

St Paul's Catholic College

Manor Lane, Sunbury-On-Thames, TW16 6JE

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| 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.

- The headteacher has successfully conveyed high ambition to all staff and students. She has empowered leaders and managers at all levels to drive improvement across the college.
- Teaching is now good through the relentless focus on improving its quality. As a result, students achieve well regardless of their starting points, ability or special educational needs.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons using a variety of approaches, make good use of time and effectively use questioning to develop students' knowledge and understanding.
- The college tracks the learning of its students well. Better use of data by all staff is ensuring that the majority of students make good progress and that interventions are effectively targeted to support those who need extra help, including disadvantaged and middle ability students.
- The sixth form has grown in size and is now good. The subjects on offer are well suited to students' needs and, as a result, they make good progress.
- Students' attitudes to learning are very positive in the college's highly harmonious community. Their behaviour is good, both in and out of lessons. Students feel safe and trust that staff are always there to support them.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although there is some outstanding teaching this is not a consistent feature across the school.
- Sometimes teachers' planning and challenge do not bring out the very best in students, particularly the most able. Occasionally, teachers do not give students enough time to reflect on and convey what they have learnt.
- Teachers' feedback, on occasion, is not precise enough to help students improve.
- Leaders and managers do not always carefully check on the impact of the actions and interventions they have put in place on students' achievement and attendance.
- Governors' skills at holding the college to account require greater sharpness, particularly in relation to students' achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 36 lessons each taught by different teachers, of which six were joint observations with members of the college's senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors made some short visits to tutorial groups, joined an assembly, conducted two learning walks with senior staff to look at the quality of teaching and assessment, listened to a small group of students read, and spoke to students around the college.
- The inspectors held meetings with four groups of students, college staff, including senior and middle leaders, and the Chair of the Governing Body. A telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority also took place.
- The inspectors observed the college's work and scrutinised a range of documents, including the college's monitoring and planning documentation, information about students' progress and records relating to behaviour and attendance, together with documents relating to safeguarding.
- They also analysed questionnaires completed by 42 staff, the 109 responses to the on-line Parent View survey, and considered the college's own recent parent and student survey information.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Angela Corbett, Lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Michael Elson | Additional Inspector |
| Duncan Millard | Additional Inspector |
| Ruth Symington | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The college is slightly larger than most secondary schools, serving the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster. It has held specialist technology status since 1996.
- Over half the students are from White British backgrounds. However, the overall proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds is much higher than average with almost every group represented, albeit in relatively small numbers. Around a quarter of students speak English as an additional language, which is almost twice the national average. A small proportion is at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium for whom the college receives additional income is much lower than average. A small number of students are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding. This is funding is for those students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in English at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average, with a below average proportion supported through school action.
- The college meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Thirty-five students in Years 10 and 11 follow full- and part-time courses at Brooklands College or Hersham Pupil Referral Unit. In Years 12 and 13, 32 students follow a course with London Irish Rugby Club, most of this teaching takes place on the college site but a small amount is undertaken at a nearby sports facility. A further 66 students in Years 12 and 13 are enrolled on a part-time course run by Schools Coaching Ltd (SCL); almost all of the teaching for 27 of these students takes place at Richmond and Twickenham Football Club.
- The college is part of the Spelthorne Federation, a group of six secondary schools in this part of Surrey that works together to share resources and expertise.
- Since the last inspection there have been significant staff changes. The headteacher took up her post in September 2011 and the Chair of the Governing Body in October 2010. A new deputy headteacher took up post in September 2012.
- A nursery school, on the same site, is owned by the governors but it has its own management committee and is subject to a separate Ofsted inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching from good to outstanding and so raise achievement further by:
 - planning and adapting tasks that support the best learning for all groups and individuals, and provide sufficient challenge for the most able, including in the sixth form
 - providing sufficient time in lessons to check students' progress by helping the students to reflect on, and articulate, their learning
 - improving the consistency of teachers' assessment and feedback so that all students are clear on the precise steps they need to take to improve.
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - checking carefully the difference that initiatives and interventions are making to students' achievement and attendance, particularly those with special educational needs or who are supported by the pupil premium
 - developing further governors' skills so the governors are able to bring greater sharpness to their questions, particularly in relation to students' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students learn well and make good progress as a result of the good teaching they receive across the college. The variations in performance in different subjects seen at the last inspection have been significantly reduced, so that students' achievement over time is good from their starting points.
- Students' attainment as measured by average point scores was significantly above the national average in 2012. Attainment in English is better than that found nationally. However, the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, was slightly below average, although higher than at the time of the last inspection. This was due to a small number of students achieving grade C or higher in either English or mathematics, but not in both.
- The college has effectively worked to raise attainment as well as increase the progress made by students in all subjects. This is a direct result of better teaching. Current data, evidence from students' work and lesson observations show that attainment levels are continuing to rise at all levels, including in English and mathematics.
- Mathematics is taught over the full two years of Key Stage 4. Early entry for some students helps them better prepare for the June examination.
- Lower ability students and those learning to speak English as an additional language make some of the best progress. The college has successfully addressed the lower performance of middle ability students in 2012 and the proportion set to achieve the highest grades is rising.
- Students who are following courses taught off site make good progress; for example, most of those on the Engineering Diploma course at Brooklands achieve high grades.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make better than average progress as a result of effective support in lessons and individual or small group teaching.
- Students supported by the pupil premium funding also make good progress so that the gap for these groups is narrowing at a faster rate than that for their peers nationally, as shown both by their average point scores and the proportion gaining five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics. This is as a result of careful targeting of this additional resource, such as personalised support to meet specific needs and additional tuition to improve their literacy and numeracy. Year 7 catch-up funding is used to support students appropriately, but it is too early to assess the full impact of this support.
- Achievement in the sixth form has also improved. In part this is due to students' higher attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 but also due to better teaching on courses that meet their needs. As a result, success rates have risen, a higher proportion is achieving at the highest grades and most complete their courses. Students achieve well in the sports-related course run by Irish Rugby and SCL.

