

Cardinal Hume Catholic School

Old Durham Road, Beacon Lough, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE9 6RZ

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Cardinal Hume Catholic School prepares its students very well for their future by nurturing them into caring and highly educated individuals.
- All groups of students, regardless of their background, make outstanding progress and end up with GCSE results well above those typically found nationally.
- Leaders continually strive for the very best in teaching, literacy and mathematics and this drive for excellence is proving very successful. However, the proportion of outstanding teaching in Key Stage 3 is not as high as in other key stages.
- Students' work is marked regularly and thoroughly. It informs them well on how they can develop their understanding of subjects.
- Teachers place great importance on their own abilities to excel in the classroom and regularly take part in activities to enhance their skills. They know their subjects well and students respond to this expertise by having full confidence in what they are being taught.
- Students are extremely mature and confident; because of the trust they have in staff, they are happy to seek support and guidance both in their studies and in their personal lives. The school's ethos supports this extremely well.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. This is supported by staff who feel that school leaders do the very best for them.
- Students overwhelmingly feel safe at school. They know all staff within their school will do the very best for them and ensure that they are safe at all times.
- There is an obvious nurturing ethos within school. Both staff and students show mutual admiration and respect for each other and this results in a very positive atmosphere around the school.
- Staff are very proud of their school and its leaders. This is demonstrated by their comments, such as 'Staff morale is great with everyone working towards a common goal' and 'It's an absolute pleasure to work here.'
- There is a relentless focus to improve the experience all learners have of all subjects and extra-curricular opportunities due to the drive by all leaders and staff to deliver the very best they can for their students. However, the progress of students in a few subjects is not as strong as in the majority.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students are prepared well for their next stages in life. The curriculum strongly supports their development and the vast majority go onto work or higher education.
- Governors and senior leaders set themselves very high targets. They relish external challenge and respond well to it. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are robust and effecting further improvement.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 43 lessons across a wide range of subjects taught by 40 teachers, including three jointly observed with senior leaders of the school.
- Inspectors listened to students in the reading programme for all Year 7 as part of the school's approach to improve literacy levels further.
- Inspectors observed behaviour inside and outside of lessons, including break and lunchtimes as well as scrutinising the school's inclusion policies and practices.
- A range of supporting documents relating to students' progress, safeguarding and child protection, minutes of governing body meetings and those relating to the school's own view of achievement, teaching and future improvement were scrutinised.
- Inspectors spoke to students about their school during lesson observations, in break time and also interviewed three groups of students in a separate meeting.
- Additional meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders with school responsibilities, the governing body, the school's improvement partner and the local authority.
- The 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 80 responses to the staff questionnaire were analysed to determine the views of parents and staff of the school.

