

# St Cuthbert's RC Business and Enterprise College

Shaw Road, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 4RX

**Inspection dates** 9–10 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although achievement is improving, it is not doing so quickly enough, especially in mathematics. Not enough students make good progress over time.
- The progress made by some groups of students, such as those with lower starting points and those supported through college action plus or with statements of special educational needs, is not rapid enough.
- In a number of lessons there are too few opportunities for students to develop their skills to work independently of adult support.
- Although teaching is improving, too many lessons still require improvement. Teachers do not always set work that is at the right level of difficulty to help students to learn well.
- Teachers do not always check that students understand their work or ensure that they learn well.
- Senior leaders and the governing body do not always check that teachers implement sufficient strategies to ensure that all groups of students learn more quickly.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Students are polite and well-mannered and relationships between students and with adults are good.
- Students are well cared for and say they feel safe in college. This view is supported by a very large majority of parents.
- The curriculum offers a good range of courses and opportunities that contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders and the governing body have a clear view of how successful the college can be and what needs to be done to improve it further. They have already demonstrated a clear commitment to improve the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 lessons and held meetings with staff, four groups of students, two members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a headteacher from another school who, at the instigation of the local authority and diocese, is providing support and advice to the college.
- Inspectors observed the college's work, including the college's analysis of how well it is doing and its improvement plan, documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, minutes of the governing body, the college's data on students' progress and their work.
- Inspectors took account of parental views together with the 59 responses from parents recorded in the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the 132 responses to a parents' questionnaire carried out by the college in November 2012.

## Inspection team

Alan Parkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

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Naomi Taylor

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## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Cuthbert's is a larger than average-sized secondary college.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is the additional funding based predominantly on the number of students known to be eligible for free school meals and a few in local authority care.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of those supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- The college meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The college uses Hopwood Hall College to provide alternative provision for some students. It also uses Rochdale Training Association, the Alternative Curriculum Service and Kick Start which are privately run organisations that offer alternative provision for some students.
- Since the previous inspection the sixth form has closed and the college became an 11-16 college in September 2012. In 2011 the college achieved the National Standard in Enterprise Education and the Excellence in Enterprise Education Award.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all lessons by:
  - providing more opportunities for students to develop their skills to work independently of adult support
  - setting tasks which build on what students know and understand already and incorporating challenge to ensure that all students make rapid progress
  - checking effectively to ensure that new work and ideas are fully understood by all students.
- Raise the achievement of students further, particularly in mathematics, by:
  - increasing the proportion of students making good or better progress
  - developing intervention strategies that enable different groups of students to learn more quickly, especially for those entering the college with lower starting points and those supported through school action plus or with statements of special educational needs.
- Improve leadership and management, at all levels throughout the college and including governance, by:
  - ensuring that the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress made by all groups of students is consistently and rigorously monitored and evaluated
  - ensuring that information from the recently improved systems for tracking students' progress is used effectively to accelerate the progress of all groups of students.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Over the last three years, the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at A\* to C including English and mathematics has remained well below average. The proportions increased in 2011 but fell in 2012. However, recent improvement in the quality of teaching means that students are making better progress in lessons and attainment is rising.
- In 2012 the unvalidated results indicate that the proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades at GCSE was above average in English, geography, history, modern languages, some sciences and physical education.
- The proportion of students making expected progress in mathematics fell in 2012 and remains well below the national average.
- The college has recently introduced a new robust system to check on the progress of students. This shows that the proportion of current Year 11 students making expected progress in English and mathematics is rising. However, the progress made by students in mathematics is not rapid enough.
- The progress made by some groups of students, especially those who entered the college with lower starting points and those students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, is not rapid enough.
- The achievement of students supported by the pupil premium is improving and the gap between their attainment and that of all other students is closing in both English and mathematics. The funding is used effectively to provide additional members of staff and small group support in English and mathematics.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to that of their peers and in some subjects, such as science, languages and humanities, better progress than that of their peers.
- The college does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.
- The proportion of students leaving the college who do not continue in education, training or employment is very low.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- In the best lessons teaching is organised and planned very well. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and set tasks that enable students to learn well. They use effective questioning to challenge and check students' understanding of the work.
- In some lessons where teaching is less effective, teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for students to contribute to their own learning to enable them to develop their independent learning skills.
- In some lessons teachers do not always plan tasks and activities that enable students to learn well and make rapid progress. This is because the activities are either too easy or too hard. Teachers do not always check carefully enough how well students understand the work and do not pick up quickly enough where learning is too slow. In some lessons teachers' expectations of what the students can do are not always high enough.
- Students say they are taught well in the vast majority of their lessons. They work very well together and the relationships between students and teachers and between students themselves are good and promote positive attitudes to learning. For example, students participate in discussions confidently, helping to develop their communication and social skills well. Students are given opportunities in some lessons to become 'lead learners'. This enables them to apply their knowledge and support others in their learning.
- The marking of students' work has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers' written

