

Trinity Catholic High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102860
Local Authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	323705
Inspection date	26 February 2009
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	1703
Sixth form	505
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs G King
Headteacher	Dr P C Doherty
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
School address	Mornington Road Woodford Green Essex IG8 0TP
Telephone number	020 8504 3419
Fax number	020 8505 7546

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The main areas investigated were: student's achievement and standards; the balance and breadth of the school's curriculum; and the way the school supports and encourages students' personal and academic development. Other areas were not investigated in detail but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments are not justified and these have been included in the report.

Description of the school

Trinity is a very large school with a larger than average sixth form. It is a science and sports college. About a third of students come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds with Black British students (Caribbean and African) comprising the largest group. Almost all students speak English as their first language. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. Most of these students have moderate learning difficulties. The school holds a number of national awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Trinity Catholic High School provides an outstanding education and makes a real difference to students' lives. It is a rigorously organised and, at the same time, a deeply caring school which does its utmost to support and empower its students. In discussions, students emphasised how happy they were to attend Trinity and expressed gratitude for the help and guidance which they are freely given by all staff.

The influence of the headteacher is all-encompassing. He shows a deep understanding of students' needs and his inclusive philosophy is fully shared by the staff. This collective commitment contributes to the outstanding leadership and management. Its qualities are most clearly evidenced in the very high standards that students attain and in their outstanding achievement. While students enter the school with above-average standards, the school 'widens the gap' so that their standards are well above average by the end of Key Stage 3 and higher yet at the end of Key Stage 4. This great success flows from the school's very rigorous self-evaluation processes, which ensure that the quality of teaching and learning are both excellent and improving. There is a restlessness about the way the school operates because staff are never satisfied with second best and constantly strive for improvement. The school's plans for the future are thorough and carefully considered. They are reviewed regularly and provide a very good 'road map' for the future. In consequence, the school's capacity for continuing improvement is, like its improvement since the previous inspection, outstanding.

Lessons are lively and engaging. They provide numerous opportunities for students to work independently. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this to both provide great clarity about what they expect to be learned and to equip students with what they require to achieve success. Information and communication technology (ICT) is increasingly used to promote excellent learning. For example, Year 13 students used laptop computers to project onto a large screen the most significant elements of current exhibitions in London galleries. Students play their part in promoting outstanding learning. They are quiet and attentive when required and equally happy to express their mature views in discussions with their teachers and one another. They are well informed by teachers about precisely what they need to achieve in each subject and strive to meet teachers' challenging expectations. Plentiful assessment information is used thoughtfully to challenge and support students, as required. Such thoroughness makes a further contribution to the outstanding teaching and learning.

Students grow and develop into well-rounded individuals. The school's system for recording the progress they make in meeting their personal goals is both comprehensive and highly motivating. Students are reflective, mature and sensitive to the needs of others and have a very good understanding of the cultural diversity of the society in which they live. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Students exhibit outstanding behaviour, both in and out of the classroom and during their time walking between sites. They also treat visitors with courtesy and consideration.

Students' outstanding enjoyment of school is very evident in their lively engagement in lessons and their keen participation in the extensive range of extra-curricular activities. It is also reflected in their well above average attendance. Students feel safe and recognise that there is virtually no bullying and little bad behaviour. They make an excellent contribution to the school through active participation in numerous opportunities offered to them. For example, they participate keenly in the school and academic council, and the 'Raphaelites' peer support group. This

provides open access for all to students who have been trained to counsel and advise their peers. Students know about and adopt healthy lifestyles. Their interpersonal and teamwork skills are well developed and these, alongside excellent progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT, prepare students exceptionally well for the next step in their education and in the world of work.

The excellent care guidance and support for students starts before they enter the school in Year 7, ensuring their smooth transition into secondary education. An extensive programme of activities in and out of school hours contributes extremely well to students' personal development. Those with moderate learning difficulties have dedicated support programmes to ensure their progress is as good as that of their peers. Very thorough attention is paid to students' health and safety and all safeguarding requirements are met. Students feel very well supported and speak positively about the fact that they have both staff and trained peers to whom they can turn for help. Excellent academic guidance affords students a very clear idea of the progress they are making, the levels at which they are working and what they need to do to improve their work.

The school has a carefully considered curriculum that is outstanding in meeting its students' needs. Those who are gifted and talented and, equally, students who have moderate learning difficulties, follow appropriately challenging and supportive courses. The school's science specialism has enriched the opportunities available for students and has added to its outstanding success. The school uses a range of awarding bodies to provide a variety of engaging and challenging experiences. For example, many students have the opportunity to follow Open University courses and, as befits the school's role as a sports college, all Key Stage 4 students undertake work towards the junior sports leader awards. Opportunities for enrichment through travel and visitors are legion. There are numerous after school activities that are both well attended and much appreciated by students.

Most parents are very happy with the school and are fulsome in their praise for the care and support offered to their children. One parent, typical of many, commented, 'Trinity is not just an outstanding provider of teaching quality but also concentrates on the well-being of pupils, guiding them to become responsible contributing members of the community they live in.'

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The large and inclusive sixth form provides an outstanding education for its students. Very few students fail to complete their courses, making retention rates far higher than in most schools in the country. Students benefit from a wide range of subjects, including a good sprinkling of vocational courses. Other initiatives, such as the introduction of the young persons' arts awards, further enrich students' experiences. Teaching and learning are excellent. Lessons are planned in great detail to include interesting activities and resources. Students speak warmly of the many opportunities they have to work independently and see this as extremely helpful preparation for higher education. Teachers are highly knowledgeable and pay particularly close attention to the requirements of examinations, and this reinforces students' well-placed confidence. Students' attitudes and behaviour are outstanding and they work in close collaboration with both their peers and their teachers.

Students' standards are above average and improving year by year. The school is alert where subjects perform less well and takes actions on the rare occasions that this is necessary. This is reflected in the improving trend in results. The school takes in a large proportion of students

into the sixth form from other schools, so the starting points of those in Year 12 are lower than the school's Key Stage 4 results would appear to indicate. However, taking into account these starting points and their excellent personal development, students' achievement is outstanding. The care students receive is excellent. They know that personal support is readily available, if required, and are very complimentary about the thorough yet even-handed advice they receive about university and the other options available to them at the end of Year 13. The sixth form is outstandingly well led and managed. Regular, systematic self-evaluation keeps the focus on standards and achievement and ensures that the very high quality of provision is maintained.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on good practice to further raise standards in the sixth form.

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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?	1	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?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	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	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	1
The attendance of learners	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	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	1

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
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	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 March 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Trinity Catholic High School, Essex, IG8 0TP

Thank you very much for your courtesy and consideration when the inspectors recently visited your school. It was a great pleasure meeting you and hearing of your tremendous pride in the school. You are right to be so proud. Trinity is an outstanding school.

Such qualities stem, at heart, from the school's excellent leadership and management and, particularly, the committed and dynamic example set by the headteacher. The very strict checks made on the quality of what is provided for you ensure that teaching and learning are outstanding and that you are very thoroughly cared for and guided. You play a significant part in all this through your excellent behaviour and most constructive attitudes. Your personal development is also outstanding.

The range and variety of subjects you study and other opportunities for interesting activities ensure that the school curriculum is excellent. There is little in the school that requires significant improvement but I have asked the school to focus on one thing.

- While students' overall achievement in the Sixth Form is outstanding, the school adds less value at Key Stage 5 than it does at Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4: the school can build on its outstanding practice to narrow this gap.

Once again, many thanks for all your help. It was a great pleasure meeting you.

Yours faithfully

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector