

Saint Pius X Catholic High School

A Specialist School in Humanities

Wath Wood Road, Wath-upon-Deerne, South Yorkshire, S63 7PQ

Inspection dates 16–17 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Achievement is good in a wide range of subjects including English, mathematics, geography, history, media and physical education.
- Standards in mathematics have risen in the last two years as a result of the positive actions taken by senior leaders.
- Many students make good progress as they move through the school. The proportion of students across all year groups making better than expected progress is rising as a result of good and better teaching.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- The school's work to keep children safe is good. Students say they feel safe and enjoy coming to school.
- Behaviour is typically good. Students are keen to do well and have good relationships with their teachers. Attendance is broadly average and improving.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have worked hard and successfully to improve the quality of teaching and have adapted the curriculum to better meet students' needs and aspirations.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is accurate and is based on a rigorous assessment of students' achievement. Leaders correctly identify how the school can improve further.
- Governors know how well the school is doing and provide a high level of support and challenge to leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all students who have special educational needs make as much progress as their classmates.
- There are a small number of subjects, including religious studies, in which students' achievement is not yet good, and in which middle leaders are not fully effective in driving improvement.
- Leaders do not check fully the effectiveness of the wide range of additional support that is provided for students in danger of falling behind.
- A small number of teachers do not use the information they have about students sufficiently well to plan work that is suitably challenging.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback on students' written work is too variable.
- Not all teaching assistants are effective in guiding students' learning so that students make the best possible progress.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, inspectors observed 36 lessons and parts of lessons, reviewed work in students' books in a range of subjects and listened to students read. Inspectors jointly observed four lessons with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher. Inspectors also visited an assembly and two form registration periods.
- Meetings were held with groups of staff, students, five members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to 24 staff inspection questionnaires. They considered information from previous school surveys carried out with parents and students. The results of 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, were also considered.
- At different times in the day, inspectors observed students moving around inside and outside the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a number of documents, including the school's own view of its performance, the school improvement plan, minutes from governing body meetings and reviews of the school undertaken by external consultants.

Inspection team

Helen Gaunt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
William John Frain	Additional Inspector
Andrew Williams	Additional Inspector
Judith Gooding	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Saint Pius X Catholic High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium is smaller than the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage. There is a very small proportion of students for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of students who have a statement of special educational needs or receive extra support at school action plus is just above average.
- The school offers alternative provision for a small number of students in Years 10 and 11 within a local network of providers including Dearne Valley College, Serenity Academy and The Kitchen Gardens.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection, governors have worked with a National Leader of Governance. School leaders have benefited from partnership work with Learners First and Wickersley School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching and learning for all students, and particularly those who have special educational needs, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use information about students to plan activities and tasks that encourage and enable all students to challenge themselves and to reach the highest levels and grades of which they are capable
 - ensuring that students are always given the precise written guidance they need to improve their work and time to respond and learn from their mistakes
 - ensuring that teaching assistants consistently give students the confidence and skills they need to enable them to make the best possible progress
 - ensuring that leaders regularly check whether the additional support and extra help provided to students in danger of falling behind are enabling them to make faster progress.
- Increase further the impact of leadership and management to raise students' achievement even more, especially in religious studies, by:
 - ensuring that the good practice demonstrated by the vast majority of middle leaders in raising students' achievement and improving the quality of teaching is adopted by all middle leaders
 - ensuring that the recently revised religious studies course engages sufficiently students' interest.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the last inspection, the quality of leadership and management has improved. Senior leaders and governors set high expectations for staff and students. Their aspirations are shared by teachers and leaders at all levels and staff morale is high.
- Good progress has been made in tackling the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection. Achievement has improved in mathematics. More students are making good progress, inadequate teaching has been eliminated, and the quality of teaching is now good and, at times, outstanding.
- Improvements in teaching have been led by the headteacher who has an accurate view of the quality of teaching across the school. There are effective methods to manage teachers' performance which are directly linked to pay progression. Teachers are set challenging targets, linked to students' achievement, and training is tailored to address the individual development points for every teacher. Opportunities to share good practice have been created through partnership work with a local outstanding school, and leaders at all levels are making the most of these opportunities to improve teaching.
- The school's systems for checking students' progress are thorough. Any potential underachievement is quickly identified and a range of additional support and help is put in place.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and plans are appropriately focused on the correct priorities for improvement. The range of improvements already achieved indicates that leaders have good capacity to secure further improvements.
- Middle leaders and subject leaders are increasingly held to account for students' achievement and the quality of teaching in their subjects. The vast majority of middle leaders are successfully driving forward improvement in their areas. However, improvement in a small number of subjects has been slower, in particular in religious studies, because leaders have not used the information that is now readily available to take swift and decisive action to improve outcomes. In religious studies, leaders have only recently taken the decision to change the curriculum so that it is more relevant for the current groups of students in the school.
- Leaders are committed to equality of opportunity for all students and recognise the need to strengthen the way in which additional support assistants are allocated within lessons and in extra, out-of-class provision, for students who have special educational needs. They have identified the need for additional training for teaching assistants so that they can provide exactly the right help to individuals and small groups of students.
- Funding for disadvantaged students and Year 7 catch-up provide a wide range of additional activities, resources and support. Leaders have started to measure the impact of this spending on outcomes for students. They are aware that the gaps in attainment have narrowed more quickly in mathematics than in English because a greater focus has been placed on mathematics in the past two years. This is being addressed.
- The curriculum is constantly reviewed to ensure that courses meet the needs of students. Leaders are aware that the changes to the religious studies curriculum need to be implemented swiftly. There is a sufficient range of alternative courses to ensure that all students enjoy and achieve. The off-site provision for some students in Key Stage 4 enables them to achieve success too.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school and believe that their children are safe there.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school over the past two years, in particular in helping to ensure that the assessment and moderation of students' achievement are accurate.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have worked hard to improve their own effectiveness since the last inspection. A new Chair of the Governing Body and vice-chair have been in place since January 2013; all governors completed a skills' audit and there has been a complete restructuring of the governing body committees. Governors continue to take their training seriously; they work closely with senior leaders and are frequent visitors to the school.
 - Governors provide high levels of support and challenge in equal measure. They have worked hard to ensure they have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what could be improved. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and students' progress and are able to ask searching questions.
 - Financial management is strong and governors were responsible for steering senior leaders to more closely monitor the impact of the pupil premium spending on outcomes for students.
 - Governors hold the headteacher and other teachers to account through a rigorous process of

