

# St Cuthbert's RC Business and Enterprise College

Shaw Road, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL16 4RX

**Inspection dates** 11–12 June 2014

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Achievement is good. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Progress in mathematics, previously an area of concern, has risen rapidly.
- The school has taken robust action to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, all groups of students are making better progress.
- Behaviour and safety are both good. Students say that they feel very safe and that there is always an adult whom they can turn to. They take a pride in their school and are eager to learn.
- Leaders and managers have managed significant changes in staffing very well.
- New appointments, including some at senior levels, are having a very positive impact on students' achievement.
- Subject leaders are fully involved in checking how well teachers are teaching and how well students are learning.
- Senior leaders and governors play a significant role in moving the school's teaching and achievement forward. Governors support the school very well while offering a high degree of challenge.
- Most staff are very positive about all aspects of the school.
- Students appreciate the many opportunities to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' achievement has not been established for a long enough period of time to support an outstanding judgement. Teaching is not outstanding.
- Some members of staff do not apply school policies consistently.
- Marking is not of a consistently high quality in the way it informs students on how they can improve their work. Teachers do not always give students opportunities to respond to advice on how to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 teachers, over half of the teaching staff in 43 part lessons.
- Inspectors examined information on students' performance for the school years 2011/12, 2012/2013 and on current students' learning and progress. Inspectors also looked at work in students' books.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders, students, eight members of the governing body and with two representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 80 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the responses from 104 members of staff who returned the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection.
- Records on attendance and behaviour were also scrutinised, along with information about the quality of teaching and the performance of staff relating to pay.

## Inspection team

Alison Thomson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Christine Addison	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector
Sheila Kaye	Additional Inspector
Clive Hurren	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Cuthbert's is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and students in local authority care.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school is a specialist college for business and enterprise.
- A small number of students are educated part-time off-site at Oldham College, Rathbone and Hopwood Hall.
- Over the past two years, there have been considerable changes in staffing. The mathematics department has six new members of staff, including the subject leader.

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

- Further raise achievement by:
  - ensuring that teaching consistently conveys high expectations and focuses sharply on the skills students need to develop
  - improving the consistency of marking so that students know clearly how to improve their work in all subjects
  - providing students with sufficient opportunities to respond to advice on how their work can be improved
  - ensuring that all staff consistently apply school policies.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students achieve well. They join the school with skills that are slightly below average and make good progress from their starting points, to leave with GCSE results that are at least in line with those found nationally and sometimes higher.
- In GCSE examinations taken in 2013, the proportion of students gaining five A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, improved on the dip of the previous year. The school's data for this year and work seen by the inspection team indicate that the rise is set to continue. The school provided robust evidence which demonstrates that its predictions are accurate.
- The percentage of students gaining A\* and A grades in 2013 was below average in many subjects. The school took decisive action to address this through increased challenge in lessons. Inspection evidence from lesson observations, work scrutiny and talking to students, along with the school's own data, indicates that students, including the most able, are on track to attain the grades they are capable of this year. This is true also for mathematics, a subject in which students have been underperforming.
- This year, some students in Year 10 were entered early for external examinations in mathematics. This has been very successful and has boosted students' confidence and determination to do even better.
- Students make good or better progress in most lessons because teachers generally match work closely to their needs. This is true of most subjects throughout the school, both in Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 4. All groups of students make good progress, illustrating the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity.
- Weaker students in Year 7 receive additional help with reading and writing through the Year 7 catch-up programme. This is having a good impact on their progress in both these areas.
- Students who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium make good progress, although not quite as good as their peers. In 2013, their average attainment was nearly one grade lower in English and just over one grade lower in mathematics. These gaps narrowed both in English and in mathematics compared to the previous year and are set to narrow even further this year.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good additional help, both in lessons and in small-group activities.
- The very few students who attend alternative provision make good progress and grow in confidence.
- Students are prepared well for the next stages in their education, training or employment. Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are integrated well into many lessons. Reading is given high priority and students were observed reading with keen interest during form periods.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire agreed that their children make good progress.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good. It is characterised by generally high expectations and lessons that enable students to learn effectively and develop their skills. Teachers capitalise well on the students' eagerness to learn. Students relish the opportunity to work out things for themselves and this supports their good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- These strengths of high expectations and a clear focus on developing skills are not consistently evident in teaching; when that is the case learning is less secure.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in many lessons, for example in respecting differences in beliefs in religious education lessons.
- Students' work is usually marked regularly and accurately. The more effective marking tells students how to improve their work. However, not all marking is of this high quality and this

