

# Trinity Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125756
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	340835
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Matharu 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>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1145
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	169
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Nuala Scarisbrick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Jim Ferguson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Guy's Cliffe Avenue Leamington Spa Warwickshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 40 lessons across the school. They held meetings with groups of students and key members of staff and governors. They observed the school's work and scrutinised the school's key documentation, including improvement plans, students' progress records, and monitoring and evaluation reports. They analysed the questionnaires from staff, students and the 166 communications received from parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by different groups of students currently in the school, and especially in English and mathematics
- how effectively teaching challenges students of all abilities
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the school's work and driving school improvement.

## Information about the school

Trinity Catholic School is a larger than average Roman Catholic voluntary aided comprehensive with a sixth form. It takes students from around 40 primary schools, covering a wide area. The majority of students are of White British ethnic origin with a small number of students from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of students are from households that are economically and socially more advantaged than found nationally. The number of students with a statement of special educational needs is slightly higher than found nationally, but the overall number with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school gained specialist college status for technology in September 2000 and gained a second specialism in arts in 2004. It holds the Bronze Eco Schools and the Artsmark Gold awards.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Trinity Catholic School is currently providing a satisfactory standard of education and is well poised to continue with a number of improvements. The staffing of the school in key curriculum areas is now more stable than in recent years, thus enhancing the school's capacity for further development. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. This has led to a clear strategic overview of what needs to be achieved, with appropriate improvement plans in place and the collective will to make this happen. Rigour has been introduced to the school's systems to monitor and evaluate its work, providing clear, accurate information about performance, from which to plan improvement interventions. Teaching is improving and includes some significant strengths. However, there is an issue for the school to tackle in those lessons taught in mixed ability groups, to ensure that all students are suitably challenged by work of a suitable level. The sharing of best practice is developing across the school but the potential here has not yet been fully realised.

The specialist subjects of technology and the arts make a significant contribution to the personal development of the students and to the local community. The atmosphere in school is positive and respectful with the vast majority of students behaving well, enjoying excellent relationships with their teachers and their peers and contributing well to the life of the school. Students value school and are positive about its impact on their future working lives.

The school's curriculum is developing soundly, but some issues of concern remain regarding the balance and entitlement at Key Stage 4.

In the last eighteen months, there have been a number of key appointments at a senior level. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They recognise that the quality of teaching needs to be more consistent across all subjects in order to increase the progress that students make, particularly for students that are more able. A major improvement drive is underway to track progress systematically and identify any underachievement more quickly. However, the systematic use of data to inform teachers about student performance and use this routinely to inform teaching is in the early stages and not yet embedded across the school. The school now has the management capability to implement and monitor a range of key improvement plans, having previously been under-staffed here for some time.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

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- Improve progress through:
  - ensuring that all teachers plan for, and provide appropriate levels of challenge for students of all abilities
  - reviewing student groupings in order to target teaching more precisely
  - embedding the systematic use of performance data to inform teaching and interventions across all departments
  - sharing best practice in teaching more effectively
- Review curriculum provision to ensure that it fully meets all requirements and meets the needs of all students, particularly at Key Stage 4
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judge satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Standards are broadly average at present, which represents a dip compared to the good attainment of recent years. Attainment on entry to the school is variable, but overall is just above average. At present, progress is satisfactory for all groups of pupils, including those from all vulnerable groups. There is continued good performance at Key Stage 3 and good attainment in several subjects at Key Stage 4, including in the school's specialist subjects. Last year's decline in students' progress in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4 (including the progress made by higher achieving students) has caused concern to the school. Consequently, the contributory factors have been analysed in detail and a range of improvement activities introduced to improve this situation - the impact of which is encouraging. The school's current tracking data and modular GCSE results for 2010 indicate rises in standards across the school. Lesson observations at inspection endorse the improvement in progress.

Students cooperate very well with each other and with adults. Their behaviour is consistently good. For example, they are confident and respectful, readily participating in activities outside the school day and contributing well to the school and to the local community in a variety of ways. These include sports leadership, 'eco' awareness activities, charity fundraising and other school council activities. Students appreciate that their views are listened to. They are suitably reflective and critical: for example, a number of older students feel that the school could do more to help them lead healthy lifestyles.

The school's religious dimension has a significant impact on students' good spiritual and cultural development. Students demonstrate good understanding of other cultures and are respectful and considerate of the needs of others. Students told inspectors they feel safe and well cared for at school and that bullying is rare, although some Key Stage 3 students expressed mild concerns about the relatively open nature of the school grounds. Satisfactory provision is made for students' future working lives. Work-related learning opportunities and careers guidance are strengths in provision; however,

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attendance and key skills in English and mathematics are broadly average at present.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The inspection confirmed the senior team's view that teaching is consistently satisfactory across the curriculum and leads to sound progress of students. Some teaching was good or outstanding. No inadequate teaching was observed.

Teaching is generally well organised by confident subject specialists. The pace of learning is often good and students are keen and enthusiastic learners. Information and communication technology is mostly effective in supporting teaching and learning. Most lessons engage learners well with students clearly enjoying a good rapport with their teachers. When teaching is good, students are inspired through suitably challenging and interesting tasks, which fully meet the needs of all abilities and accelerate their progress. For example, in an outstanding history lesson, the teacher continually checked students' learning throughout a variety of stimulating activities including a range of ongoing assessments. When teaching is satisfactory, there are some missed opportunities to highlight key information for students and deepen their understanding, with the level of

<sup>1</sup> 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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challenge lower and too little differentiation of learning tasks.