performance management.

- Governors ensure that the safety of students is high on their list of priorities.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students' behaviour in lessons and their attitudes to learning are positive. Their behaviour around the school is also good. They are well mannered and show courtesy and respect towards one another and towards adults.
- Students told inspectors that they like their school, that they feel well cared for and that adults provide them with the support and guidance they need. They say that there is always someone to go to if they need help or advice and that their teachers encourage them to do well.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Students say that they feel safe in school, they know how to keep safe and parents agree.
- Students enjoy coming to school and attend well. Since the last inspection, leaders have worked hard to encourage regular attendance which has continued to rise. Overall attendance is average and the number of persistent absentees is below average.
- The school's work to encourage positive behaviour and ensure that learning is not disrupted has reduced the number of fixed-term exclusions since the last inspection.
- Students have a good understanding of all of the different types of bullying. They say that bullying is rare and that any incidents that do occur are dealt with swiftly. Leaders are working with local agencies to provide appropriate guidance for students about child sexual exploitation.
- Staff, governors, parents and students all have regular opportunities to express their views, on all aspects of school life, through meetings and questionnaires and leaders act on the findings from these responses. For example, the Year 9 curriculum was adapted in response to students' feedback.
- The school successfully promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through a rich and varied range of activities within and beyond the daily curriculum. Students demonstrate a respect for, and appreciation of, different faiths, cultures and beliefs, to tolerate difference and to develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will help them to contribute positively to life in modern Britain.
- Students are enthusiastic about engaging in activities such as football, basketball, trampolining, debating, chess and a weekly United Nations project group. They also develop leadership skills as school prefects, peer readers and team captains.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved significantly across most subjects since the last inspection. This has resulted in students making swifter progress and so standards have risen.
- There are more opportunities for teachers to share strengths in their practice; links with teachers in other schools have been developed and more teachers in the school are embarking on a programme to develop outstanding practice. Students told inspectors that teaching has improved since the last inspection and that they undertake and enjoy more work with other students to discover solutions to problems and to assess each other's learning.
- Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in all aspects of teaching and strengths are embedded throughout the school. Aspirational targets are set for all students; many teachers pitch activities at exactly the right level so that all students are able to make good progress and most students know their targets and are working hard to improve upon them.
- Students respond very positively when they are given the opportunity to think for themselves, to share their ideas and to express their own views. For example, in a Year 9 sociology lesson in which students considered how the media portrays criminals, this led to a discussion around stereotyping and social stigma. Students made outstanding progress because activities for each student were matched precisely to their individual and aspirational target grades. The teacher's excellent questioning enabled students to develop their thinking further and students worked together to assess each other's performance.
- There are occasions when students are not clear about the level at which they are working. Also, they do not have access to the most appropriate type of support or resource to enable those who are finding their work too difficult or too easy to make the best possible progress.
- Inspectors found some excellent marking and feedback in a range of subjects, including geography and

