

Our Lady and St Chad Catholic Sports College

Old Fallings Lane, Wolverhampton, WV10 8BL

Inspection dates 9–10 January 2014

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.

- In the last 18 months students have been making increasingly good progress.
- Standards have significantly improved in the last school year and have been above the national average in English and additional science at the end of Year 11.
- The quality of teaching is good and a growing proportion is outstanding. Teachers know all their students well and have high expectations.
- The most recent results in mathematics and English confirm the positive impact of high quality teaching.
- Students are proud of their school, behave well and show respect for each other, for staff and for their environment. They feel happy and secure at school and are eager to learn.
- The sixth form is good. The majority of students make good progress in their courses; these meet their needs well. All students go on to training, employment or further education.
- Since the last inspection, the headteacher has created a strong team of school leaders. Together with determined governors, they have driven improvements in teaching and significantly raised students' achievement.
- The school celebrates the diversity of students' cultures and faiths. Students, particularly in the sixth form, have a strong sense of social responsibility.
- The school's sports specialism makes an exceptional contribution to the personal development of students and to the wider community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While books are marked regularly and consistently, teachers do not always make sure that their comments are helping students to understand the work better.
- There are not enough opportunities for students, particularly the most able, to develop their ideas in extended writing and discussion.
- Teachers do not always make sure students get in the habit of checking their own work before handing it in.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons, of which five were jointly observed with the headteacher or the deputy headteachers. In addition, the inspection team looked at students' work in their books and listened to them read.
- There were meetings with groups of students, senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 23 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and the 130 responses to a recent questionnaire from the school to parents. Inspectors also considered the 68 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team examined: the school's own data on students' recent and current progress; planning and monitoring documentation; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Richard Boswell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Keith Brown	Additional Inspector
Roisin Chambers	Additional Inspector
David King	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of students come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The percentage of students who are supported through the pupil premium (which provides additional funding for students in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- Some students in the sixth form attend some of their lessons at four other local partner schools: Heath Park School, North East Wolverhampton Academy, Moreton School and Moseley Park School.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2012, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there has been a considerable number of changes among the teaching staff and among school leaders at all levels. The headteacher was not able to be in school for medical reasons for a part of the last school year. A substantial new building project was recently completed on the site.

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:
 - allowing students to get involved in writing longer pieces of work and in extended discussion and debate, thus offering more challenge for the more able, including in the sixth form
 - making sure that comments in books are helping students to understand the work better
 - giving students the skills and confidence to correct and re-draft their own work as part of the process of completing it.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school with standards that are markedly below those found nationally. In the last school year, at the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of students achieving a good pass at GCSE was very close to the national average. This means students are making good progress from low starting points.
- Students currently on roll at the school show very positive attitudes to learning and have been making good progress in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 as they move from year to year. This includes the smaller number of more able students and shows that the improvements in achievement are consistent and sustained.
- The previous inspection made reference to concerns about students' achievement and the strength of the broader leadership team in the school following the promotion of key members of staff. As the report acknowledged, the school was already tackling these issues but the performance of Year 11 students in examinations in 2012, immediately following the report, was below the minimum expectations set by government. Since the previous inspection, and those results, the school has developed and appointed highly effective leaders who have relentlessly driven significant improvements in the quality of teaching and raised achievement.
- There has been a significant improvement since September 2012 in the proportion of students making the progress expected of them in English and mathematics. This is now higher than that found nationally in English and close to the national figure in mathematics. Many students currently on roll are now making more than expected progress, particularly the more able.
- Students with lower to middle attainment at Key Stage 2 make particularly good progress. The school uses early entry to GCSE mathematics and English for some of these students to assist in their motivation. Recent results for examinations taken in November 2013 show nine out of 10 students achieved a good pass in mathematics and 17 out of 24 in English. All students who have taken an early examination have had the opportunity to take it again if required.
- The gap in the attainment of those students who are supported by additional funding and others in the school has considerably narrowed from 2012 to 2013, by one third of a GCSE grade in English and by a half a GCSE grade in mathematics. This is a result of the funding being carefully targeted to provide additional teaching and resources. These students are making the same progress in English as other students in the school and better than other students nationally who are also supported by additional funding. In mathematics this group of students are making progress that is close to the progress of other students in the school.
- The school has put in place a strong support system for students in Year 7 who are catching up other students in literacy and numeracy. Year 7 readers were keen to talk about their books and the school library. Funding has been used to offer computer software programs for literacy and numeracy as well as additional teaching support. Staff, including senior leaders, have been trained in the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics).
- Sixth form achievement is good. Students make good progress in the school and in partner schools, following a range of courses well suited to their needs. These include sports studies and science, law and health and social care. The proportion of students who remain for both years in the sixth form is higher than the national average. Students are well equipped with the skills to find work locally and nationally and in 2013 all students either found employment or continued with further education or training. The school has introduced tougher entry requirements into

the sixth form though less than one in twelve sixth form students are following academic courses. Students are making much improved progress in these courses since September 2012 and are attaining well. The majority of students are on more closely work-related courses and make good progress with a trend of improvement in standards over the past three years.

