

Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School

Potters Green Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 2AJ

Inspection dates

6–7 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The multi-academy company (MAC) did not support the school effectively between 2015 and 2017 because some key decisions were delayed. As a result, until recently, many pupils underachieved significantly. The MAC's capacity to support the school is still limited.
- Current pupils are making better progress because leaders are making effective changes to teaching, learning and assessment. However, overall, their progress is not yet good because the quality of teaching is variable.
- The progress of some groups of pupils in science is particularly weak. Their progress in English and mathematics is broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- The provision of careers information, advice and guidance needs to be developed.
- Non-qualification activity in the sixth form is not well tracked. As a result, students do not all receive the opportunities they are entitled to.
- New governance arrangements are more effective than in past. Current arrangements are only temporary and will be reviewed at the end of 2018.
- Pupils' attendance, while improving, is below the national average.
- Students' attendance and punctuality in the sixth form is improving but is not monitored carefully enough.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is improving but is not yet consistently calm.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and his committed senior team have an accurate understanding of what needs to be improved. They have made rapid, effective changes to improve the quality of education for pupils.
- The highly effective executive headteacher supports school leaders well.
- Outcomes in languages are exceptional. Pupils who join the school with limited English language skills are effectively supported by the languages department and make strong progress in a range of subjects as a result.
- Newly appointed middle leaders are a strong team that has the capacity to further improve their areas of responsibility.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop the MAC's capacity to support the school by:
 - developing the MAC's expertise in secondary school improvement
 - creating sustainable networks of support
 - creating sustainable, long-term governance structures that allow decisions to be made quickly in the interest of pupils' progress.
- Further improve pupils' attainment and progress by:
 - improving the consistency of the impact of teaching
 - improving the consistency of the use of the school's assessment policy
 - making sure that all teaching matches the quality of the best in the school
 - developing the curriculum and assessment so that teachers can be confident about which pupils need support and what support they need.
- Improve pupils' behaviour so that all pupils can be confident that, in corridors and social areas, behaviour will be calm and orderly.
- Improve pupils' attendance, by:
 - reviewing all of the systems in place to help pupils to attend more frequently
 - identifying what works best for different pupils and groups of pupils
 - ensuring that parents and carers fully understand their key role in maintaining high attendance.
- Improve careers education, advice and guidance by:
 - making clear and coherent plans so that all pupils benefit from high-quality support
 - monitoring pupils' participation carefully.
- Improve study programmes for post-16 students by:
 - more closely tracking students' attendance to lessons
 - tracking students' participation in non-qualification activity
 - developing a clear overview of all of the non-qualification activity
 - targeting those who do not participate fully, to find ways of engaging them.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- As a result of a lack of capacity in the MAC when it was first set up, Cardinal Wiseman School did not receive the support that it needed to improve rapidly. Pupils' attainment, progress and behaviour suffered as a result.
- Leaders acknowledge that their plans for the spending of funding for disadvantaged pupils are weak. These plans are poorly written, vague and inaccurate. However, as a result of improving teaching and some well-targeted recent interventions, disadvantaged pupils' progress has begun to improve.
- The school benefits from the support of an executive headteacher from outside of the MAC. It has also appointed a new headteacher. These leaders are uncompromising in their vision that pupils at Cardinal Wiseman can be highly successful.
- The new headteacher has a piercingly accurate view of the school's current effectiveness and has already made many effective changes, which have had a positive impact. He has appointed a new, dedicated senior team that shares his passion and drive to improve the school as quickly as possible. However, over this short period of time, the team's work has not yet ensured that all areas of the school are good.
- All senior leaders are skilled in the evaluation of teaching and pupils' learning. They have identified where teachers' practice needs to improve, and effective plans have been put in place to support staff development. However, the quality of teaching is not yet consistent across the school.
- Leaders have reflected carefully on the curriculum. They have made well-considered changes to make sure that pupils have time to develop their key skills and experience a wide range of subjects. Some subject leaders have made detailed plans to make sure that lessons are delivered in the order that pupils need and assessments support learning well. This is yet to be consistent across the school.

