

All Hallows Catholic School

Weybourne Road, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 9HF

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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.

- The percentage of students attaining five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, has been well above average for the last four years.
- In 2013, almost half of the White British students attained the EBacc qualification, more than double the percentage seen nationally. Practically all students from minority ethnic heritages attained an even higher percentage of this qualification.
- Students' progress is outstanding because teaching has moved into a higher gear since the previous inspection. It is extremely effective in helping students to learn and to do well in examinations.
- The well-considered curriculum gives students worthwhile qualifications which prepare them well for their future lives.
- The sixth form is good. It represents less than 15% of the school population, but its popularity is growing. Students provide help for younger ones and mature into thoughtful young adults.
- Year 12 students made outstanding progress in 2013, but this was not the case in Year 13. Tighter checks on students' progress are generating higher standards in both sixth form years.
- As parents confirm, students feel completely safe and happy at school. They are very well cared for and admit that the strict rules contribute to their outstanding behaviour.
- Students work hard, concentrate in lessons and participate enthusiastically in the very wide range of after-school activities.
- The school fosters very harmonious and respectful relationships between students and between students and staff.
- Fundamental to the atmosphere of the school is its excellent promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; this permeates many lessons and activities.
- The headteacher, senior and middle leaders and governors have improved the quality of teaching and raised standards since the previous inspection.
- The headteacher's leadership is steely on the outside and deeply caring underneath. She consistently promotes the values she wants students to acquire.
- The governing body has increased its effectiveness in recent years. The Chair of the Governing Body is determined to strengthen further its contribution to the school's effectiveness.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 50 part lessons, several of which were jointly observed with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors observed assemblies and form times.
- As most GCSE and sixth form examinations had finished, inspectors could not see any lessons in Years 11 and 13. They met students from both these years and several other groups as well.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, leaders in charge of subjects and other aspects of the school's work, other staff with positions of responsibility and the Chair of the Governing Body and one other member.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority and spoke to an external support consultant on the telephone.
- Inspectors discussed lessons they had seen with teaching staff and examined a range of documents including the school's own evaluation of its work, improvement plans and data about progress, standards, exclusions, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of students' work within and outside lessons.
- Inspectors took into account 280 parents' responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire and questionnaires completed by 72 members of staff.

Inspection team

Clare Gillies, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lee Faith

Additional Inspector

Gordon Jackson

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Helen Neal

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Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- Gender balance is even in the main school, but there are more girls than boys in the sixth form.
- About 70% of students are White British, 10% of Asian heritage (mainly Nepalese), 7% of other White heritages (mainly European) and small percentages from several other minority ethnic backgrounds.
- An above average proportion of students speak English as an additional language, of whom almost none are at an early stage of learning English.
- A below average proportion of students receive support through the pupil premium, which provides additional government funding for specific groups including looked after children and students known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has very few looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below the national average. The most common needs relate to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, specific and moderate learning difficulties and for those on the autistic spectrum.
- A very small number of students are eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The school does not use any alternative, off-site education provision.
- The school received specialist status as a technology college in September 2005 and in music and provision for gifted and talented students in September 2009. Gifted students are identified by their end of Year 6 standards in English and mathematics and by teachers identifying students with particular aptitude for their subjects.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education.
- A new sixth form centre is due to open in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in the sixth form by:
 - ensuring that senior and middle leaders check that Year 13 students make as much progress as those in Year 12
 - giving students, in all subjects, constructive and specific feedback about how they can improve their work
 - ensuring that all teachers use information about students' progress to shape and plan their teaching and students' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- The percentage of students attaining five GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has been above 80% in three of the last four years. After six years of rising each year, the percentage dropped in 2013. This was because the English language results, for the first time ever, were neither as predicted nor similar to those attained in English literature. In English literature and mathematics, and in at least half of all the GCSE subjects, well over 80% of students attained GCSE A* to C grades.
- The percentage of top A* and A grades is above average in practically all the subjects taken at GCSE. This reflects the school's work to ensure that the most able students attain as well as possible. Results in the three separate science subjects, taken predominantly by these students, and in the humanities are particularly strong.
- The most able students also achieved outstanding results in GCSE religious studies (taken at the end of Year 10), AS theology, GCSE mathematics and GCSE statistics. Early entry for GCSE mathematics has not held back any student from attaining their best possible grade.
- Sixth form results have been just above the national average for several years. The percentage of pass and top AS grades increased in 2013 but A-level results did not. There is much evidence that the relatively new subject reviews, combined with tighter checks on students' progress, will be reflected in the 2014 A-level results. Year 12 results in work-related courses are high.
- All students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language, make outstanding progress in Years 7 to 11. This is because they work hard and consistently experience high-quality teaching. This outcome also reflects that, after intensive support where necessary, students read and write very well and confidently apply their excellent mathematical skills in other subjects when needed.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make more progress than that seen by these students nationally.
- Year 12 students made outstanding progress overall in 2013, but Year 13 students did not make as good progress.
- In 2013, the drop in the GCSE English language passes particularly affected the very small number of Year 11 students eligible for additional funding. Their progress was far less than that made by other students in English, but it was almost the same as their peers in mathematics. They attained about one GCSE grade lower than other students in these two subjects.
- These students' lower results were mainly a reflection of their individual situations, special educational needs or other significant difficulties that they face. One third of the present Year 11 students receiving this funding have special educational needs. The gap between their performance and others is expected to be far less in 2014. Students eligible for additional funding in Years 7 to 10, including those receiving catch-up funding in Year 7, are making excellent progress.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Now students learn exceptionally well because the teaching is skilful and well thought out. Teaching sometimes moves students, particularly the most able, 'out of their comfort zone' and into very high levels of thinking and understanding.
- Reading is given a high profile in English lessons and tutor time, and wall displays highlight subject specific vocabulary. Students are encouraged to speak clearly in lessons and to participate in public speaking competitions. Most teachers identify spelling mistakes when marking students' work, but they are occasionally not so attentive to punctuation and grammar errors.
- There is a whole-school weekly focus on literacy and numeracy. For example, in an English

