

# St Julie's Catholic High School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104712
<b>Local authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	377115
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Jacqueline Rothery

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,265
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	223
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maggie McDaid
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Alderman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 June 2009
<b>School address</b>	Speke Road Woolton Liverpool L25 7TN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 4286421
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 4211399
<b>Email address</b>	reception@st-julies.liverpool.sch.uk

---



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## Introduction

### Inspection team

Jacqueline Rothery  
Lee Northern  
Christine Birchall  
Bernard Robinson  
Pamela Hemphill

Additional inspector  
Her Majesty's Inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 43 lessons taught by 41 teachers and two instructors. Four of these lessons were observed jointly with senior members of staff. A further 13 short observations were conducted to evaluate the quality of provision for targeted groups of students. Inspectors held meetings with senior staff, middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher's personal assistant and groups of students. They also analysed the questionnaires returned by 180 parents and carers, 196 pupils and 70 staff. Inspectors also took account of the 24 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) when planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documentation, including self-evaluation and improvement plans, performance data, minutes of the governing body meetings, and safeguarding records. Students' work was evaluated through sampling their books and files and in lessons and by means of a separate work scrutiny.

## Information about the school

St Julie's Catholic High School is a larger than average secondary school. The school has a sixth form, which includes a small number of boys. There are very few students who speak English as an additional language and almost all students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action is well-below average; the proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported by the school at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school draws from a wide area. It has a specialism in languages and includes, amongst its awards, Artsmark Gold and Sportsmark. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. The school meets the government's current floor standard.

There have been significant changes to both senior and middle leadership since the previous inspection, including the appointment of the current headteacher in September 2010. A parallel section 48 inspection, which inspects the religious character of the school, took place during the second day of the inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- St Julie's Catholic High School is a good school. The headteacher provides strong leadership. He is supported well by senior and middle leaders who share his drive for change and improvement. The strong emphasis on accountability for students' performance has led to improvements in achievement and gaps in performance between different groups of students being narrowed. The school is not outstanding because, although attainment is above average, achievement is good overall and not yet outstanding; systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and its impact on learning and progress are not robust enough; and the sixth form is satisfactory rather than good.
- The school's strong promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the students' excellent conduct around the school and their good behaviour in the majority of lessons. Robust tracking systems have ensured that attendance is at least average and improving.
- Teaching is good overall. The school's emphasis on accountability has led to effective use of assessment data in identifying different groups of students with widely differing learning needs. In the best lessons, planning ensures that these needs are met successfully. This practice is not consistent, however, and some opportunities to provide appropriate challenge are being missed.
- The school's leaders, including the governing body, have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The successful impact of their work is demonstrated in a trend of improving outcomes.
- The sixth form is satisfactory. Given their starting points on entry, students in the sixth form make satisfactory progress across a range of courses. Although attainment in the sixth form is below national averages, this difference is reducing. The quality of teaching and its impact on outcomes is variable across different subjects.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement from good to outstanding by:
  - ensuring that all teaching consistently meets the needs of all groups of students
  - ensuring that the monitoring of teaching places a sharp focus on the quality of learning of all groups of students, in lessons and over the longer term.
- Improve achievement in the sixth form by reducing variability in the quality of teaching and sharing best practice more effectively so that all teaching is at least good.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Inspectors' evaluation of students' learning in lessons confirms that achievement is good. Students are keen to learn and their achievement and progress is best in those lessons where teachers have set high levels of challenge for all groups of students. For example, in an expressive arts lessons seen, the pace was fast, planning was well conceived, expectations were high, and progress was rapid. Evidence gathered through scrutiny of students' work and in discussions with them demonstrates that learning and progress are good over the longer term. Those parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction with the progress being made.

In 2011, the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics was the highest for the school in the last three years and above the national average. The school's tracking information provides secure evidence that current attainment, based on internal data and externally verified outcomes, is above average. Given that current students entered the school with attainment levels which were broadly average, this indicates that progress for those students is now good, following a trend of improvement in outcomes in 2010 and 2011.

Progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs is in line with that of their peers. Although there are weaknesses in the extent to which teachers plan consistently effectively to meet the needs of all groups of students, the strength of students' attitudes to learning and the quality of use of data and assessment information to identify and address underachievement mean that this group achieves in line with their peers. This is also underpinned by the highly inclusive ethos which permeates the school. Attainment gaps are narrowing; issues affecting those students known to be eligible for free school meals and some affecting those with a disability and those with special educational needs have been addressed. These groups are now making better progress as a result of targeted support.

Achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory. A previous decline in achievement in the sixth form has been halted and achievement is now in line with nationally expected rates. While there is still some variation in outcomes across different subjects, overall there is an improving picture and attainment gaps are closing.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching is good and there are examples of outstanding practice. No inadequate teaching was seen during the inspection. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire agree that their children are taught well. Relationships are positive and many students show confidence in reading aloud and in articulating their views. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well and vary their methodology so that lessons have well-planned curricular content which is engaging and challenging, with a range of skills being developed. Imaginative use is made of resources. In the best lessons, good pace and effective planning engage students well with their learning, enabling all groups of students to make good progress. Effective teaching contributes substantially to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Well-planned activities include opportunities for students to work collaboratively and teachers' skilful questioning deepens their understanding and learning. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson about poetic techniques, tasks were structured carefully to enable students to explore language and ideas within their groups and to share meaningful, empathetic responses. The teacher's questions prompted students to explore and expand their insights, improving the quality of their answers significantly.

In less successful lessons, planning is overly focused on teacher-led tasks, at times inhibiting depth of response and leading to missed opportunities for students to take a lead in developing their own learning. While teachers' planning identifies different individuals and groups of students who may require further extension or support for their learning, strategies to provide this are not consistently well developed.

While teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory, there is greater variation in the quality of teaching overall. In the best lessons, very effective planning supports students in reaching their target grades, there is brisk pace, evidence of strong subject knowledge and students being guided in their development of higher-order thinking skills. Where teaching is less effective, there are too many teacher-directed activities, so that depth of learning is not sustained.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They say they feel very safe, and their parents and carers agree. Students have been supported through the curriculum to understand different types of bullying and conflict. For example, through their work on e-safety, students gain a good understanding of cyber-bullying and its implications. They show respect towards others which results in low incidence of bullying. This, combined with the ethos of the school, contributes well to the positive climate for learning. Students' behaviour around school and in lessons makes a strong contribution to the safety of themselves and others. Breaks and lunchtimes are calm and orderly.

At its best, students' exemplary behaviour in lessons supports their learning very well. Students are enthusiastically engaged in learning and this raises levels of challenge and makes a strong contribution to improved outcomes. Very occasionally, minor instances of disruptive behaviour slow the pace of a few lessons. While this was not expressed as a

significant concern, it was noted in a very small number of responses to inspection questionnaires by students or by their parents and carers.

The school is effectively securing improvements in attendance and reducing levels of persistent absence. As a result of the work of different staff teams, the school has a good understanding of the links between behaviour, attendance and progress and their impact on improving outcomes.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher is highly ambitious for the school and its students. He provides a strong drive for improvement which is widely shared by staff at all levels. Following a period of turbulence and changes in leadership and management, greater stability and drive are helping to ensure improved outcomes for all students. As a result of the investment that has been made in professional development, staff are united in the energy and enthusiasm with which they embrace change. Improved systems of tracking, monitoring and evaluation of performance data are now ensuring that leaders have a clear view of progress and are able to intervene rapidly to address any underperformance. Middle leaders are supported well by senior leaders in bringing about improvements in outcomes. The improved use of data and more 'joined-up thinking' are cited by middle leaders as strengths of new ways of working. Self-evaluation is accurate and development plans are appropriately focused on improving learning and progress and strengthening provision. New planning and monitoring procedures are beginning to impact positively on the quality of teaching and learning; leaders and managers are ready to take this forward by ensuring a sharp focus on the quality of learning of all groups of students, in lessons and over the longer term. The school is demonstrating good capacity to improve.

New curriculum routes have been introduced to address more appropriately the needs of all groups of students and to ensure successful progression into the next stages of education, training or employment. They include a full range of academic and vocational options, successfully ensuring equality of opportunity for all students. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Energetic leadership and committed drive in the sixth form are securing improvements in learning and progress. Data and information are used swiftly to target interventions and improve outcomes for students. Recent changes to the curriculum are proving popular and retention rates are rising. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, however, and opportunities are missed to share good practice.

The governing body plays an active part in implementing the school's vision. It meets its statutory duties in ensuring staff and students are safe, including in relation to child protection. Members of the governing body provide support and challenge for the school and, through link roles, they ensure involvement in all aspects of the school's work. They articulate a clear ambition that 'every child's needs must be met' and express strongly the view that the school is well placed to ensure this. Parents and carers are highly positive that the needs of their children are met.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as students.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 February 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of St Julie's Catholic High School, Liverpool, L25 7TN**

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently and, in particular, our thanks go to those students who met with us in meetings and around the school.

Your school is providing you with a good education and helping you to make good progress. The school's strong emphasis on your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a special feature of your school. We were impressed by your excellent conduct, the respect you show towards one another, and your willingness to learn. You tell us you feel safe in school and we can see clearly how much your good behaviour contributes to that.

The headteacher and other leaders in the school, including the governing body, lead the school well. They are ambitious and determined to ensure that you achieve the best you possibly can and they are supported well in this by your teachers. Because of this and teaching that is good overall, you achieve well, though inspectors would like to see some of the best practice being shared more effectively, particularly in the sixth form. We have also asked that all teaching challenges all of you, meeting your needs and making sure that there are more opportunities for you all to move forward in every aspect of your learning. You can play your part in this, by working as hard as you do now and continuing to support fully your school's ambitions for you.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Rothery  
Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).