Inspection team

Colin Scott, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Linda Davies	Additional Inspector
Alexandra Hook	Additional Inspector
Patrick Feerick	Additional Inspector
Mark Simpson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Cardinal Hume Catholic School converted to become an academy school in February 2012. When its predecessor school, Cardinal Hume Catholic School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- It is situated in Gateshead and is larger than most other secondary schools. Students come from a wide area with some bussed in from outlying wards. The school is part of the Hexham and Newcastle Diocese and sits within the Deanery of East Gateshead.
- The highest proportion of students come from a White British background. There is a small and growing proportion of students for whom English is an additional language.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education (NLE) and the school has five specialist leaders of education (SLE). Together they support Gateshead local authority, a network of schools in the north-east of England and some in other parts of England. The headteacher is also executive headteacher of another secondary school.
- The school holds mathematics and computing specialist status to support its provision and curriculum.
- The school has previously entered some students early for GCSE.
- The school supports the teaching of some students from Gateshead College by integrating them into some lessons in the sixth form.
- The proportion of those eligible for the pupil premium is slightly above average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families.
- The school currently does not make use of alternative provision for students and has its own internal exclusion unit to support good behaviour and attitudes.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is below average.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, particularly at Key Stage 3.
- Further increase the achievement of students in the few subjects that do not perform as highly as the majority, so that students make the same progress in those lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students at Cardinal Hume Catholic School make outstanding progress and achieve results at GCSE that are high. In the sixth form, they continue to make outstanding progress overall, achieving high results. Students enter Year 7 with attainment that is broadly average with a small proportion whose attainment is above average. By the end of Year 11, their attainment is significantly above average compared to other schools nationally.
- The school keeps accurate records of how students are progressing. These data clearly indicate that progress in all subjects is set to continue to rise even further. The evidence from the inspectors' analysis of progress agrees with the school's own tracking.
- The proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics is well above that typically found nationally in other secondary schools.
- All groups of students in all of the core subjects and in the majority of other subjects make outstanding progress throughout the school. This includes students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs. In the few subjects where attainment has not been as strong as in the majority of other subjects, the school has already begun to make marked improvements.
- The large number of students who are eligible for the pupil premium funding achieve as well as their peers and there is little difference in the attainment they reach compared to others. The pupil premium funding is being appropriately used for their support.
- Year 7 catch-up money is used well by the school to deliver a programme of reading for all students in their first year at the school. This programme has proven extremely successful in its support of literacy in all subjects.
- Scrutiny of work carried out by inspectors, both in the classroom during observations and separately, shows that students make rapid progress throughout the school. Attainment is high with students making particularly outstanding progress in English. This has been brought about over a number of years, due to the particular focus on literacy the school has had and continues to maintain. The success of this strategy is being developed by other middle leaders to make even more impact on students' progress in different subject areas.
- Any students entered early for GCSE have made outstanding progress and this approach has supported the most able students to gain the highest possible results.
- Students in the sixth form achieve very well. In the lessons observed by inspectors, the proportion of outstanding achievement was very high. A feature of those lessons was the mature and independent way in which students tackled their work under the guidance of their teacher.
- The school prepares its students extremely well for whatever their future careers may be. Their literacy, communication and numeracy skills are very well developed. Students are clearly comfortable asking their teacher searching questions about concepts, which supports their understanding and progress in their studies.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- School leaders record the standards of teaching very accurately and these indicate that teaching is outstanding. The proportion of outstanding teaching observed by inspectors during the inspection was extremely high and inspection evidence supports the school's own view of teaching.
- In lessons, opportunities are grasped by staff to support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding of the world. For example, in one religious education lesson, students were challenged to design their own baby. This went beyond the normal subject matter in that students were able to go on and develop their wider beliefs in other matters of conscience.
- Teachers challenge students to excel in all areas. They have high aspirations for them all and encourage them to develop into conscientious workers. For example, in one science lesson, Year

13 students were asked to independently build a nucleus for themselves using available information, and were also challenged to apply very difficult mathematical procedures to help solve problems.

- All staff are determined to expand their skills and expertise in the classroom and regularly attend training to enhance their work. This helps to raise the confidence of leaders, students and parents in the quality of teaching. Parents overwhelmingly say that their child is taught well in school and 98% who responded to Parent View agree. Additionally, 95% agree that their child makes good progress.
- In the majority of lessons, students are kept highly motivated and stretched to achieve well. Typical aspects of these lessons were the enthusiasm and knowledge of the teacher about the subject being taught. For example, in an outstanding Year 10 mathematics lesson, the students engaged with enthusiasm in a highly successful paired discussion about algebra and quadratics using whiteboards, due to the teacher's own enthusiasm in the subject matter.
- Students themselves say that lessons are normally fun and that they are kept challenged to do even better by their teachers. They say they welcome the extra support they receive in various lessons outside of normal school hours and that this extra support allows them to understand their work better.
- Students know how well they are doing and exactly what they need to do to improve. This is due to the regular and thorough marking of books and the constructive dialogue teachers and support staff have with individual students. This is even more rigorous in Key Stages 4 and 5 and supports the inspection evidence, which shows that there is an even higher proportion of outstanding teaching in those key stages than there is in Key Stage 3. Students' knowledge is often further deepened, for example and where appropriate, when teachers ensure that they relate the work they are doing to the real world and not just to examinations.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The procedures in place to check the credentials of staff are meticulous and the pastoral structures of the school positively support the well-being of students.
- Attendance is above average and rising further. There has been a marked increase in attendance this year and this is partly due to the enjoyment of students in their lessons and in school.
- Different groups of students attend as well as their peers and there are negligible differences in attendance rates between them. Persistent absence continues to fall.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The school makes limited use of fixed-term exclusions and these are lower than typically found nationally. The school has made no permanent exclusions recently, instead preferring to work with the small number of individuals who have difficulties in school in a supportive way, and nurturing them back into main school through their internal exclusion unit. This is proving successful as part of the wider behaviour management systems in place within the school.
- Students are courteous, confident and respectful to each other and to staff and visitors. The supportive relationships built by all individuals are exemplary. During the inspection, there were many examples seen by inspectors where students independently, and naturally, helped their peers who were having difficulties in lessons when they noticed that the teacher was busy.
- Students are highly skilled in recognising how to stay safe in and around school. They talk about the support they receive in becoming confident users of social media and how to stay safe online. They are also skilled in being safe in practical lessons. For example, in one outstanding Year 10 design and technology lesson, students were observed using different machinery and technology in a very safe manner. When questioned by the inspector, students could explain in detail how to be safe using particular engineering equipment such as laser cutters and lathes.
- Students are extremely positive about their school. They told inspectors that they feel valued and supported by all of the staff and that they have many opportunities to take part in activities outside of school hours, both in school and on visits.