lesson, Year 7 students automatically referred to dictionaries when exploring the difference between the words 'implicit' and 'explicit'. They understood the subtle elements they should consider when reading texts.

- Teachers motivate students to learn really well. For example, by explaining how questions or activities are linked to different levels of difficulty, students realise how their increasing understanding and knowledge, and participation, will help them to achieve higher standards. On rare occasions, the most able students do work that is too easy for them, but mostly they tackle highly challenging work, occasionally even AS-style questions in Year 11.
- Preparing students for examinations, for example, by getting them to explore the marking and grade criteria of papers, helps students to understand how, and in what depth, they should answer questions.
- In many subjects teachers give students specific feedback, either in their books or during lessons, which tells them exactly how they can improve. This feature of learning, particularly evident in Year 12, was not seen in all subjects.
- Students with special educational needs receive valuable support from learning support assistants, who liaise well with teachers so they know best when and how to intervene.
- Students' learning is strong because students understand the relationship between class work and homework. Students have a lot of homework. It certainly contributes to their outstanding progress, but a few parents suggest that it can occasionally be too much and generate stress.
- With the changing style of examinations, the school has introduced a memory skills programme and 'crammers' in advance of examinations. The success of these initiatives will not be known until after the 2014 results, but students have found them very helpful.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Sixth formers' dress code is under review, but those in the main school dress smartly. All students respect the environment and move around the large site sensibly. Students' attendance is very high. The students arrive punctually to lessons and are ready to learn and work hard. It is very rare that a teacher has to address any untoward behaviour in a lesson.
- Students' concentration in assemblies and form times is exemplary. During the inspection both featured reference to the anniversary of the D-Day landings. Students reflected deeply on the impact of sacrifice and respectfully listened to an extract from a D-Day diary.
- Students regularly discuss the news in form time, reflect on moral issues in religious education lessons and learn about different cultures in subjects such as art, music, English, French and German.
- The school council is an effective organisation for students to air their views. It also focuses on charity work and fundraising to which students give generously. There are many opportunities for students, not just sixth formers, to develop leadership and social skills. Many students achieve Duke of Edinburgh awards.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Personal, social and health education lessons include sessions on the potential dangers of social media sites or careless use of the internet. These are linked to discussions about different types of bullying, such as homophobic bullying.
- Students know that discrimination and bullying are not tolerated in any shape or form. As a Year 11 student put it, 'I hate the rules but they're really good and that's why there's no bullying here.' Year 7 students feel 100% confident that should bullying happen it would be dealt with effectively.
- Senior leaders keep meticulous records of any behavioural, bullying or racist incidents and it is rare for any student to be cautioned more than once. Permanent exclusions are rare and the number of fixed-term exclusions has more than halved in the last two years.
- A major factor behind the excellent relationships between students, and students and teachers, is the high quality of care and support for all students. Pastoral leaders and specialist support

