



The Holy Family Catholic School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 107428
LEA Bradford
Inspection number 277751
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Ms Josephine Nowacki HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Spring Gardens Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Keighley
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		West Yorkshire BD20 6LH
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01535 210212
Number on roll	970	Fax number	01535 210242
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Gilligan
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr C Davis

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 7 December 2005 - 8 December 2005	Inspection number 277751
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Holy Family Catholic School is a popular Catholic comprehensive school for boys and girls aged 11 to 18 years. It is about the same size as other secondary schools; 970 students on roll, including 126 in the sixth form. There are many more girls than boys in the school. The school is situated approximately one mile north of Keighley in an urban area close to the Yorkshire Dales. Many of the students come from the socially deprived wards within Keighley. Just under ten per cent of students are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The school community is predominantly White British; the largest minority ethnic group is Pakistani. The number of students for whom English is not their first language is low. The students entering the school have achieved results at primary school which are close to the national average. Just over 9 per cent of students have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which is well below average. A small number of students receive support from the school's Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit. Very few students join or leave the school at times other than in Year 7 or at the end of Year 11.

The sixth form is run jointly with a local high school. This provides a culturally diverse community which is different to the rest of the school and is highly reflective of the local population. Students enter the sixth form with average GCSE scores.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The Holy Family Catholic School is a satisfactory school with some good features. The headteacher, ably supported by his senior leadership team, provides clear leadership and an open style of management. His commitment to the school is indisputable. In recent years he has worked relentlessly to ensure better sixth form provision. He has been equally successful in securing new school buildings and a much improved environment for all students. This work is now largely complete and the senior leaders are rightly focussing on the need to raise standards and achievement in the main school. Standards have risen significantly since the previous inspection, although there is inconsistency across subjects. From average attainment on entry to the school, students' progress by the end of Year 9 is well below average. In Years 10 - 11 students make better progress.

There are many strategies in place to address underachievement, especially in Years 7 to 9, and these are now having an impact. However, managers at all levels recognise the need to evaluate the impact of these strategies much more carefully. Teaching and learning in the main school is satisfactory. Data is well used by some departments, such as mathematics and history, to set targets for improvements in student achievement, but its use is inconsistent across the school. Students' contributions to the local community and to school life are excellent. The Catholic ethos is at the very heart of this school where every child, of any faith, feels valued and well supported. The school, and especially the sixth form, provides a safe place where students can learn to live in harmony with each other, preparing them well for life in multi-cultural Britain. The school has taken effective steps to improve since the previous inspection and it has good capacity to improve still further.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The recently established Associated Sixth Form is very well led and managed by a group of senior managers from the Holy Family Catholic School and Greenhead High School, which has a predominantly Muslim student profile. This associated sixth form is cost effective. Numbers on roll have increased by 15% since 2002. The curriculum offers an extensive range of academic courses and a growing number of vocational options which meets the needs of students very well. Personal development in the sixth form is good. The diverse cultural profile of the sixth form is very different from that of both schools; the mature and harmonious relations that exist amongst the students reflect a warm respect for each others' cultures. Students enter the sixth form with average attainment. They achieve well because of the good teaching they receive and their very positive attitudes to their own learning. Attendance is good and the number of students who complete their courses is high. Nearly all students progress to higher education at the end of Year 13.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use strategies, already in place, e.g. closer monitoring of students progress, to speed up the students' rate of achievement in Years 7-9.
- Ensure that the best practice in teaching and learning is shared across all subjects.
- Be more rigorous and critical when evaluating the impact of strategies to raise whole school performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Overall standards have risen at both key stages since the last inspection, although there are fluctuations between subjects. From average attainment on entry to the school, the progress of most students from Years 7 - 9 is well below average. As students move through the school their progress in Years 10 and 11 is close to average levels. At GCSE level the number of students achieving 5 A* - C grades was well above average in 2004. Pass rates in English literature, German, history and Spanish were particularly high in 2004 and in 2005. In GCSE Japanese, A*-C passes were 100% in 2005. However, the number students achieving an A*- C pass in English and mathematics was below national averages from 2002 to 2004. In 2005, the number of students gaining an A*-C pass in English rose significantly, and was much closer to the national average. However, pass rates in mathematics remained slightly below the national average, although the number of A* - A grades improved significantly. The small number of students taking general national vocational qualifications (GNVQ) achieve very well. Standards in the sixth form are high and students make good progress: many achieve grades above those predicted by their GCSE scores.

The students from minority ethnic groups, although small in number, make better progress than any other group. The achievement of boys at both key stages has been below average. Many actions are in place to tackle this, and where these have been evaluated, the results are very encouraging. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive very good support and achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' attendance is carefully monitored and is just above the national average. Most students enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They take a pride in the school's multi-cultural nature and the harmonious way in which students get on together. Students report that there is a small amount of bullying and occasionally some racism but such matters are dealt with promptly and effectively by teachers. Most students have positive attitudes and are willing to take part in the wide range of activities offered by the school. Behaviour in and around the school is generally satisfactory although there is some unsatisfactory behaviour in lessons. Students understand the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle and value the opportunities provided for

healthy eating and taking exercise. However, the extent to which they do so remains inconsistent. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Some of the opportunities provided to students are excellent, including annual retreats in each year group and a pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Sixth form students have very positive attitudes. They are willing to take on extra responsibility, for example through the "buddying" and mentoring system for younger students. They take their work seriously and many are able to work independently. A few students lack effective study skills and do not use their time to best effect.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and a small amount is good. Where teaching is most effective, as for example in modern foreign languages and history, lessons have a clear focus, expectations are high and teachers generate a lively pace that keeps students on their toes. However, the examples of good practice are not shared widely enough among all teachers and there remains too much variation in other subjects. The result is that many students do not make good progress overall. In less effective lessons, students are passive learners. They are not enthused because they are not always challenged sufficiently, and sometimes poor behaviour ensues. The quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form is good. Lessons are well conducted, and teachers have high expectations of their students. Relationships are very secure and students respond confidently and successfully.

