

Convent of Jesus and Mary Language College

Crownhill Road, London, NW10 4EP

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The majority of students make good progress and achieve well given their starting points when they enter the school.
- Teaching is generally good across the school and some is outstanding. As a result students, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress and achieve well.
- Strong careers advice and guidance and a developing range of subjects in the good sixth form are increasing staying on rates and enabling more students to progress to further and higher education.
- Students say that school is a safe and secure place to learn. Attendance is at a high level and there is zero tolerance of all forms of bullying.
- A highly experienced headteacher a national leader of education leads a strong senior team who identify good practice in teaching and learning from a range of sources and implement it across the school.
- The governing body knows and supports the school community and has established effective systems to monitor how successful leaders are in driving improvement.
- Positive attitudes to learning are a notable feature among students who arrive in class very well prepared for learning and ready to do their best.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all students who enter the school with high scores make as much progress as they could by the time they reach GCSE.
- The quality of assessment, marking and feedback to students does not always match that of the best.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper understanding of their work through discussions.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team attended a liturgy and made a number of short visits to an assembly and other activities around the school.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, the Chair and two members of the Governing Body, school staff, including subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed 55 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), three parents' emails and 91 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- They observed the work of the school and examined numerous documents, including checks on teaching, minutes of governors' meetings, support for vulnerable students, and policies and records relating to students' achievement, exclusions, attendance, punctuality, behaviour, safety, bullying and safeguarding.

Inspection team

James Coyle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Brian Lester	Additional Inspector
Karen Roche	Additional Inspector
Mary Myatt	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average size secondary school.
- It converted to academy status in April 2012. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. Students come from a wide range of ethnic groups, with many speaking English as an additional language.
- About one in five students is supported through school action, which is above average. About one in every 25 students is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs. This proportion is below the national average.
- Two in every five students are eligible for the pupil premium, additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children of service families and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is well above the national average. There are no children from service families currently on the school's roll.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of students follow vocational courses with a local training provider.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure all lessons are good or outstanding by:
 - improving teachers' oral and written feedback to students so that it matches the quality of the best and students know what they need to do to improve their work
 - giving students more opportunities to take part in discussions in order to develop a deeper understanding of the topics they are studying
 - ensuring students are given appropriate levels of challenge, in particular the more able, so that they make better progress and attain higher grades at GCSE and A level.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they enter the school students attainment levels are in line with those found nationally. Most make progress that compares well with national figures.
- Students consistently achieve five A* to C passes at GCSE including English and mathematics in line with the national average so that by the time they have reached the end of Year 11 they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In 2012, the attainment of both groups of students who were eligible for the pupil premium, as indicated by their performance at GCSE, was below that of other students in the school, but they made slightly better progress than students nationally. In English, students' achievements were similar to those of others in their age group in school, and higher than those in similar circumstances nationally. In mathematics there is a gap of half a grade with other students in the school, and a quarter of a grade with all students of their age group. This gap is smaller than is usually found and is closing quickly. These students make rapid progress, in many cases because of the additional teaching and support they receive in Years 7 and 8.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make very good progress because staff monitor their performance carefully, and ensure that they receive extra support, for example from teaching assistants if they need it.
- Students from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are also monitored carefully, and their progress is similar to that of other students in the school.
- Reading standards are good, because students make rapid progress, some of them from low starting points at the beginning of Year 7. The school's additional support programme is helping to encourage more students, especially in Years 7 and 8, to read widely and develop their literacy skills.
- Inspectors saw evidence of good skills in writing, communication and mathematics across a range of subjects. In a Year 13 performing arts class, for example, students took part in a rehearsal using oral and characterisation skills to model Brecht's techniques of addressing the audience and changing tone and mood during performance. They spoke with confidence and revealed knowledge and application skills which were accurately evaluated by other students.
- Applied and vocational subjects such as health and nutrition, and personal effectiveness provide suitable learning programmes for those students who take them. They gain good results, which ensures that they have good opportunities to continue their education.
- Students who take alternative vocational courses with a local training provider, including basic skills provision in English, mathematics and science and appropriate work experience placements, achieve well.
- The number of students staying on in the sixth form continues to increase. For most their attainment when they join the sixth form is below average. Their progress and achievement is good and improving. It is not outstanding because the number of students gaining the higher grades at A level is not as high as it could be, but is improving.
- Until September 2012 students were entered early for mathematics GCSE s. However, analysis of results over time showed that the more able students were not securing the higher A* and A grades at GCSE, and the policy has been abandoned. As a result, the proportion of students gaining higher grades is set to increase.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good with some outstanding classroom practice. When teaching is at its best, teachers have high expectations of their students and good subject knowledge. They plan activities which closely meet the needs of all their students and carry out regular checks to make sure they understand what they are doing. However, not all teaching provides sufficient challenge so that all students progress as rapidly as they can.

