

Mount St Mary's Catholic High School

Ellerby Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS9 8LA

Inspection dates

16–17 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to accelerate pupils' progress. Recent improvements have not had enough time to make an impact.
- Pupils' progress is too variable. The difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils with similar starting points is not diminishing rapidly enough.
- Although middle leaders and teachers check pupils' progress, they do not ensure that those who fall behind catch up.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Not all teachers use effective strategies to engage and challenge disadvantaged pupils. Teachers' questioning is inconsistent.
- Teachers of some subjects do not challenge pupils sufficiently. Pupils too often repeat work unnecessarily. There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length and demonstrate their understanding. Consequently, too many pupils, including the most able, do not make the progress they should.
- Leaders' actions have not addressed inconsistencies in teaching across subjects. They have not identified quickly enough the barriers to pupils' progress. Leaders' plans to support disadvantaged pupils have not been responsive enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils conduct themselves in a mature and positive manner during lessons and around school.
- The senior leaders have been successful in improving pupils' behaviour. Pupils' attitudes to learning are much improved.
- Careers information, advice and guidance are strong and this supports pupils to be prepared well for the next stage of learning or employment.
- Staff give pupils strong pastoral care and support, which contribute effectively to pupils' well-being and safety.
- Leaders provide pupils with high-quality opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, in order to increase rates of progress, by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan activities which match the abilities and prior attainment of all pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils
 - strategies used by leaders and teachers allow disadvantaged pupils to make progress at least as good as that of their peers
 - teachers develop their questioning skills in order to deepen pupils' understanding of key concepts
 - pupils have enough opportunities to write at length in a range of subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the use of pupil-premium funding, so that it leads to demonstrable improvements in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - checking rigorously that actions to improve the school are bringing about the intended results
 - ensuring that leaders and teachers are fully held to account for the progress of pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, the most able and pupils who fall behind in their learning.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders' actions to tackle the areas for improvement following the previous section 5 inspection have not been fully effective. Consequently, the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make continue to require improvement.
- Leaders do not identify accurately what they need to improve. They do not track sharply enough whether their actions have brought about improvements. Consequently, improvements in teaching are not consistent or rapid enough.
- Although leaders check the progress of specific groups, such as disadvantaged pupils, they do not always take effective action to ensure that pupils catch up. As a result, these pupils often do not make enough progress.
- Leaders have not checked the impact of pupil premium funding rigorously. As a result, this funding is not always spent effectively.
- The actions taken by leaders to improve behaviour have resulted in a calmer climate for learning. The number of fixed-term exclusions has declined and there are fewer incidents requiring the use of sanctions. Actions to improve the attendance of specific groups have resulted in reduced absences for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Leaders have planned a curriculum that offers a wide range of options in Years 10 and 11. For example, leaders have ensured that vulnerable pupils access alternative provision that offers suitable qualifications. However, the curriculum, together with homework set for pupils, does not secure consistently good rates of progress in English, mathematics and science. Recently appointed leaders in these subject areas have produced appropriate plans and identified correct priorities. However, these plans have not had enough time to make a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
- Personal, social and health education are well developed through assemblies and lessons. For example, pupils deliver assemblies exploring their community. Pupils are respectful of each other and demonstrate a high level of respect for others' faiths and cultures. Leaders are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have spent the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding effectively. Pupils are assessed accurately and intervention is focused and timely. Consequently, the reading and numeracy skills of pupils who had not reached the required standards by the end of primary school have improved rapidly.
- New leadership of special educational needs provision is effective and the additional funding is suitably deployed. Leaders are clear about where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do to catch up. Support programmes are carefully planned and tracked to ensure that they are bringing about improvements.
- Leaders ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported in accessing all aspects of school.
- Leaders have received support from a national leader of education, the local authority

and the Catholic diocese of Leeds. Leaders have used this support to begin to improve provision in mathematics.