The curriculum is satisfactory and continues to develop. Since the last inspection, a range of vocational options has been introduced at Key Stage 4, the impact of which has been good. However, some niggling curriculum issues remain unresolved; for example, the limited provision for physical education at Key Stage 4. Further, although some effective learning takes place in personal, social and health education and citizenship, currently there is insufficient time available for both subjects to be fully explored.

Specialist status has had a positive influence on the curriculum in terms of widening provision and providing primary school and community activities, although the impact of specialist status on raising achievement has not yet been fully realised. A rich range of extra-curricular activities is appreciated by students and enhances provision.

Procedures for safeguarding and providing care for students' well-being are good. Effective work is evident with a range of partners and external agencies to support students, including those who are vulnerable, with clear evidence of good impact on the confidence, self-esteem and achievement of these students.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The principal and relatively newly established senior team recognise that the improvement of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good is the means to sustained improved performance. Thorough lesson monitoring, including recent department reviews in core subjects, have informed the accuracy of the evaluations of teaching and learning across the school.

Senior leaders are accurate in their identification of best practice in teaching, but the dissemination of this across the school is not yet fully developed. The principal articulates a clear, convincing strategic vision for the school. He and the senior team are ambitious for success, have a good grasp of the school's strengths and have accurately identified those areas where performance should be better. It is early days; consequently, there is limited impact of the improvement strategy on teaching and learning through examination results, but the signs in terms of improved student progress are promising. Vigorous efforts are being made to ensure that the barriers to success for all students are minimised.

Pastoral leaders make strong contributions to the success of the school. They, and school tutors, are influential in the good quality care and guidance evident for students.

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The middle leadership tier is clear about their roles and responsibilities in driving improvement and contributes strongly to the school's improvement drive through increasingly effective leadership of their subject teams.

Governors have a good strategic overview of the school's work. They are well organised into appropriate committees and demonstrate very good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. Their challenge and support for the school is effective in promoting and supporting continuing improvement. They meet their statutory responsibilities well. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and ensure the welfare and safety of staff, students and visitors.

Engagement with parents is satisfactory. The school seeks parents' views over a range of issues and there is a regular exchange of information regarding students' progress, although the timings of these cause concern for a minority of parents.

The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Whilst the cohesion within the school community itself is good, there is limited evidence of impact beyond this.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Sixth form

Sixth form students achieve standards that are slightly higher than average at 'A' Level but broadly average overall when considering both years. This represents satisfactory progress. Students enjoy their learning and make a substantial contribution to the school community. They support the learning of younger students through mentoring and contribute very positively to the school ethos. The teaching observed at inspection



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was good overall but there remain some inconsistencies in the results of different subjects. Students made good progress last year, relative to their starting points, in fine art, modern foreign languages and history. Students much appreciate the teaching they experience and the good guidance and support provided for them, although they would like greater variety in their enrichment courses and several feel that some vocational aspects of their learning are limited. Curriculum provision is satisfactory with a number of courses available in consortium with other providers. The head of sixth form is new in post and has made a solid start in reviewing aspects of provision, tracking student performance and planning for improvement, but it is too early to assess the impact at this stage.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

A relatively small number of parents responded during the inspection, given the size of the school. The majority of those who responded are supportive of the school. Several parents wrote positively about their child's enjoyment of school life, their appreciation of the excellent relationships and the opportunities available for students. Positive comments were also received about the strength of transition arrangements and the effective pastoral care provided for individual students.

However, an equal number of parents expressed a variety of concerns. Several feel that students are insufficiently challenged to make optimum progress and that teaching is too variable. Others feel that communications with home could be improved. They would like better information regarding their child's progress and how they, as parents, might support their child's learning. A number do not like the school's current timing of parents' evenings, particularly in Year7. The school is aware of this and has plans to address it.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Trinity Catholic 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 166 responses by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1145 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	42	37	51	3	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	27	37	41	56	5	7	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	26	38	52	12	16	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	21	45	62	8	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	16	22	51	70	2	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	16	41	56	18	25	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	12	51	70	10	14	1	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)	17	23	42	58	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	26	40	55	9	12	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	15	44	60	10	14	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	7	48	66	13	18	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	14	19	46	63	3	4	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	45	29	45	4	6	2	3

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



13 November 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Trinity Catholic School, Leamington Spa, CV32 6NB

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. It was a pleasure to meet and talk with so many of you. We appreciated your honesty, courtesy and cooperation. It is clear to us that most of you are happy in school and value the excellent relationships you enjoy with adults. We were particularly impressed by your consistently good behaviour and attitudes to learning.

Our judgement is that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. There are several good features and, at present, standards are broadly average with all groups of students making satisfactory progress. There has been a dip recently in English and mathematics and your teachers are working hard to restore levels of progress to a consistently good level. Teaching is always satisfactory and often good across the school. It is evident to us that many of you work hard and want to do well. Your teachers and other adults in school know you well, care about your progress and do their best to meet your needs. The curriculum, although satisfactory at present, is developing well with an increasing range of vocational options. The school's pastoral care and guidance are good.

The school attaches importance to your personal, social and moral development and preparing you for adult life. We feel that there is much successful work here and your personal development is good. Many of you are confident, respectful young people who contribute well to the wider life of the school. You told us how much you value the wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities available to you.

Your school leadership team is now at full strength and has a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have good plans in place to address these. They are determined to continue improving things to ensure that you all achieve as highly as possible. We have asked the senior staff to do several things: ensure that all of your teachers plan activities in lessons to stretch and challenge every one of you, so that progress further improves overall; ensure that the curriculum meets all requirements and is suitably balanced to meet all of your needs.

We wish you every success for the future.

Best wishes

Judith Matharu

Her Majesty's Inspector

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