

Mount St Joseph: Business and Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105263
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	355742
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Shirley Gornall 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	904
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bernard Waldron
Headteacher	Mr Paul Roach
Date of previous school inspection	14 November 2007
School address	Greenland Road Farnworth, Bolton Lancashire BL4 0HU
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 43 lessons taught by 43 teachers and held meetings with school leaders, teachers, groups of students, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documents including improvement plans, the school's self-evaluation, monitoring reports, policies, safeguarding records and information regarding students' achievement. They analysed 171 questionnaires received from parents and carers, 46 from staff and 187 from students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of different groups of students in lessons, particularly in mathematics and English.
- The quality of teaching and learning and the impact of the school lesson observation system on driving improvement.
- The effectiveness of the school's work to raise students' literacy levels.
- The impact of the school's care, guidance and support systems on improving students' attendance and achievement.

Information about the school

Mount St Joseph: Business and Enterprise College is an average-sized, Catholic secondary school serving the community of Farnworth. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average. The school's population includes a much higher than average proportion of students from minority ethnic groups, and of these the vast majority have English as an additional language. The proportion of students with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school was redesignated as a business and enterprise college in 2008. It gained Healthy School status in 2008, International School Award in 2010 and became a Fairtrade School in 2010.

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

Mount St Joseph: Business and Enterprise College is a good and improving school. Under the determined and principled leadership of the headteacher, provision and outcomes have improved since the previous inspection. Students enjoy all that the school has to offer and their achievement is good. Attainment has been low but has risen so that standards are broadly average. Students achieve particularly well in science and information and communication technology (ICT). An increased proportion of students are now attaining higher grades across a range of subjects. Progress in mathematics has been variable but is strongly improving as a result of focused action to enhance engagement, teaching and learning.

The school's Catholic ethos underpins its work as an inclusive, harmonious community where students of different religious and ethnic backgrounds are respected as individuals. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding because of the supportive climate in which students from very diverse cultures willingly share ideas and learn from each other. Students behave well, demonstrating caring and thoughtful attitudes. They feel very safe and value the considerable efforts taken by staff to ensure their well-being. Attendance is similar to the national average and there has been a reduction in the proportion of students who are persistently absent. The school's specialism in business and enterprise makes a good contribution to students' experience. Their development of entrepreneurial skills is strong and they have a mature understanding of trading ethics.

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good overall, with some that is satisfactory and some that is outstanding. Relationships between staff and students are excellent. Teachers' assessment of students' work is generally accurate, although there is some variability in the quality of marking and advice given to students on how to improve their work further. Many lessons are well-paced, engaging and characterised by very effective questioning. However, on occasions, teachers talk too much and do not tailor activities sufficiently to meet the needs of all students. A good curriculum has been developed with an appropriate focus on raising students' literacy levels. A wide range of courses at Key Stage 4 enable students to make choices that will equip them for their next stage in education, employment or training. Good care, guidance and support, including that provided through partnership with a wide variety of agencies, make an effective contribution to students' happiness, self-esteem and good progress.

The senior leadership team has a very clear understanding of the school's context and priorities. Intelligent management systems have been developed to identify underachievement, orchestrate rapid intervention and ensure accountability. Staff and students subscribe to a clear vision for continuous improvement, which greatly values the local community and seeks to remove barriers to learning. In partnership with a skilled

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and well-informed governing body, leaders at all levels have created a climate in which students are nurtured and encouraged to have high aspirations. Improvement planning at all levels is sharp and includes ambitious targets and appropriate timescales. Some subject leaders are working together to share best practice but this is not embedded across the school. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, contributed to by leaders, teachers, support staff, parents, students and the local authority. The school has successfully tackled the key issues identified by the previous inspection and has good capacity to sustain further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further so that a higher proportion of students gain five good GCSE qualifications including English and mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good and outstanding by:
 - – sharing the excellent practice that exists across subjects
 - – ensuring that the progress of all students is enhanced through carefully matching activities to individual needs
 - – developing more effective questioning
 - – ensuring that marking is of a consistently high standard in order that all students are very clear as to how to improve their work.
- Improve students' attendance levels.