The quality of teaching is good

- Effective staff training has significantly improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Students say the variety of tasks and activities that teachers provide make learning enjoyable. Parents also agree that students are taught well.
- Most teaching is good, with an increasing proportion that is outstanding. There remains some inconsistency in quality between teachers, although this is reducing. Most make very good use of information on students' progress to plan lessons well to ensure the best learning for all groups of learners regardless of the ability level and needs. However, in a few instances, tasks and activities are not sufficiently adapted to ensure good learning for all students.
- Teachers use questioning techniques well to promote and check students' learning, as well as develop their thinking skills, varying the questions to suit different individuals. Occasionally, teaching does not provide sufficient stretch and challenge for the most able students across the

college, including in the sixth form.

- Teaching is most successful when lessons move at rapid pace and students discuss each other's work. Teachers skilfully assess students' written and verbal responses to fine-tune learning to secure their understanding and sustain engagement. This was exemplified in a Year 11 mathematics lesson when the students worked individually, in pairs and as a whole class to overcome their misconceptions in solving equations. In some instances, opportunities are missed, particularly at the ends of lessons, for students to articulate what they have learned and prepare them for the next step in their learning.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs and others who find learning hard are effectively supported by additional adults in lessons or in working in small groups. Extra help is also provided for those, for instance in Year 7, who join the college with lower than expected reading levels so that they too can keep up with their peers.
- The mathematics and English teams are working well to help teachers in different subjects support and develop students' numeracy, literacy and communication skills. There is also some effective support across the curriculum, such as in mathematics, for those learning to speak English as an additional language.
- All teachers now provide students with oral and written feedback on their work indicating 'what went well' and 'even better if'. However, there is some inconsistency in how teachers use assessment information and feedback to ensure that students are clear on precisely what it is they need to do to improve their work and achieve their targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are polite and courteous. Strong relationships among students and between students and staff are a key feature of the college.
- The climate for learning has significantly improved with the better teaching and higher ambition staff now set for students' achievement. Good systems are in place to manage behaviour; these are understood by all and used effectively by staff. Students are keen to learn and do well, and are increasingly taking responsibility for their own and others' behaviour.
- Students with one voice say they feel safe at the college; a view supported by staff and parents. Students are clear that help and support are available should they need it; evidence from college records fully endorses this. Through lessons, assemblies, tutorial time and special events, students gain a good understanding about how to stay safe, including e-safety and what bullying is and its different types, such as prejudiced-based bullying. They confidently say that bullying is dealt with well on the rare occasion it occurs.
- Overall, attendance is just below the national average because of the lower attendance of a few students. The college is working hard with parents to improve the attendance of these and all students. However, they are not fully evaluating the impact of the strategies put in place.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides very clear and resolute leadership. Since taking up her post she has systemically driven improvement in all areas of college work and relentlessly focused staff at all levels to successfully raise students' achievement through better quality of teaching.
- Staff are proud to work at the college. Leaders at all levels have been empowered to take responsibility for their areas of accountability. They share a strong sense of purpose and determination to raise the achievement of all students.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and clearly identifies the current strengths of the college and what needs to be done to move the college to outstanding. However, the impact of initiatives and interventions are not always checked carefully enough in relation to students' achievement, including for disabled students and those with special educational needs or who are supported