- The progress of the sizeable group of students who have special educational needs and who are supported through school action has improved over the past three years and in 2013 their progress was above the national average. This was not the case with the smaller group of students who are supported through school action plus. However, just under half of these students joined the school after Year 7 and they have made good progress during their time in the school.
- The school's commitment to equal opportunities is evident in the similar achievement of students who have English as an additional language to other students. Those who come to the school at an early stage of learning English are well supported and make rapid progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection and this resulted in improvements in the attainment of Year 11 students in 2013 and improved progress for students who are currently on roll at the school. Students throughout the school enjoy their lessons and show positive attitudes to their learning. Relationships between staff and students are strong.
- Inspectors saw consistently high expectations from teachers throughout the school, including the sixth form, and this is reflected in the school's own records. Students know how well they are doing in class and are set challenging targets. Their progress is regularly and accurately assessed and teachers are quick to spot any underachievement. They receive regular homework that is marked and returned promptly but students are not always clear about how teachers' comments can help them improve.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and is improving further as a result of close monitoring by the leader of sixth form. This includes the quality of teaching that students are receiving in schools in the sixth form partnership and there are regular observations of teaching in other schools and team planning of partnership lessons. Inspectors saw highly motivated students in sixth form lessons, engrossed in imaginative, demanding work. For example, in one Year 12 psychology lesson, structured like a university seminar, students skilfully took detailed notes from the teacher before working independently and eagerly to test a true/false hypothesis.
- All groups of students, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, benefit from the development of literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of lessons, from physical education to business studies and across the year groups. The skills required to study effectively are actively taught, particularly in the sixth form, but students are not always in the habit of checking their work before they hand it in.
- There have been particular improvements in the teaching of geography and history. This has shown a positive impact in students' progress in these subjects, particularly at Key Stage 3. For example, in one Year 8 history class observed during the inspection, pupils made outstanding progress as they worked in groups researching the role of General Haig in the First World War.
- While the best teaching allows all students to make good progress, this is not always the case. Some teachers cut short discussions or written responses that are giving students, particularly the more able, the opportunity to explore and develop ideas. As a result, their progress is not

always as good as it might be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- This is an orderly school where students are punctual and there are high expectations of courtesy and respect. The wider school ethos of service and of social and moral responsibility is seen in everyday interactions both in the classroom and around the school. It is a sign of the mutual respect between teacher and taught that the school's policy for behaviour applies equally to staff and students.
- The behaviour of students is good. They are confident, friendly and helpful to each other and to visitors. For example, students of all ages will frequently greet adults with an unprompted 'Good morning' or 'Good afternoon'.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe anywhere on the school site and are free from any intimidation or prejudice. They know what to do and who to see if any bullying does occur and both students and parents say (and school records show) that the school deals with any incidents swiftly and effectively. Students are also knowledgeable and aware of e-safety and the need to protect their identities online. Students' safety and attendance off-site, for example, in the sixth form, is monitored carefully.
- Students and staff are clear that good behaviour in lessons has contributed to the good progress that students are now making. It is also clear in the pride students have in the appearance of their uniform, the neat presentation over time of work in their books and how well prepared they are for their lessons. Behaviour is not outstanding because students across the school have yet to demonstrate through their progress exceptional independence and consistently strong attitudes to their learning.
- The proportion of students in the school who have special educational needs is above average; of these students, the majority have difficulties with their behaviour. The school works closely with these students and is able to demonstrate considerable success in raising their achievement and improving attendance. Permanent exclusions from school have been zero over the last three years and temporary exclusions are low compared to the national average.
- All members of the sixth form engage in volunteering and are strong role models for younger students. They lead or assist in drama, music or sports sessions with younger students as well as helping them with their reading or their mathematics.
- The school has made very good progress in moving attendance up to being broadly average from low and the rate of persistent absences has dropped markedly. This is a result of robust actions taken by school leaders and governors, such as the purchase of a minibus to bring students to school when required. The school has been prepared to pursue legal action with parents where necessary in order to ensure students are in lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, in the summer of 2012, the school has expanded its team of school leaders at all levels to work with the headteacher. These leaders have shown a unity of purpose and a steely determination to move the school forward. Parents, students and staff all share high expectations of achievement, teaching and behaviour.
- The marked improvements in teaching and the consequent raising of students' performance

