

# The Trinity Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122895
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Nottingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	327818
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Martin 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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1098
Sixth form	228
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Sylvia Tye
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael McKeever
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 November 2005
<b>School address</b>	Beechdale Road Aspley Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG8 3EZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0115 9296251
<b>Fax number</b>	0115 9426560

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## Introduction

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

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated in detail the following areas: achievement and standards, leadership and management and aspects of provision, specifically teaching and learning. Evidence was gathered from the school's data, lesson observations including joint observations by inspectors and members of the senior leadership team, students' work and school documentation. There were meetings with students and staff including the school's senior leadership team, governors and the School Improvement Partner. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and some of these aspects have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

The Trinity School is a Catholic specialist secondary school. The school became a specialist arts college in 2002 and was awarded a second specialism in mathematics and computing in 2007. Over 80% of students are baptised Catholics and all are practising members of a church. The majority of learners are White British, although the proportion of learners from other ethnic backgrounds is higher than that found in most schools, which reflects the local population. This proportion includes Asian students of Indian or Pakistani heritage and students of Black Caribbean or Black African heritage as well as an increased proportion of students from European Union backgrounds. The number of students whose first language is not English is around average but growing. The school serves a wide, mixed area of the city of Nottingham with some areas of significant disadvantage. The overall ability of students on entry is around average. The number of students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number with statements of particular need.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The Trinity Catholic School is an outstanding school that offers an excellent quality of education and care for its students. A strong Catholic ethos of care and respect for the individual permeates the work of the school. This vision is realised through remarkably good relationships and a commitment to provide the very best for every young person in the school. This results in outstanding achievement by students both academically and more widely and in students' outstanding personal development. The overwhelmingly positive response to the parental questionnaires confirmed these strengths.

The quality of care is most noticeable in the presence and visibility throughout the school of all staff, but particularly senior leaders, and their availability for students. Staff know students very well indeed and the school has strong early warning systems that enable it to intervene when students experience any difficulty. Senior leaders are very strong role models of care, respect and concern for the individual. At the same time, they constantly reinforce high expectations in terms of student conduct, behaviour and learning. As a result, behaviour is impeccable and students are friendly and welcoming. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is outstanding. They respect and understand the lives of people from cultures, backgrounds and religions different from their own. They adopt healthy lifestyles and are aware of how to keep safe. They enjoy and appreciate the excellent, healthy food available in school and the great majority of students participate in a wide range of sports activities. Attendance is very high and students say that they enjoy school very much, particularly the extensive range of additional activities across a wide range of student interests. As well as sports, the school has a remarkable range of high quality musical activities. Most noticeable is the fact that all students learn a musical instrument and are able to play and sing together in a wide range of ensembles. The large male choir was also very impressive and, like all the groups seen, performed with gusto and style! Students are involved in a wide range of experiences that take them into the community and bring the community into the school, for example through concerts and regular arts productions. Through the outstanding care, guidance and support that they receive and excellent academic results they achieve, students are very well prepared for their future lives as active, valuable members of the community.

Attainment at all key stages is exceptionally high. At the end of Year 9, students attain standards that are well above average overall and in English and mathematics. Standards are above average in science, and improving rapidly. At the end of Year 11, standards are again exceptionally high. This is true for all the national benchmarks, and includes the proportion of students achieving five A\* to C grades including English and mathematics in their GCSE examinations. By the end of the sixth form students reach very high standards in their GCE A-level subjects. Students enter the school with prior attainment that is broadly average overall. As the standards that they reach suggests, they make excellent progress as they move through the school. The continued improvement over the last three years places the school firmly within the top 10% of all schools nationally for progress. Students who find learning more difficult make equally good progress as their peers. Remarkably, very few students do not achieve at least their potential, and many achieve extremely well. No groups of students make significantly weaker progress than their peers, as the school tracks each individual carefully to ensure that each does as well as possible. Students are aware of how well they are doing because of very good feedback from teachers. They know the standard that they are currently working at, have aspirational personal targets and are extremely well supported in achieving them.

