvement, in addition to setting challenging targets, its rigorous evaluation procedures need to be implemented routinely in all areas. Staffing issues have previously affected performance in some subjects but these have now been largely resolved. The management of provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language is particularly effective. School governance is very strong. Governors capably fulfil their strategic role in guiding the school's work and providing challenge for further improvement. Provision is enhanced by the school's specialist status and good links with other schools, colleges, businesses and the community.



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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	College 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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the college work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
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 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	3	

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	3

<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	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the college's self-evaluation	2	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	Yes
Does this college require special measures?	No	
Does this college require a notice to improve?	No	

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**Annex B**

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

25 January 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of St Peter and St Paul, Lincoln's Catholic High School, A Science College, Lincoln LN6 7SX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. During the two days we had the chance to talk to a number of you in formal meetings and lessons, and to chat to you around the school. This letter outlines our findings from the inspection.

We found your school to be a good school. Your standard of work is improving and many of you make good progress. We found there is a lot of good teaching and the vast majority of you behave very well, are courteous and are very keen to learn. We agree with you that some lessons do not challenge you as much as they could, because there is sometimes too much copying or teacher-led activity. Your school uses its specialist science status very well and this has led to greater use of ICT. You develop good social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness and many of you grow in confidence. We also agree that there is good guidance and support, which you value. Your headteacher, governors and teachers are working hard to improve your education. Senior managers know what the school does well and what it could do better and are working to improve communication with parents and carers.

The sixth form is satisfactory overall with some positive aspects. Your progress is good in some lessons but it varies by subject. Teaching is good in some cases, but not enough of your lessons stretch your abilities and encourage you to be independent learners. Support and guidance are satisfactory. Your school recognises the need to help you prepare earlier for either higher education or employment. Management and leadership of the sixth form are satisfactory.

We left your school with the following three key areas for improvement:

- to ensure more of you achieve at least five A\* to C grades including English and mathematics at GCSE
- to ensure that the very best teaching and assessment is found in all lessons so that all of you are challenged to meet your potential
- to make sure that all staff who lead on aspects of the school's work consistently check how well things are going, particularly in the sixth form.

You can of course help your school improve - by working hard, attending regularly, and sharing your views through the school council. This way, managers will know what you think the school does well or what it needs to improve further.

We wish you all the very best in your studies and every success in the future.

Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins HMI