have been achieved in the context of the headteacher's unavoidable absence for medical reasons and a major building project on the school site. This demonstrates the strength of leadership over time, the impact of decisive action taken since the last inspection and the robust nature of the management systems that are now in place. This track record, together with the good progress of students currently on roll, clearly demonstrates the capacity of the leadership and management to make further improvements.

- The improvements in teaching have resulted from rigorous monitoring by school leaders and managers and highly effective performance management driven by the needs of the students. This has led to some significant changes in staffing. Underperformance by staff or underachievement by students is tackled immediately through an initial, supportive six-week plan. If no improvement is registered then further action is swiftly taken.
- The school has insisted on all staff consistently applying policies regarding, for example, assessment and the management of behaviour. This means that students have the security of familiar routines and know exactly what is expected of them as they move from lesson to lesson. This has been key to developing the students' positive attitudes to learning.
- Effective training in the assessment of students' progress has meant that accurate and relevant information is produced by every teacher on a regular basis. School leaders use this information to make sure the school is responding to the changing needs of its students. The development of the staff's professional skills is a high priority. This has led to promotions to all levels of leadership in the school.
- The school's strong sixth form leadership has meticulously addressed issues raised in the previous inspection report. The range of courses on offer to students, both academic and work-related, is well matched to their requirements. The quality of these courses, provided through the sixth form arrangement with other schools, is carefully monitored and changes have been made to ensure students receive the best teaching available within the partnership. Independent and impartial advice on careers, training and further education is available to all students as they move through the school. More able students are encouraged to consider appropriately-demanding courses in higher education and visits to universities are arranged.
- The local authority has assisted the school in tackling the issues identified in the previous inspection. Good use has been made of local authority training and guidance, particularly in helping to improve the quality of teaching.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire were very positive about all aspects of the school's work, including communication between the school and home. The school meets all the statutory requirements for the safeguarding of students and case studies show that vulnerable students are well cared for and continue to make progress with their studies in spite of challenging circumstances.
- The school offers a wide range of subjects and activities for students at all stages of their school career. This offer has been reviewed and updated in the last 18 months and is well suited to the needs of the current students. There is additional teaching support in literacy and numeracy for those who require it and more able students are given opportunities to extend their learning. The school's extensive sports programme makes an exceptionally strong contribution to students' experiences of school. There are direct links to supporting literacy and the involvement with the local community is exemplary. Impressively high numbers of students are sports leaders, building their confidence and self-esteem alongside their sporting talents.
- As a school with the Catholic faith at the heart of its ethos, the spiritual life is evident in many

aspects of the school's work. There are opportunities for reflection in prayers every morning and students frequently take assemblies themselves based on themes of moral choices in everyday life. The school celebrates the rich diversity of other faiths and different cultures that are a reflection of its students' backgrounds, with, for example, a recent visit to a Sikh gurdwara and the marking of religious festivals. The students, particularly in the sixth form, have a keen sense of local and global responsibility and through their own initiative raised over £2,000 in response to the typhoon in the Philippines. They also act as mentors and buddies for younger students. The artistic life of the school is vibrant and extensive with many musical bands and dramatic productions. There are regular cultural visits abroad and links with two partner schools in Uganda.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governors are very supportive of the school and take their statutory duties seriously. They have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and do not shy away from asking difficult and important questions about the school's performance. They know what is happening in the school as a result of their knowledge of data, their own visits, regular interviews with school leaders and guidance from the local authority. As result, they have a good awareness of improvements since the last inspection, including those in students' performance and the quality of teaching. They also check on how the school is recognising and rewarding teachers, tackling any underperformance and ensure this links to performance management and pay progression. The governing body has undertaken training in order to improve its effectiveness and they 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.

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	104401
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	431169

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	794
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Middleton
Headteacher	Mary Keelan
Date of previous school inspection	2 May 2012
Telephone number	01902 558250
Fax number	01902 558251
Email address	info@olsc.org.uk

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