limits the progress that some students make. The school is aware that not enough opportunities are given for students to respond to the advice teachers give. The inspectors agree with this.

- Teachers know the needs of their students well and they know how well their students are progressing. This includes students with special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium. Effective additional help is matched closely to individual needs and these students make good progress as a result.
- Most parents who responded to the online questionnaire felt that their children are taught well.

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

- Students take pride in their school and look after it well. They are polite and friendly, both to adults and to each other. The inspectors found them very willing to engage in conversation and to share their views with them.
- The behaviour of students is good. Students say that it has improved with the introduction of rewards and sanctions, although not all teachers implement the school policy on this.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students describe their school as very safe and say that there is always an adult they can talk to if they have a problem. They were observed working very safely in practical lessons in science and technology. Students have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, including homophobic and racist bullying. They say that hardly any bullying occurs, and any that does occur is dealt with well.
- The school has increased attendance to be above that found nationally. This has been helped by the appointment of an attendance officer who works closely with families whose children have been persistently absent in the past.
- Students are very keen to learn and they work very well together in groups. This was seen in many lessons.
- Almost all staff who returned the questionnaire agreed that students' behaviour is good. Most parents who responded to Parent View agreed that the school helps their children to behave well and almost all said that their children felt safe.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher and his senior leaders are working very effectively together to drive up students' achievement and improve the school. There have been many improvements since the previous inspection, including in the quality of teaching and attendance. These have impacted very positively on the students' achievement. Gaps between the progress of different groups of students are closing rapidly, reflecting the school's inclusiveness and stress on the equality of opportunity.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing, including some at leadership level. Those new appointments have brought about significant improvements.
- Senior leaders have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas to develop. They have responded very well to the areas for development given at the previous inspection and the subsequent monitoring visit. For example, high standards are expected from the teachers and those in need of support have been guided well to improve. Tracking of students' progress is now rigorous and underachievement is being identified and addressed in a timely manner.
- Subject leaders keep a close eye on how well teachers and students are doing in their departments. This accountability is ensuring that most students make at least good progress and that students in danger of falling behind are helped to catch up.
- The curriculum and spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision are very strong and meet the needs and interests of students well. Students are very appreciative of the wide range of clubs and visits on offer to them. They raise large sums of money for charities. They participate successfully in many sporting events and many take up the opportunity to be sports leaders.
- Staff questionnaires showed that the majority of staff are very positive about all aspects of the

school. Some, however, think that school policies are not applied consistently by all staff.

- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met.
- The partnership of the local authority with the Rochdale Pioneers Trust is providing very effective support.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are very knowledgeable and support the school very well. They undergo training, including training to understand data. This has enabled them to hold the school to account well for the performance of its students. Governors have a realistic view of the quality of teaching. They ensure that the pay of teachers is linked closely to their performance and that any underperformance is tackled swiftly. They have had to take some hard decisions regarding redundancies and poor performance, as well as securing some good staff appointments that are making a real difference to the school. Governors play a key role in the allocation of the budget, including the pupil premium funding, and this has improved the progress of eligible students.

## 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>	442333

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>	1,170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fr Martin Collins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Christopher Meehan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 647761
<b>Fax number</b>	01706 642378
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@scrchs.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2014