history, where teachers gave very precise details of what the student had done well and what they needed to do to improve their work. In some lessons, students responded to these comments. However, this does not occur consistently across the school. Also, errors in spellings and grammar are sometimes left unchecked and untidy or poorly presented work is left unchallenged.

- There is an increasing focus on the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Sometimes, key words are on display and students' spelling and grammar are checked routinely. In all mathematics lessons, the development of students' numeracy skills is a key focus. However, students do not practise their literacy and numeracy skills across the full range of subjects.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Since the previous inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 4 have risen consistently in a range of subjects and an increasing proportion of students across all year groups are making and exceeding the rates of progress expected of them. The school's assessment information, and evidence seen in students' books, confirms this.
- From below average starting points when they enter the school, students reach broadly average standards in their GCSE examinations in most subjects. This demonstrates good progress over time.
- Standards in mathematics have risen significantly since 2012 and students now make good progress because underperformance has been tackled successfully and teaching has improved.
- Over time, GCSE results have been consistently above average in English and students make good progress from their starting points. At the time of the inspection, the 2014 English examination papers were being re-marked. Evidence from the school's externally moderated assessments, the standard of work in students' books and in lessons observed during the inspection, strong and consistent department leadership and teaching in English, reflected in the school's own records and demonstrated during the inspection, show that this trend continues.
- Over the last three years, pupil premium funding has been used well to support disadvantaged students. A number of actions have been taken by school leaders to improve the learning and progress of these students. As a result, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged students and other students in the school, which in 2012 was up to two grades lower in each of mathematics and English, has narrowed to one grade lower in 2014. The attainment of disadvantaged students, in comparison to other students nationally, was one grade lower in 2012 in English and it has stayed the same in 2013. In mathematics, in comparison to the national figures, the gap has narrowed from one-and-a-half grades to one grade in the same period.
- The school's data and inspection evidence from a range of subjects and classes show that there is no difference between the progress made by students from different minority ethnic groups, those who speak English as an additional language and others either in school or nationally.
- In many subjects, teachers' expectations of what the most able students can achieve have risen over the past two years; students undertake work that challenges and 'stretches' them to reach their potential. As a result, the proportion of students achieving three or more of the top GCSE grades, A*-A, has risen, including in mathematics. However, there are a small number of subjects where the proportion of students who achieve the top grades remains below average, including in religious studies.
- In response to students' feedback, in 2014, some Year 9 students had the opportunity to follow an option course leading to a GCSE or ASDAN qualification at the end of Year 9. As a result, many students already have a grade A* to C GCSE qualification when they start Year 10, which has given them the confidence to face the demands of the whole range of GCSE courses. The school does not enter students early for GCSE examinations in mathematics and English.
- The curriculum meets students' needs and aspirations well. Students following vocational courses at a local college and with other providers also make good progress.
- Students who enter Year 7 with low numeracy and literacy skills benefit from extra support, such as additional numeracy lessons and small-group support for reading. This helps them to settle in quickly and some of them make rapid progress as a result.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are cared for well and they receive a wide range of support in lessons and from additional lessons in smaller groups or on a one-to-one basis. In 2014, the proportion of these students who made the progress expected of them in mathematics was above average. However, progress varies and not all students make as much progress as their classmates. This is because not all forms of additional support and extra help are equally successful, and not all teaching assistants are as effective as they could be in helping students make the best possible

progress. Leaders are only just beginning to assess the impact of all of the different forms of support on students' achievement.

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

Unique reference number 106962

Local authority Rotherham

Inspection number 442184

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

Type of school Secondary

School category Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils 11–16

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 640

Appropriate authority The governing body

Chair John Cooke

Headteacher Tony Bishop

Date of previous school inspection 24 October 2012

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