Governance of the school

- Until January 2018, an academy committee was responsible for the local governance of the school. This committee did not effectively hold school leaders to account over time for pupils' weak progress and poor behaviour. Multiple layers of accountability between the academy committee, the MAC and diocese made decision-making slow.
- The executive headteacher and headteacher designed new, fit-for-purpose governance arrangements. This school improvement board (SIB) took over the local governance from the academy committee in January 2018 and will be in place until the end of this academic year.
- The SIB is effective because:
 - new terms of reference and MAC board representation mean that it can support the headteacher with swift decision-making
 - it is made up of experienced school leaders who understand the school and can challenge leaders knowledgeably

- it is overseen by a highly experienced external adviser who offers an added level of challenge to leaders and governors
- members of the SIB satisfy themselves that the school is improving through first-hand evidence.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All safeguarding documentation is fit for purpose. The checks on adults working in the school are undertaken very carefully, overseen by senior staff and members of the SIB.
- There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders make sure that they respond to any concerns that pupils have swiftly. They make referrals appropriately when this is necessary.
- Leaders work closely with the local police to make sure that any concerns in the community are responded to in school. In assemblies and through a range of activities, they remind pupils of key safety messages regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is improving quickly. However, it is still variable across the school and within different subjects.
- In science, teaching has been weak in the past, and this has slowed pupils' progress. Pupils have had many different teachers, which has disrupted their learning. There are some signs of improvement in science, and leaders have appointed a new, experienced subject leader. Where teaching is improving, so is pupils' progress.
- Sometimes, teachers' subject knowledge is not strong enough and, as a result, the work that pupils do is too easy, simplistic or repeated. Over time, this leads to weak progress for some groups of pupils. This is especially the case when temporary, non-specialist or unqualified teachers teach classes over a long period of time.
- Where teaching is more effective, over time, pupils improve their skills and knowledge well. Teachers plan lessons that are interesting and follow on smoothly from previous learning, and assessments diagnose what pupils need extra help with. As a result, pupils take part in some lessons with enthusiasm and focus.
- Teaching for pupils who speak English as an additional language is effective. As a result of high-quality teaching, pupils' language skills develop swiftly, and their progress in other subjects follows quickly.
- There are pockets of excellent practice across the school. Where relationships between pupils and teachers are strong and there is continuity of staffing, pupils do very well.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The vast majority of pupils said that they feel safe in school. Some raised concerns about corridor behaviour. Inspectors observed corridor behaviour and leaders' work to improve this and saw future plans to improve it further. Leaders have been effective in improving pupils' feelings of safety in the school but acknowledge that further work is needed.
- Leaders' planning for and tracking of careers information, advice and guidance are not strong enough. Leaders have appropriate plans in place to improve this soon. Recent actions to heighten pupils' aspirations are beginning to have an impact. For example, aspirational messages and large posters of previous pupils who have been successful are placed in social spaces to consistently remind pupils of the successes that are possible.
- The school offers 'The Gateway Centre' for pupils who need help integrating into school. This centre successfully helps pupils effectively develop their confidence and access the curriculum.
- Pupils' use of prejudicial language is rare, but does happen occasionally. The school's system for dealing with this is responsive and effective. A programme of assemblies raises awareness of the importance of equality and, when there are incidents, leaders supplement this with extra messages. For example, leaders have recently held assemblies on homophobia following the use of homophobic language in the school. Leaders make sure that there are direct reminders of the school's commitment to equality and intolerance of the use of derogatory language.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Fixed-term exclusions are above the national average over time, but have fallen sharply this term. There have been marked decreases in incidents of lateness, truancy, smoking and bullying incidents as pupils work with leaders to improve behaviour.
- Leaders have put in place a raft of appropriate strategies, which are having a positive impact on pupils' attendance. However, pupils' attendance remains below the national average. Persistent absence is above the national average. Some pupils have not responded to the school's efforts to improve their attendance.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school has improved, but there is still some way to go before corridors and social spaces are a consistently calm environment. Pupils are noisy and boisterous too often. Leaders have taken effective action to improve pupils' behaviour in corridors and have strong plans in place to develop this further.
- In lessons, pupils behave generally well. However, low-level disruption is not yet rare. Where teaching does not meet pupils' needs, they become disengaged, chatty and

distracted.