Governance of the school

- Governors meet with leaders to ensure that they are informed fully about the actions leaders are taking to tackle areas needing improvement. Governors are using this information increasingly to challenge leaders.
- The governing body has identified accurately that disadvantaged pupils are not doing as well as they should. This has been discussed in governors' meetings and with leaders. However, these discussions have not brought about the rapid improvements necessary in disadvantaged pupils' progress.
- Governors are highly committed. They now know and understand the school's strengths and the areas which need improvement and have worked with the headteacher and senior leadership team to plan for positive change. However, there has been insufficient time for these plans to have the necessary impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that a culture of care and vigilance exists, placing safeguarding at the centre of their work. Pupils are safe in school and know how to protect themselves from harm because of detailed work to keep them safe. Pupils know to whom and how to report concerns. Leaders have recruited staff who understand how to support vulnerable pupils. Training received by staff and governors is of a high quality, ensuring that the systems for safeguarding are understood by all and that the actions taken are timely and appropriate.
- Communication with parents, carers and a wide range of stakeholders is effective in ensuring that pupils are safe and supported.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Despite a number of new teaching and subject leadership appointments, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to require improvement. This is because teaching remains variable in quality and does not consistently lead to good progress.
- Some teachers do not make specific provision for disadvantaged pupils in their planning or practice. This allows the difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils to remain. Some teachers have begun to employ strategies to engage and challenge disadvantaged pupils more effectively, but these approaches are not used consistently across the school.
- The quality of mathematics teaching is too variable. Teachers do not plan interesting lessons consistently at the right standard for pupils' abilities. They do not check pupils' understanding well enough. Too often, activities lack challenge and are repetitive.
- Teaching in science is inconsistent. Too much learning remains at a superficial level and does not help pupils make links between activities or develop a deep understanding of scientific concepts.

- Extended writing is not used effectively across all subjects. Teachers do not insist regularly that pupils deepen their learning through written work.
- Teaching has improved in English. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make secure progress when teachers plan at the right level to meet pupils' learning needs and clearly explain concepts. Although inconsistencies remain, these are fewer than in other subjects.
- The use of homework is uneven. Too often, homework does not consolidate learning and pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the level of tasks set.
- Although teachers use questions to check pupils' knowledge, teachers' questioning is not used systematically to check and deepen pupils' understanding. Teachers ask what pupils know but do not always ensure that pupils can explain or apply this knowledge.
- Teachers, in accordance with the school's policies, provide parents with clear reports on their children's progress and attainment.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The dedicated pastoral team supports pupils well with their personal development and emotional health. The staff focus on all elements of pupils' well-being and provide essential care and support, ensuring that pupils are safe.
- The school makes good use of a range of external agencies when pupils need support. Staff are persistent and rigorous in following up referrals to professional partners.
- Pupils from a range of minority ethnic groups work well together and are respectful of one another. Consequently, the school community is harmonious.
- The detailed personal, social and health education programme is well designed. As a result of a comprehensive programme of learning, pupils know how to keep themselves safe from physical and emotional harm, avoid the dangers of extremism and keep safe online. Pupils understand how to follow a healthy lifestyle and maintain positive and safe physical and emotional relationships.
- Bullying is rare: when it occurs, staff respond quickly so that it does not happen again. This is supported by pupil leaders undertaking supervisory roles, thereby ensuring that all pupils treat each other with respect. Teachers do not tolerate the use of derogatory language. Pupils said that teachers deal swiftly with any instances when inappropriate language is used.
- From Year 7 onwards, pupils undertake a programme of careers information, education and guidance which informs their option choices and their next steps when they leave the school. This work is planned and delivered systematically to ensure that all pupils are supported to develop a good understanding of the qualifications and skills they will need to take their next steps. This work prepares pupils effectively. Last year, all pupils secured an appropriate place in further education, employment or training.
- Pupils make a number of visits, including to universities, to encourage them to continue

