

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108095
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	337023
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Ian Richardson HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	903
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Angela Cox
Headteacher	Miss Elizabeth Cox
Date of previous school inspection	28 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 33 lessons and held meetings with the senior leadership team, governors, other staff and groups of students. They observed the school at work; and looked at the school's development plan, notes of meetings of the governing body, a selection of the school's policies, records of lesson observations carried out by school staff and documents describing the school's involvement in community activity. Questionnaires completed by staff and students were scrutinised. The inspectors also looked at records of parents' and carers' involvement and analysed 378 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

- the performance of students since the last inspection to identify any trends in the outcomes for students
- the progress made by students to establish whether it is similar for students of different attainment
- the extent to which variations in the quality of teaching contribute to changes in students' outcomes
- the quality of leadership and management to identify any improvement since the last inspection. This involves senior and middle management and the work of the governing body.

Information about the school

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is just below the national average for the number of students attending. It is situated in Meanwood, a suburb of Leeds, but draws students from a wide area. The school, while being denominational, attracts students from different faith groups and a wide range of cultural heritages. The school has a greater than average proportion of students from a variety of minority ethnic groups but the proportion whose first language is believed not to be English is below average. Around three quarters of students are described as being from the White British ethnic group. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average, as is the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School is a good school. Since the last inspection the school has made significant improvements. The areas for improvement given in the last report by Ofsted have all been addressed and further improvements promoted. The school now has a positive learning programme, although this is not yet consistently applied across the curriculum. Over the last three years, there has been an improving trend that shows the progress of students is now significantly above the national average. There has also been an improving trend in achievement, with the attainment of students having risen from significantly below average in 2007 to significantly above average in 2008 and 2009.

The improvements in the school are a consequence of a number of factors, not least of which is the more rigorous assessment, monitoring and tracking of students' progress and increased focus on this area through the appointment of an improvement leader. This systematic approach to measuring progress has been applied most vigorously to performance in English and mathematics. The performance in mathematics has improved from being a point of concern in the last report but the school's managers are not complacent and continue to drive improvement successfully. The same rigour is not currently applied consistently across the other subjects in the curriculum. In this endeavour managers are well supported by the governing body and the middle leaders in school who manage curriculum areas and year groups. The school's self-evaluation has been very effective and is accurate. Members of the governing body and senior leadership team have successfully promoted good improvements in the last three years. They have a school development plan that is detailed and clearly focused on further improvement. These factors combine to show the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement. The coordinated approach to improvement and the hard work of teachers are helping students to give of their best.

Students interviewed in school made it clear they feel secure, well taught and proud to be members of the school community. There is an inclusive and caring ethos that pervades the school. The very good behaviour seen in lessons and around school is evidence of students' strong moral values and sense of responsibility. The school does not only look inwards but also outwards to the immediate community and beyond to the wider world, the international community and the rich variety of cultures and societies to be found there.

Students feel very well cared for. Safeguarding procedures are satisfactory and the school and governing body are modifying the safeguarding policy in line with advice from the local authority. The school has succeeded in promoting community cohesion in a range of ways. The outreach of the school and orderly life found there are

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underpinned by clear, effective school policies and strong senior management that have brought a systematic approach to development. The financial systems put into place with the effective involvement of governors have resulted in positive balances in the budget each year since the last report. Given the way resources are effectively deployed and the good outcomes for students, the school is giving good value for money.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the current programme of positive learning across all subject areas.
- Build on the present good practice in assessment, monitoring and tracking seen in English and mathematics by implementing the same systems in all subject areas.
- Ensure that the arrangements for child protection become more systematic through regular review.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Attainment has risen since the last inspection. Not all subjects are as strong as others in the school. Progress in mathematics was average in 2008 and 2009. Science is performing significantly below the average for the subjects in the school. Conversely, art and design, Spanish and religious education are all performing significantly better than the school's average. There are variations in the quality of teaching that lead to these differences between subjects. Observations of lessons confirmed the good attainment and progress seen in the performance data. This is so for students of all abilities including those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

It is clear from interviews with students that they feel safe and substantially free from bullying. While some students describe incidents of bullying, they say they are rare and rapidly dealt with by prompt action of staff. Students are well aware of the anti-bullying policy and the part they can play in anti-bullying measures. Throughout discussions, lessons observations and around school, students showed themselves to be very well behaved, polite and managing their own behaviour based on their strong moral code. They act responsibly and with maturity and show through their choices of food that they understand what contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Those in public care are well supported in adopting healthy lifestyles.

There is a strong sense of community in the school and students make many contributions to this. The school council has involved itself in improving the school's virtual learning environment and older students mentor younger students. Students are proud of their school and the language college status is enhanced by good connections to the global community. As yet, students do not contribute as fully as possible to planning and making decisions in the school and they are not always clear about the connections the school has with the community.