comments clearly tell students how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve, although there are still some inconsistencies within some subjects.

- Students identified for additional support respond well to the college's literacy intervention programme. They are actively engaged, enthusiastic and are keen to develop their skills. As a result the majority of students have improved their reading and spelling skills in a range of subjects. However, students' numeracy skills are less well-developed.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support students' learning, particularly to support intervention strategies for those students who speak English as an additional language, those supported through pupil premium, disabled students, and those who have special education needs.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The college's new behaviour policy, introduced in September 2012, has had a positive impact on improving behaviour. As a result, the vast majority of students behave well in lessons and around the college. They are polite, well-mannered and courteous towards each other and to adults and visitors. This promotes students' very positive attitudes to learning.
- Students say they feel safe very safe in college because they are cared for well by teachers and other adults. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, with regard to e-safety and using the Internet.
- The pastoral care system is a strength of the college, is valued by both students and parents and demonstrates the college's commitment to offering all its students equal opportunities to be successful. The college has established effective partnerships with parents and external agencies that enable effective support to be given when problems arise for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable.
- The college's strong Christian ethos helps promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, a college assembly provided students with opportunities for reflection to 'dream big' and consider how adversity can be overcome.
- Bullying is rare and any instances are dealt with quickly. Students have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying.
- The responses to Parent View and to the parental survey carried out by the college indicate that a very large majority of parents agree that students behave well, they are not bullied, that they are cared for well and that they feel safe at college.
- Attendance is improving although it is still below the national average. The college is successfully implementing strategies to reduce the number of persistent absences.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The college's headteacher, senior leaders and governing body have accurately identified the college's strengths and areas for further improvement. They have, rightly, implemented strategies to improve the quality of teaching resulting in accelerated rates of progress by students. They demonstrate a passion and commitment to improve the quality of provision for the students and have a clear focus on raising attainment further, particularly in mathematics.
- The college has very effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching. This information is used appropriately when advising the governing body about teachers' progression up the salary scale. These systems and process provide information about how best to support and encourage further training opportunities for staff.
- The college has recently introduced rigorous systems to monitor the achievement of students accurately, although it is too early to show students' progress over time.
- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of students well. It offers some students the use of alternative provision to provide appropriate courses and work placements that enable

them to be successful. The college takes all reasonable steps to ensure that students behave well and are safe. The attendance of students at these work placements is good.

- The college offers a range of enrichment activities which provides students with opportunities and experiences to develop their personal and academic skills. For example, the trips to Patterdale and the Belgian war fields and the work of the sports leaders in primary colleges support students' learning, their personal development and contributes significantly to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The local authority and diocese provide very effective and valuable support for improvement to the college and also to the governing body.
- **The governance of the college:**
  - The governing body is well-informed and challenges and supports the college leaders. The governing body know the strengths of the college and has an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve the college further. The governing body monitors the quality of teaching and uses performance management to set appropriate and challenging targets. Although governors monitor and evaluate the college's overall performance well, they do not robustly monitor and evaluate the progress made by different groups of students. The governing body has a good understanding of the college's finances, including the allocation of pupil premium funding to appoint additional staff and provide additional small-group sessions for students in English and mathematics. Safeguarding policies and procedures meet the statutory requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105845
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	400805

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,275
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Martin Collins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 June 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 647761
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