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

Students enjoy all that the school has to offer and achieve well from starting points which are broadly below average. The proportion of students gaining five or more good GCSE qualifications at A* to C grades is significantly higher than that found nationally, as is the proportion of students achieving two good science qualifications.

The proportion of students gaining five GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has been low but current performance indicates that it is now much closer to the national average. Students' attainment is high in all science subjects, ICT, physical education and English literature. Attainment in a minority of subjects is below the national average.

School data and lesson observations confirm that students make good progress. Rates of progress in mathematics and English dipped in 2010 but have now been restored. The achievement of Year 11 students in 2011, as indicated by students' coursework and results in external examinations, shows great improvement and indicates performance at or above average in English, mathematics and science. The proportion of students meeting ambitious targets has improved as a result of a number of well-considered measures. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that of their peers due to high-quality support which is carefully matched to their needs.

Students behave well in lessons and around the site, including on some narrow corridors. They are good humoured and respectful, readily celebrating each other's differences. They report unanimously that incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with immediately and effectively. They feel safe in school and willingly play their part in ensuring its caring, community ethos by taking on roles as councillors, leaders and mentors in subjects, such

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as performing arts and physical education. Decisions taken by students have influenced school policy, for example, through consultations on the school uniform. Students maintain that the school keeps them healthy. They participate in a wide range of sporting activities and appreciate the nutritious meals prepared for them by the school's award-winning catering team. They have a good awareness of the dangers associated with smoking and drug misuse. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They openly initiate mature discussions about beliefs and values, showing great respect for each other's religious and ethnic backgrounds. In a particularly powerful assembly, one student sang to a large audience of peers and prompted their deep reflection. Students have a strong awareness of the world of work, developed through enterprise education at both key stages. They cooperate well when working in teams, are punctual, and well organised. Their attendance remains stubbornly average although the number of students who are persistently absent has substantially reduced.

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	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

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

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and the majority is now securing good progress and learning. The best lessons are characterised by lively teaching, varied activities and good opportunities for students to work collaboratively. This was the case in an inspirational history lesson in which students discussed their views about protest movements with maturity, paying close attention to well-presented sources

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of evidence. In a well-paced ICT lesson, students demonstrated high levels of application and perseverance in response to the teacher's expectation that they should be 'businesslike and professional.' They responded very positively to opportunities to teach each other newly-acquired skills. Excellent assessment techniques were observed in physical education and performing arts lessons in which students gave positive and constructive feedback on each other's work. The most effective teaching enabled students to develop higher-order thinking skills. For example, in a very successful English lesson students enhanced their analytical skills because the teacher gave them an appropriate amount of time to think and formulate extended verbal responses. On some occasions, however, questioning is insufficiently focused and students' answers are consequently under-developed. There is a tendency for teachers to do too much talking in a few lessons, leading to passivity on the part of students. In the most effective lessons, activities are tailored to meet the needs of different students within the class, however, in some lessons this is not the case and the progress of students slows. There are examples of high-quality marking, particularly in English, history and ICT, but there is some inconsistency in the quality of marking within departments.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and constantly evolving. The school has identified the need to boost the literacy levels of students in Key Stage 3 and has successfully developed an 'enterprising minds' programme which is having a positive impact on developing their communication skills. Personalised pathways have been developed at Key Stage 4, in collaboration with other providers, enabling students to gain vocational qualifications. Enterprise and employability courses equip students well with knowledge and skills to prepare them for the world of work. Academic ambitions are fostered strongly and there are good opportunities for students to engage in courses and projects that raise aspirations. Some students have recently participated in a national 'Dragon's Den' initiative that required them to show high levels of business acumen. The science curriculum enables students with different interests and skills profiles to follow engaging courses to meet their needs. Extra-curricular activities include a wide range of clubs that are well-subscribed and much appreciated by those who attend.

Students agree that the quality of care, guidance and support they receive is very good, commenting that 'adults care for us and think we matter as individuals.' They appreciate the good quality transition arrangements when they enter the school and the effective guidance they receive to help them make choices about their destinations at the end of Key Stage 4. Students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable benefit from nurturing arrangements which build their confidence. The school, in partnership with various services and agencies, is adept at anticipating, identifying and addressing barriers to learning. A carefully designed mentoring programme is having a good impact on students' progress through the provision of personalised advice and support to those in danger of underachieving.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
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?