The school is able to achieve the demanding targets that it sets itself because of the outstanding quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. Teaching is characteristically good in the school, with much that is outstanding. Teachers prepare and plan their lessons carefully. They have good information about the prior learning of students and know them very well as individuals. This helps them to match the work very well to their different needs. Lessons have a good variety of activities, and provide very good pace and challenge to all. The striking feature in classrooms is the exceptional readiness of pupils to learn, created by the strong sense of discipline and mutual respect between teachers and pupils and amongst pupils. Learning time is maximised and lessons are all very productive. Students get good, diagnostic feedback through regular and thorough marking and take great care in the presentation of their work. Teachers share lesson objectives with pupils and they clearly know what is expected of them. The school is now sharing good practice very effectively and increasingly embedding active learning techniques across the curriculum. The provision of information and communication technology (ICT) facilities is much better than at the time of the last inspection and many teachers are confident in the use of classroom technology, including electronic whiteboards. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and convey a love of their subjects to students. The curriculum gives students an outstanding range of learning opportunities, which motivates them to make excellent progress and reach very high academic standards. Students have wide-ranging needs, including increasing numbers who are at an early stage in learning English. The support they receive enables them to rapidly access the full curriculum, and achieve exceptionally well. The school's specialist status in the performing arts considerably extends the range of learning opportunities from which students benefit. In Key Stage 3, the curriculum goes well beyond national requirements and all students gain extensive experience of the arts. Their range of experience is balanced and extended by the school's other specialist subjects - mathematics and computing. In Key Stage 4, students have the opportunity to combine academic and vocational interests. The extensive subject range includes, for example, a new vocational diploma for creative and media studies and a course in construction studies.

The school has moved even further forward, from a position of considerable strength at the last inspection, due to the considerable efforts of outstanding leaders and managers. The school is very ably led by a dedicated headteacher, supported by a senior team of great experience and complementary talents. School leaders model the standards and professional skills that are required at all levels of the school and support staff very effectively. They have further developed systems and effective planning to help them analyse areas of relative weakness so that they can take effective action. The use of data to track student progress, attitudes and attendance is very thorough and leads to rapid intervention strategies. Subject leaders are held accountable for the progress that students make. At the same time, staff are supported by line managers in making effective improvements and are empowered to further develop the curriculum and classroom practice. The school's contribution to community coherence is good, but is not yet planned strategically to match local needs. The school has made outstanding improvement since the last inspection and has the proven capacity to improve further. Only the split-site and out of date buildings offer any potential barrier to further success. The school works hard and invests significant management time and effort to overcome any possible safety and movement issues. School governors are highly skilled, supportive and hold the school effectively to account. Given the outstanding outcomes and the limitations of the site, the school offers outstanding value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

The sixth form is outstandingly effective. Students' exceptional personal development is reflected in their strong sense of responsibility to the whole-school community. Relationships are excellent. Students are enthusiastic learners and reach high standards in GCE AS and A-level examinations. They appreciate the excellent quality of teaching that enables them to achieve their best. Teachers apply their impressive subject knowledge very well to help students enjoy learning and make rapid progress on the wide range of AS and A-level courses available. Students' learning is further enriched by an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, and the large majority take up the opportunities available. Almost all students continue their education in higher education. The school's Catholic ethos contributes greatly to the warm support and helpful personal and academic guidance that students receive. Close monitoring directs support to the individual student in need. Teachers give time willingly to help individuals with their work and in planning for the future. Students greatly appreciate this support and interest. Consequently, the very large majority completes courses successfully. Sixth form leadership and management are highly effective in ensuring that the needs of the individual student have the highest priority and are fully met

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

- There are no important areas that the school needs to improve. Sustaining current standards of achievement and personal development will be sufficient challenge at this point.

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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	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	1
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	

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<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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	
The attendance of learners	1	
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	
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?	2	
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**

23 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The Trinity School, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3EZ

I would like to thank you on behalf of Mr Beaver and myself for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our day in the school very much and we learned a great deal from the many conversations that we had with you. You impressed us greatly with your friendly, mature approach. We were very impressed by the fantastic range of activities that the school offers, and by how many of you are involved in sports, arts and other interests.

We found that your school is outstanding. These are just some of the things that make your school very special.

- Students all achieve at least to, and many beyond, expected levels. This means that standards overall are exceptionally high at the end of Years 9 and 11, as well as in the sixth form.
- Teachers go to a great deal of trouble to prepare lessons for you. They deliver consistently good and often outstanding lessons that help you to achieve these very high standards.
- The care that teachers have for you as individuals and the time that they give to your development is outstanding.
- You develop as confident, mature people as you progress through the school. You have delightful manners and an excellent attitude to your studies.
- You are able to enjoy a wide range of additional activities. The strong musical, artistic and sporting life of your school is quite exceptional.
- Leaders and managers at your school, including governors, work tirelessly on your behalf to improve the education and care that you receive. They constantly plan to improve the school and the experiences that you enjoy.
- You demonstrate your faith through the excellent relationships that you make with adults and each other, and through the care and respect that you show to others.

Your school leaders show great determination to maintain these very high standards. With your help, the school can go from strength to strength. We wish you all every happiness and success in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

David Martin

Her Majesty's Inspector