Students' attendance is good. This and their punctuality help to demonstrate the effective way they are being prepared for the world of employment. Care is taken to raise students' aspirations; students' placements on leaving the school are assiduously monitored and show there are no students who leave without a place in education,

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training or employment. Specific links with industry to promote preparation for life after school are not yet well developed. However, the development of students in spiritual, moral, social and cultural matters is outstanding. Students think deeply about their experiences and link them well to their personal values. No situations of conflict between individuals were seen during the inspection, although students told us that any such difficulties are rapidly resolved. The school ensures that students of all backgrounds get on with each other. Students demonstrate clearly that they are aware of the value of individuals, they show respect to all, have confidence and a good sense of self-worth.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The majority of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. No inadequate lessons were seen and the judgements of the inspection team correlated well with those of the school's own monitoring of teaching. Lessons are well planned and provide a variety of activities and experiences that keep students well engaged. This includes the effective use of information and communication technology to provide students with independent

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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learning opportunities, to carry out research and to experience phenomena not available first-hand. Teachers offer clear advice to students based on the assessment of their learning. Marking of students' work is regular but in a small number of cases lacks sufficient guidance on how to improve. Students are clear about the focus of lessons and have ample opportunity to consolidate their learning through discussion in groups or in whole-class plenary sessions. Work is generally well matched to students' needs but occasionally there was a lack of challenge for some.

Overall, the curriculum provides a well-balanced experience of a range of subjects that meets students' needs. Provision for religious education is good, with all students participating and showing attainment well above the average. Provision for modern foreign languages, the school's specialism, is good and being developed to make access to a second foreign language more available. The school is also developing vocational courses but there is not yet a complete match to the needs of students for vocational and enterprise education. The specialism has enriched the education of students through, for example, the International School Award. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of students joining or leaving the school at various times during the year, especially those who speak English as an additional language. There is good enrichment of learning and there are many clubs including those involving languages such as Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and Polish.

The care, guidance and support that students receive are good. More effective monitoring of standards and tracking of students' progress are promoting better learning and higher achievement. These changes are yet to have full impact because of their recent introduction and they are yet to be implemented consistently across all subjects. Students overall feel well advised on the quality of their work and how to improve. Evidence of good quality care and guidance extends to the transition arrangements with primary schools and the good links they have with post-16 education and training providers. The school has taken effective steps to encourage good attendance using rewards and good communications with parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The quality of leadership and management has improved since the last inspection. The vision of the headteacher and senior leadership team is shared with and understood by middle leaders and other staff in the school. Members of the senior leadership team

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have developed a rigorous process of analysis of performance data to inform them of progress made and to identify areas for further development. The account of the school given in the self-evaluation form is detailed and accurate, linking identified outcomes with particular decisions made and actions taken by the school. Middle leaders are providing good leadership and management of subject areas and the pastoral system. They have adopted senior leaders' strategy in the way they carry out their roles; there is no dissonance in the school regarding the vision and strategies made clear by the senior leadership team.

The governing body has demonstrated good challenge of and support for members of the senior leadership team. It is clear from discussions with governors and scrutiny of documents that they have been complicit in the improvements such as the more rigorous assessment, monitoring and tracking system. They are engaged in setting targets and reviewing progress and there is a sub-committee that is effective in working with staff to ensure that those students falling behind experience intervention to support learning. The values expressed by the senior leadership team are expressed by governors also. These values are seen in school policies, such as that on equal opportunities, that are promoted well in the school community. Governors' role of challenge and support now extends to curriculum leaders who are required to give progress reports on their subjects at governing body meetings.

The responses provided by parents and carers on the questionnaire and other documentary evidence in the school show high levels of support from parents and carers for the school and good engagement. There is a comprehensive range of ways communication with parents and carers happens including newsletters, open days and evenings, and access to the school's website. The students' planners provide a good means of communicating parents' and carers' comments. The school has forged a range of partnerships with other providers such as post-16 establishments and local universities. The ethos created by senior leadership and staff effectively promotes good learning and progress.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The support for the school that parents and carers express in their questionnaire responses is very strong. Above all is the clear view, expressed by 99% of those responding, that their children enjoy school and feel safe. There is very high agreement that teaching is good, the school is helping their children's learning well and that overall they are happy with their children's experience at the school. Only 1% of responses disagreed with the statement that the school is led and managed effectively. The weakest response was seen in 92% of parents and carers believing that the school makes sure that their children are well prepared for the future, helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle and takes account of parents' and carers' suggestions and concerns. These views were gathered from a total of 378 completed questionnaires and show a very high level of approval among parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 211 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 903 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	207	68	93	31	1	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	155	51	144	48	4	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	147	49	138	46	13	4	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	131	43	152	50	11	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	127	42	163	54	8	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	102	34	174	57	13	4	6	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	77	25	165	54	27	9	3	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	117	39	157	52	11	4	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	124	41	159	52	13	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	126	42	145	48	20	7	5	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	81	27	185	61	17	6	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	136	45	150	50	10	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	167	55	121	40	9	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



15 March 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School, Leeds, LS6 4QE

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed inspectors into your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing how much you enjoy being part of the school's community. You show each other and the teachers good respect and demonstrate what mature and responsible attitudes you have. You work hard and make good contributions to the life of the school. You are to be congratulated on your good behaviour and positive attitudes. We saw no poor behaviour around school but we did see a few students who were not trying their best. We would encourage all of you to do your best. You have shown excellent personal moral values and good concern for your community and that of the wider world.

The school has improved over the last three years and examination results gained show good progress has been made. We believe the school is providing you with a good education. The headteacher and others in leadership in the school are doing their best for you. There is a good range of activities in class and in clubs and visits organised by the school. You should take advantage of these and join in as much as you can.

We think your school can improve even more by:

- extending the positive learning programme across all subject areas
- making sure the assessment, monitoring and tracking seen in English and mathematics is implemented in all subject areas
- reviewing the arrangements for child protection issues more regularly.

On behalf of the inspection team I wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Richardson

Her Majesty's Inspector

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