- Leaders make checks on the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils in alternative provision. Checks show that these placements have a positive impact on pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, Year 11 pupils' outcomes were weak overall. This was because pupils' progress in mathematics, science and some other subjects was poor. Rapid action by new school leaders means that pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is lower than that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. However, it is improving over time because leaders are focusing more sharply on the barriers to these pupils' progress.
- Pupils' progress in English and humanities in 2017 was in line with that of other pupils nationally with similar starting points. Progress in these subjects is continuing to improve as leaders carefully develop the curriculum and the accuracy of their assessments.
- Around one third of pupils take examinations in languages. These pupils made excellent progress in their languages courses.
- Pupils who join the school with little or no English language skills make rapid progress. Once they are proficient in English, they take examinations in a range of subjects as soon as they are ready to make sure that they can go on to higher-level courses in the sixth form or local colleges.
- The proportion of pupils going on to higher levels of study following Year 11 is in line with the national average. Most pupils go on to sixth form and local colleges.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Non-qualification activity is not yet strong for all students. There are many valuable activities that students can access, for example university visits, leadership and mentoring opportunities and a tutorial programme. However, leaders do not track participation in the impact of these activities to make sure that all students have access to a full study programme.
- Some students do work experience and find this a valuable experience. However, the system for work experience is informal and relies too heavily on students' own contacts and organisational skills. As a result, leaders do not have a strong enough overview of the quality or impact of work experience.
- Students' attendance is not strong enough. Leaders have made some changes to the sanctions for poor attendance and punctuality. These actions have resulted in marked improvement, but are too recent for leaders to be able to say with certainty that they

are effective in the long term.

- Leaders in the sixth form do not track pupils' attendance to lessons closely enough. While their attendance registers meet safety requirements, they do not yet know which lessons pupils miss too often.
- Students on academic and vocational study programmes make progress in line with that of other students nationally with similar starting points. Retention has improved this year and is now above the national average. This is because pupils are increasingly on courses which meet their needs.
- Students said that they enjoy being in the sixth form and value the new study facilities that they have. They feel well supported both in their studies and their personal development. Most go on to university, while others go on to a range of employment and apprenticeship destinations in line with their interests.

School details

Unique reference number	141992
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10043996

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1208
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	201
Appropriate authority	Board of directors of the Romero Catholic Multi Academy Company
Chair of the board of directors	Dean Kavanagh
Chair of local academy committee	Fionnuala Hegarty
Principal	Tom Leverage
Telephone number	02476 617231
Website	cardinalwiseman.coventry.sch.uk
Email address	admin@cardinalwiseman.coventry.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened as an academy on 1 August 2015 as part of the Romero Catholic Multi Academy Company. The company is made up of seven primary schools: Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, St Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School, St Gregory's

Catholic Primary School, St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, St Patrick's Catholic Primary School; and one secondary school, which is Cardinal Wiseman Catholic School.

- The MAC is governed by a board of directors. A local academy committee oversees the work of school. This committee reports directly to the board of directors.
- A small number of pupils are educated in full-time alternative provision at The Edge Free School Birmingham.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average as is the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's floor standards for secondary schools.
- When the school's predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and the headteacher, the leadership team, members of the school improvement board and representatives of the MAC. They met with middle leaders and teachers.
- Pupils' behaviour was evaluated through observations before and after school, at break and lunchtimes, between lessons and through scrutiny of the school's records.
- Inspectors visited lessons and scrutinised samples of pupils' work. They spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and evaluated the 169 responses to the pupil questionnaire. Formal meetings were held with pupils from all year groups.
- The views of parents were evaluated through the 52 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 37 free-text responses. The views of staff were evaluated through meetings with staff and the 57 survey responses.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including staff vetting and safeguarding information, attendance, behaviour and attainment records.

Inspection team

Dan Owen, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gwen Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Bernice Astling	Ofsted Inspector
Sukhbir Farar	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Fisher	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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