their education. Pupils attend a large range of clubs and activities before and after school. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils engage with these opportunities.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The new behaviour policy has had a positive impact on pupils' conduct and attitudes to learning. Pupils in all year groups told inspectors that there has been a rapid improvement in behaviour since its introduction.
- Behaviour records, detention figures and the numbers of pupils sent out of class are all reducing, which in turn is leading to less disruption to lessons. The number of fixed-term exclusions is diminishing over time.
- Pupils with identified behavioural difficulties are supported in moderating their behaviour through mentoring.
- Pupils are proud of their school and the site is calm and orderly at all times. Pupils treat their environment respectfully and keep it free of litter.
- Pupils' relationships with each other and staff are positive and respectful.
- Leaders actively promote the fundamental British values of respect and tolerance. They place a strong emphasis on pupil leadership and personal responsibility, which contribute successfully to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Consequently, pupils from different faiths and cultural backgrounds integrate well and treat each other respectfully.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is in line with national levels. The school works tirelessly to engage pupils who have poor attendance and has had some success through using alternative providers.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because the progress pupils make is inconsistent across different subjects and key stages.
- Typically, pupils enter the school with levels of attainment significantly below the national average. Last year, from these low starting points, pupils made significantly weaker progress than seen nationally in a number of subjects and failed to make up lost ground. As a result, over half of pupils that took GCSE examinations in 2016 did not secure a GCSE at grade A* to C in English and mathematics.
- Last year, the progress made by boys was weaker than that made by girls. Girls made broadly average progress across a wide range of subjects, but the progress made by boys was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally.
- Close to half of pupils in the school are from disadvantaged backgrounds. The progress they made last year was significantly below that of other pupils nationally. Only around a third of disadvantaged pupils secured a GCSE at grade A* to C in both English and mathematics. The most able disadvantaged pupils made weak progress in English, science and humanities subjects.
- The most able pupils also fell well short of their potential last year. They made weak progress in English in particular, but also in mathematics, science and humanities

subjects. Only around a third of the most able pupils attained a GCSE at grade A or A* in English and mathematics. Very few attained a GCSE at grade A or A* in science.

- The progress of pupils currently in the school has begun to accelerate. Leaders make regular checks on the progress of different groups of pupils and these checks show an improving picture. However, scrutiny of the work in pupils' books shows that these improvements are inconsistent across subjects and key stages.
- The school's most recent assessments and the work in pupils' books shows that disadvantaged pupils across the school are beginning to catch up in some subjects but this is not consistently the case.
- The school meets the needs of lower-attaining pupils more effectively. Last year, these pupils made better progress overall in comparison with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Outcomes for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities were also weak last year. However, provision for these pupils has improved and has begun to deliver better rates of progress for pupils currently in the school.
- Although relatively few pupils study a modern foreign language, their progress in languages is strong and disadvantaged pupils who study a language make considerably better progress than other pupils do nationally.
- Outcomes for pupils in alternative provision are variable. Most follow a programme of learning that includes qualifications in English and mathematics, together with vocational qualifications. Leaders work hard to ensure that these pupils are able to take their next steps confidently when they leave the school. Last year, the efforts of leaders ensured that all pupils who left the school secured a place in further education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	108097
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10031031

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	907
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Clare Skinner
Headteacher	Mark Cooper
Telephone number	01132 455248
Website	www.mountstmarys.org
Email address	thehub@mountstmarys.org
Date of previous inspection	19–20 May 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional first language is much higher than national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national figure. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is lower than average.
- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- The school uses the following alternative providers: Elect, Excel, MAP, Grafton Learning Centre, Breeze Sports Academy, Aspire and Achieve, Aim, COSP, Skills 4U, Leeds College of Building, the Vinery Centre and Hunslet Club.
- The school is supported by a national leader of education, the local authority and the Catholic Diocese of Leeds.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 34 lessons, 10 of which were undertaken jointly with leaders. Leaders and inspectors checked pupils' work to consider progress in books and folders. Conduct in and around the school was also observed, including at the start and end of the day, breaktimes, lunchtimes and as pupils moved between lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders from across the school, teachers and non-teaching staff. Members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, also met with inspectors. Inspectors held discussions with representatives from Leeds local authority and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, action planning, information about pupils' progress, minutes of governors' meetings, evidence of teaching over time and records relating to behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views through the online survey and met with groups of pupils from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.
- Parents gave their views through the 16 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. The 60 staff responses were also considered.

Inspection team

Deano Wright, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michael Maddison	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Cummings	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector

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