- Students' work is regularly assessed, and students are given oral and written feedback. However, there is some variability in marking across subjects and in the way feedback is provided to students, with the result that they do not always know exactly what to do to improve their work.
- In an outstanding Year 12 health and social care lesson the teacher asked the class to reflect on what had been covered in an earlier session in order to make decisions on the 'nature/nurture' debate. In paired groups they were given challenging, timed research tasks exploring themes such as diversity and discrimination. They assessed each other's responses using a scoring sheet to which the teacher added written comments on how to improve and gain better marks. However, the use of assessment during lessons is not always up to this high standard.
- There are sound policies in place for promoting literacy across and within subjects, for raising attainment in science in the sixth form and for improving the progress of more able students in mathematics, and effective systems are in place to ensure that they are implemented.
- An increase in the number of well-qualified learning support assistants has allowed for much closer monitoring of students' progress by teachers, most notably in Year 9 and of disabled students and those with special educational needs, in English, mathematics and science. Consequently, these students now receive appropriate support.
- In the sixth form, teaching is also good. Teachers carefully plan activities which provide challenge and opportunities for independent thinking. In English, for example, teachers successfully used poetry and a novel to encourage discussion between teachers and among students. Assessment of work is closely related to examination requirements, and teachers track students' progress in order to make improvements to lessons, meet the needs of students and improve their grades.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students exhibit exemplary behaviour and mature attitude to school. They are prompt to lessons and arrive well prepared and ready to learn.
- The school's high expectations of behaviour, which are underpinned by a strong and effective pastoral support system, result in students' excellent conduct and manners in and around the school.
- Students' consistently above-average attendance is excellent and attests to their enjoyment of school and the priority that attendance is given by school leaders.
- Parents, staff and students are highly positive in confirming that students are well behaved and that the school is a safe place to learn. Year 7 students say that there are strict rules in the code of conduct which everyone understands and that teachers are always available to help them if they need it.
- The attendance and progress of the very small number of students who attend courses away from the school site is carefully monitored, and are excellent.
- On the rare occasions when bullying occurs, either in the form of name-calling, physical or cyber-bullying, students say that the school deals with it extremely quickly and effectively so that it does not interfere with study.
- Students, including those who attend courses with the local training provider, have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the senior team share high aspirations for the students' success and well-being. The headteacher, a national leader of education, knows where good practice exists and makes good use of it throughout the school.
- Effective performance management systems are in place and self-evaluation makes a positive

contribution to improvement planning and professional development, resulting in improved outcomes for students as the quality of teaching continues to improve.

- While the general trend is for improved outcomes for many students the school recognises that there is still work to do, in particular to ensure that leaders at all levels share high ambitions for the most able students, focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning, and closely monitor the use of assessment so that the quality of marking is always high.
- The range of subjects offered by the school is broad and balanced, and is kept under continuous review in order to ensure that it fully meets the needs of students. The school has recently introduced an applied science option in Year 10, as well as additional English, mathematics and science, focused on improving students' performance at GCSE and progression to the next stage of education, training or employment. In addition students benefit from additional literacy and numeracy sessions available after school.
- The sixth form is responsive to the needs of all its students who benefit from the flexibility in the range of courses it offers them. Students spoke about the very good support they receive, especially the advice and guidance they are given when applying for university. In turn they make a constructive contribution to the life of the school through charity fundraising related to the faith of the school and working with primary schools.
- Returns from Parent View and the school's own survey findings indicate that parents have positive views about the school and that the leadership is effective in fostering good relationships with them. The leadership is effective in ensuring all students are treated equally and that there is no discrimination.
- Statutory safeguarding requirements are met, including those relating to the other institution attended by the school's students.
- Since April 2012 the local authority has maintained links with the school, providing governor training and networking opportunities for leadership development across the authority's schools. In addition the school provides the training for the National College on the middle leaders development programme.
- In keeping with the school's motto 'with God's grace we excel and lead', students are given many opportunities to reach their best. This is set within an environment which requires them to reflect on their own lives and how it compares with that of Jesus. Students' regular attendance at Mass, assemblies utilising songs and religious images, and religious and personal, social and health education programmes all enable students to offer confidently a range of well-informed ideas and opinions on spiritual, social, moral and cultural issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - An experienced governing body with long-serving members who know the school well is organised into key committees that work to hold the school effectively to account. Governors know how well students achieve and how the school is performing compared with others nationally. Robust reporting systems provide governors with valuable information on students' progress and the quality of teaching. Governors ensure that teachers' pay and promotion are linked directly to their effectiveness in meeting targets aimed at improving students' achievement. They have oversight of a system for managing both the headteacher's and other teachers' performance and pay progression. The allocation of the pupil premium money is tracked carefully and governors are aware of the ways in which it has been used to recruit additional learning support assistants, create small groups for eligible students, and provide them with a specific careers advisor. Governors develop good relationships with parents through their attendance at presentation evenings and parent teacher meetings, and newsletters.

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	137994
Local authority	London Borough of Brent
Inspection number	412288

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1003
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Daniel Finnegan
Headteacher	Geraldine Freear
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 May 2009
Telephone number	020 8965 2986
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