- The school's ethos strongly supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life, enabling students to be confident, caring and considerate young people. Students recognise and empathise with the different cultural and diverse aspects of wider communities and are supportive of all.
- Students participate vigorously in their local communities and carry out charitable work, which helps to stimulate their personal consciences positively.
- Punctuality to school and lessons is exceptional. Even though it is a large secondary school, all students in all year groups, including the sixth form, were fully dressed in correct uniform. In lessons, they all had the right equipment with them, for example books and stationery, in order that they were able to learn. Students themselves say that it is important for them to be properly equipped and punctual for work.
- Bullying is extremely rare and students say that if it ever happens, it is dealt with immediately and successfully. The school's own records for incidents are accurate and detailed.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management at all levels within the school are exemplary. All leaders share a common goal and picture for the ethos, vision and development of the school. They hold high expectations of all and are striving to deliver even higher outcomes for students. This has a marked impact on the achievement of students in every year group.
- Rigorous performance management processes ensure that teachers know their targets well and middle and senior leaders are challenged to deliver even more outstanding progress.
- Gaps between the achievement and attendance of any particular groups of students, for example those who receive the pupil premium, are tiny and not significant in this school. The school feels this is due in part to governors and senior leaders' clear belief in an inclusive approach to education for all, regardless of background.
- The headteacher has a clear vision and determination that the school will be successful. His diligent, determined and pragmatic leadership has ensured that there is clear purpose and determination at all levels and with everyone, students and staff alike, to succeed so that the school community is one where young people develop into resilient and responsible adults. His success is recognised by governors, staff and the local authority and he is now a national leader of education whose expertise is used beyond the school's own community. He is also executive headteacher at another local secondary school.
- Central to the success of the school is the relentless drive of leaders to improve teaching and learning for students. For example, the school now has five specialist leaders of education and all staff are regularly involved in professional development to enhance their skills in the classroom.
- The head of school is proving very successful in leading the school on the occasions when the headteacher is carrying out other duties. He is meticulous in his understanding of the needs of the school and in the data that help to identify areas for support and action. This has been made possible partly by the headteacher's coaching but also by the faith governors have shown in him, and the challenges they give him.
- The headteacher and head of school have a clear understanding of the standards of teaching and performance of their staff. This ensures that they are able to tackle any underachievement in performance quickly. This has been exemplified when, for example, standards began to deteriorate in the art and design department. This was quickly identified and action was swift to correct any issues and reverse any decline.
- The curriculum on offer to students is well matched to the needs of individuals and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of learning are outstanding. This is meeting the needs and aspirations of the students well. Despite this, the school is already ensuring that its subject offer is adapting to the future needs of both the national curriculum and the world of work. The school's specialism of mathematics and computing supports the school well. Middle leaders in charge of information technology and mathematics are working effectively to support the wider

school development of the curriculum using the specialism.

- Middle leaders are highly skilled and are developing a strong team of staff for whom they are responsible. For example, English has proven to be an extremely successful subject in this school and the approaches used to support literacy are being adapted to suit other subject areas, in particular mathematics, in order to effect even greater progress. This is supporting individual teachers to develop their own practice and increase students' achievement. Teachers themselves say that they are supported well by their leaders.
- School leaders receive support and challenge from Gateshead local authority via a school improvement partner, which they feel is successfully helping managers at all levels to continue to effect improvement in standards.
- All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding are met and child protection arrangements are exemplary.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body of the school is highly successful and effective. Governors have an excellent understanding about the quality and performance of teachers and managers at all levels and ensure that progression for staff occurs only when appropriate. They are rigorous in finding out about what is truly going on in the school, both by ensuring that they receive information by more than one external adviser and by their own visits to different areas of the school.
 - Governors are trained in the use of external and internal school data and accurately know what the data are telling them. This allows them to offer further challenge to the headteacher and head of school. This is exemplified in their understanding of the recent challenges the school has had in art and design.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the financial position and are confident, due to the use of external accountants, that the school is financially stable. They have a good knowledge of how the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding are being spent to bring about positive outcomes for students.
 - Governors are passionate about their school. They are proud and they display a determination for the school to be even better.

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	137852
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	434003

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1,319
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tom Graham
Headteacher	Nick Hurn
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	0191 487 7638
Fax number	0191 482 4421
Email address	info@cardinalhume.com

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