staff ensure that disabled students and those with special educational needs get the support they need for learning or welfare issues. One learning support assistant is trained to support emotional literacy needs. Heads of year liaise most effectively with the special educational needs coordinator who, in turn, liaises with a number of external support agencies when necessary.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is very ably supported by the deputy and assistant headteachers and other senior leaders. Their key goal is to give all students equal opportunities to gain the qualifications they need for success in their future lives. All staff endorse the headteacher's philosophy and staff morale is high.
- The headteacher never wavers about the high standards of behaviour and work she expects all students to maintain. These contribute significantly to students' outstanding behaviour and progress. Students may complain about the rules, particularly about not being allowed to bring mobile phones to school, but deep down they appreciate them and keep to them.
- Teachers, particularly newly qualified ones, value the support and training they get. One observed that 'the support for behaviour is brilliant, you just need to follow the system'. Senior leaders observe lessons using questions which get to the heart of what learning is about. They give teachers constructive and supportive comments.
- Generating outstanding teaching and learning has been a successful focus since the previous inspection. A small booklet on outstanding teaching, to which all staff contributed, has been influential. Staff know that their students' results will influence their pay progression and that the Teachers' Standards underpin all expectations.
- Middle leaders, who liaise well together, contribute much to the school's success. They find the senior leaders' reviews of their sixth form work 'motivational'. They feel confident that they are generating better progress. Most of them appreciate that they do not yet use checks on students' progress sharply enough to plan exactly what they must do to help students to do even better.
- The headteacher is convinced that more than a couple of work-related courses do not strengthen students' chances in the world of work. The curriculum is therefore geared predominantly towards GCSEs and academic sixth form courses. Practically all students take GCSE in either French or German and a technology subject. A few parents feel that ten GCSEs are too many for students to take; senior leaders keep a careful watch on whether any students are overloaded.
- The music specialism generates a large number of instrumental and singing groups which many students participate in and enjoy. It has also created many links with primary schools and the community. The school's work for the most able and/or talented students reflects the music specialism, but has also led to the school competing successfully in national mathematics and science competitions.
- Year 9 students say they have helpful advice about their GCSE option subjects. Year 11 students feel they receive unbiased guidance about their further education. More of them leave than stay, partly for the perceived freedom of sixth form colleges and/or for a wider choice of work-related and academic courses. Sixth formers praise education and careers guidance they receive. No students leave the school without a clear path ahead.
- Senior leaders spend all additional funding wisely, mainly on extra teaching for English and mathematics but also on well-considered support for eligible students' individual needs. This may involve providing a looked after student with an on-line language course in the parents' language, paying sixth formers to support students (sometimes in lessons) or funding motivation workshops for individuals lacking confidence.
- Senior leaders value the support they receive from the local authority and external consultant, welcoming validation of the school's future plans. The priorities are the right ones because senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. The headteacher does not hesitate to make staffing changes if a subject is underperforming. Her work supporting other

local schools is regarded highly by the local authority.

- Nine out of ten parents who responded to the online questionnaire would recommend the school, although a few do not feel the school responds well to any concerns they raise. The school does a lot to involve parents in its activities, for example, through colourful celebratory newsletters and even once, babysitting a sibling so a parent could attend school to see a student performing. The headteacher knows that the website lacks a little statutory information, such as policies; a senior leader is already redesigning and updating it. All required safeguarding and child protection arrangements are of a high standard.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body moved into a higher gear after the previous inspection and is increasingly effective. Recently, senior leaders strengthened governors' understanding of standards and progress data and how the school's results compare with national ones.
- Governors are fully aware of the quality of teaching, know that teachers' appraisals are linked to their pay and fully support the headteacher in taking firm action if a teacher's work is not good enough.
- Governors control the school's finances carefully and check that additional funding is spent wisely and effectively. They have played a major role in securing funds for the exciting new sixth form centre opening in September 2014.

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	125315
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	444368
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
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	1420
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Tahourdin
Headteacher	Elizabeth Lutzeier
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 February 2011
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