by the pupil premium.

- Leadership of teaching is strong with frequent monitoring of quality undertaken. The use of performance management has been effective at improving the quality of teaching. Performance is analysed at subject and class level and any underperformance rigorously tackled. Salary progression decisions are now linked to teaching quality and students' progress.
 - Data are used much more effectively at all levels to check the progress made by different groups of students and to ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Any students at risk of underachieving are identified quickly and appropriately supported. The special needs department provides highly effective support for these students, particularly for those with a statement of special educational needs as well as additional care for those who are most vulnerable.
 - The progress and safety of students in off-site provision are routinely monitored.
 - The curriculum meets students' needs well. The Key Stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced, with good focus on developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. Two pathways of study at Key Stage 4 provide an appropriate range of academic and vocational courses, which is further tailored to meet individual needs. A good range of different qualifications, all at level 3, are provided in the sixth form. Excellent partnership arrangements provide opportunities to motivate and engage students who would find a full academic programme hard to access. Careers advice and transition guidance are carefully planned and structured. A good range of extra-curricular opportunities is also available.
 - The ethos of the college helps students to learn respect, empathy for others and understand right from wrong. Religious education, charity work and routine events, such as the Lenten assembly led by the college chaplain during the inspection, contribute well to students' strong spiritual, social and moral development. Good opportunities for cultural development encompass artistic understanding as well learning about other beliefs and ways of life. The link with a school in Tanzania involves all students and is used well by subject staff to develop global understanding.
 - The Parent View responses indicate that parents are positive about the college, with most feeling their child is happy, making progress and would recommend the college.
 - The local authority has provided targeted support, such as in English and mathematics, to help the college to improve. This is reducing to light touch now the authority is confident in the school's capacity to continue to secure improvement. A partnership with an outstanding training school is very effectively supporting professional development.
 - Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Staff are fully aware of their duties to keep students safe.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive of the college and take their statutory duties seriously. The new Chair has brought strong leadership to the governing body and considerable support and challenge to the college. Governors are informed about the work of the college through the headteacher's reports and from visits to look at different aspects of the college's work for themselves. As result, they have a good awareness of improvements since the last inspection, including those in student performance and the quality of teaching. They also check on how the college is recognising and rewarding teachers, tackling any underperformance and how this links to performance management and pay progression. The governing body has undertaken training in order to improve its effectiveness. However, their skills to analyse the progress information of students and to challenge the college about the impact of changes to provision and use of interventions are not sharp enough to fully hold the college to account. Nonetheless, they routinely ensure that the college's financial resources are used well. This includes reviewing the effectiveness of the college's use of the extra financial support to help improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged students in relation to their peers in the college and nationally.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 125311 |
| Local authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 402326 |

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

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| Type of school | All-through |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 11–18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1104 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 253 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Cathy Hobday |
| Headteacher | Ceri Bacon |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23–24 June 2010 |
| Telephone number | 01932 783811 |
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