Assessment practice is satisfactory overall. The quality of feedback in marking does not always give students a clear understanding about how to improve the standard of their work. In the sixth form the use of data to track and monitor students' progress is good; students are clear about their targets and what they need to do to reach them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that satisfies legal requirements.

In Years 7 to 9, a broad and balanced range of subjects meets the needs of the students. As befits a school with Language College status, there is an innovative and successful approach to the modern languages programme.

In Years 10 and 11, the school is continuing to develop its curriculum well, offering an increasing degree of choice and flexibility. The successful introduction of an alternative curriculum enables some students to attend a variety of practical, vocational courses at a local college as well as continue their studies at school. By providing a wider range of work-related courses, the school is developing appropriate routes of study that meet the individual and diverse needs of its students more successfully.

In the sixth form the curriculum is good. In addition to catering well for those students who wish to study mainstream subjects, the school works successfully with its associate sixth form to expand the number of courses it offers to the growing number of students whose needs and aspirations are not satisfied by the traditional AS and A level courses.

A wide range of enrichment activities enhances the curriculum. They make a highly effective contribution to the academic and social development of the students and also to their enjoyment of school life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The school is accurate in judging the quality of care, guidance and support to be satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form. Arrangements for child protection are properly in place. Teachers and support staff know their students well and there is a high level of commitment to promoting their well-being. Support is good for vulnerable students and students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The ASD unit provides a very high level of support to a small but growing number of students. Year 7 students are helped to settle in the school quickly. Students in Years 10 and 11 say they receive good advice and guidance on further education and employment opportunities. Sixth form students value the very high quality of guidance they receive when applying to higher education or seeking employment.

The use of assessment data to follow the progress and set appropriate learning targets for students in Years 7-11, is beginning to impact in a few departments. While good practice exists, this is not widespread - too many students are unaware of their individual targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with some good features. The headteacher has overseen rising GCSE results since the last inspection. He supervises the development of strong pastoral care arrangements that ensure a safe and caring environment based on the clear Catholic ethos of the school. The headteacher and senior managers have played a major part in establishing the successfully burgeoning Associated Sixth Form provision. He has instigated some good appointments that both further strengthen the senior management team's effectiveness and which also bring new and dynamic leadership, at middle management level, to some subject areas. The school's specialist language college status is having a positive effect and language departments set an example of good practice for other areas in the school.

Leadership on inclusion is good and equal opportunity is promoted well, but concentration on increasing success in GCSE examinations and in building sixth form

provision has left a legacy where more specific action is now required to deal with the underperformance of students in Years 7 to 9. The school is aware of this.

Within subjects, the quality of leadership, as shown through evaluation, monitoring and planning varies from satisfactory to exemplary, such as those in the humanities department. There are areas where the impact of school action to share good practice and raise overall quality has not yet been fully realised.

Leadership and management of the Sixth Form are good and monitoring of the personal and academic progress of students is effective. Governance is satisfactory. Governors are strongly committed to the school and show satisfactory knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.

The school receives very positive support from the vast majority of parents. Links with external agencies, including primary feeder schools, are good. Funds and resources are managed effectively.

Given the improvements in GCSE results and standards in the Sixth Form; the good appointments recently made to key posts, and the clear commitment to raising standards in Years 7 to 9, there is good capacity for future improvement

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team into your school earlier this week. We appreciated the time many of you gave to talk with us and to let us know your views. The purpose of our visit was to find out what your school does well and the areas that need to improve.

These are our main findings from our visit.

- The headteacher and staff have been successful in helping you to improve your exam results at all levels. However, many of you do not make as much progress as you should between Years 7 and 9. You need to try harder to achieve the best results you can and you should ask your teachers to help you with this by showing you how you can improve your work.

- Teaching is good in some areas of the school, but too many lessons do not give you the chance to develop your skills or be involved in different activities that will help you to learn and make progress more quickly.

- Many of you are not set targets, and generally do not know how well you are doing in your subjects. We have asked the school to make sure that you are all given targets and that teachers tell you about how you are progressing.

- Students in the sixth form make good and sometimes very good progress. The school has worked really hard to provide you with a good range of subjects to choose from. Students really like the atmosphere in the sixth form because the staff treat you as an adult and there are good opportunities to make new friends.

- Your behaviour around the school is fine, but a few students are disruptive in lessons and this stops others from making as much progress as they could.

- The Holy Family Catholic School cares well for you and encourages you to lead healthy lifestyles. Some of you could take more advantage of the opportunities to participate in sport, especially sixth form students.

- You value very highly the support and guidance that staff give when you transfer from primary school and as you move through different year groups. Those of you with particular learning needs are very well supported.

- We were impressed with the respect you have for people of other faiths and cultures. The work that many of you do in the community and the help you give to others less fortunate than yourselves is outstanding.

Finally, please can we thank you again for welcoming us into your school and being so friendly and polite. We wish you every success for the future.