One teacher commented, 'the school has a clear vision that all staff are aware of and involved in. The leadership and management teams work hard and strive to achieve their best for the students in their care.' Inspectors support this view. The headteacher, who was appointed following the previous inspection, articulates a powerful vision for improvement based on the school's mission to be 'a community of learners, a community of believers and a community of friends.' Together with his conscientious and effective leadership team he has successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. Leadership roles have been clearly defined, lines of accountability strengthened and improvement planning sharpened. The school's self-evaluation is insightful and comprehensive, drawing on the contributions of staff, students, parents and carers and the local authority. Action planning is consistent with the outcomes of self-evaluation and the procedures for monitoring and review are clear. The school's programme of moderated lesson observations and coaching has led to an increased proportion of good and outstanding teaching. Provision and outcomes have demonstrably improved. Intelligent data management enables staff to identify students at risk of underachievement and take swift, effective action.

The governing body provides an appropriate balance of challenge and support and has enabled the leadership team to achieve a substantial reduction in the school's budget deficit without detriment to the quality of education for students. Morale of the staff and students is high. The school sets itself ambitious targets and has the personnel and systems in place to ensure that these will be met; the capacity for sustained improvement is good. The school is fully aware of its own context and makes a good contribution to community cohesion. It is a model of inclusion and racial harmony itself and is increasingly outward-looking, for instance, through an initiative to make connections with students in classrooms in other countries. Respect for the individual is strong, equal opportunities pervade all aspects of provision and there is zero tolerance of harassment in any form. The school analyses its data critically and takes measured action to address any gaps in performance, for example, by taking positive and effective steps to build the confidence of girls, whose achievement was weaker than that of boys in 2010. The school's safeguarding policy and procedures are strong and regularly reviewed; all members of the school community are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities and discharge these effectively.

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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
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 vast majority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires say that they are happy with their children's experience at school. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and care their children receive and feel that the school is well led. One commented, 'the school makes me feel very welcome and the staff and pupils are a credit to it.' This view was echoed by many other parents and carers. A very small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors took particular note of this in observing behaviour in lessons, holding discussions with students and studying the school's behaviour records. They found behaviour to be good and its management to be effective.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mount St Joseph: Business and Enterprise College 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 171 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 904 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	29	113	66	6	4	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	58	34	109	64	3	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	32	102	60	14	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	36	100	58	6	4	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	53	31	107	63	6	4	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	23	100	58	24	14	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	18	118	69	19	11	3	2
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)	48	28	107	63	9	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	31	104	61	10	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	30	92	54	20	12	7	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	21	109	64	14	8	5	3
The school is led and managed effectively	54	32	106	62	9	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	75	44	90	53	4	2	2	1

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 all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



25 March 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Mount St Joseph: Business and Enterprise College, Bolton, BL4 0HU

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. Thank you to those of you who gave up time to speak to us and those who completed the questionnaire. We were impressed by your caring and sensible behaviour and the pride you rightly take in your school. We think the way in which you respect each other's beliefs and values is outstanding. Many of you make a really strong contribution to the school as mentors, councillors and buddies. We were very interested in your 'Dragons' Den' work and other ways in which you show enterprise skills. The Year 7 assembly in which one of you sang to a large audience was stunning. We agree that your leaders and teachers support you well, keep you safe, help you learn and prepare you well for life beyond school.

The inspection team consider Mount St Joseph Business and Enterprise College to be a good school. It provides you with a good standard of education and most of you make good progress. There have been many improvements to the school over the last few years and we can see no reason why these should not continue.

We have identified some points for improvement. First, we have asked the school to continue to raise standards at GCSE so that even more of you leave school with five good qualifications including English and mathematics. Linked to this, we have asked the school to increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching you receive. Your teachers already work extremely hard and you can help them by letting them know the sorts of activity that help you think and learn best, and by acting promptly on feedback that they give you about improving your own work. We have also asked the school to improve attendance so please play your part and remember that every lesson counts!

Please continue to support your school as strongly as you do. On behalf of the inspectors, I would like to wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Gornall

Her Majesty's Inspector

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