

Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Language College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119787
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291543
Inspection dates	17 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Jim Bennetts HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	934
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Kathleen Cooper
Headteacher	Mr George Lloyd
Date of previous school inspection	March 2001
School address	Out Lane Croston Leyland Lancashire PR2 6HJ
Telephone number	01772 600349
Fax number	01772 601320

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Bishop Rawstone C of E Language College serves a relatively advantaged rural area to the south of Preston. Students have above average attainment on entry. Almost all students are of White British family background; few use English as a second language. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about half that found nationally, but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. In addition to its Language College status, the school has been selected for a second specialism to commence this year: science with mathematics. It is a designated Training School for teachers and has a number of significant accolades, such as the Investor in People Award. Its mission as both a Church of England school and a school serving the wider community is central to all its work.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, with a particular focus on English, mathematics and science and progress in Key Stage 3. Evidence was gathered from documentation, discussion with staff and students, the observation of over a dozen lessons and students' work, the observation of students' general conduct, and nearly 500 questionnaires completed by parents. On all aspects of the school's work, inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessment was unjustified.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The pursuit of excellence permeates all its work. The school's ethos as a Christian community drives its every endeavour. Students are avid learners. Achievement is exceptionally high. Teaching is generally of high quality. Leadership is perceptive, sensitive and determined; the school is managed with consummate efficiency. Senior managers strive to continually improve all aspects of the school.

Progress during the five years that students are at the school places it well within the top 10% of schools nationally. This quality has been sustained over several years. GCSE results show outstanding achievement by both boys and girls, with some particularly impressive results, for instance, in mathematics. Achievement in lessons is generally high in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. For example, a middle ability group in a Year 9 history lesson were making excellent progress in speculating about the issues underlying the demise of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914.

Data show recent improvement in English, particularly at Key Stage 3, and this trend is confirmed by what is seen in lessons. In science and mathematics, achievement at Key Stage 3 is good and has been so for several years. There is outstanding progress in some lessons in these subjects. An outstanding science lesson in Year 9 dealt with the manipulation of variables in science experiments and exemplified these general methods with an example from physics. However, science teaching in Year 9 involves different teachers for biology, chemistry and physics. This is inefficient: it leads to duplication and missed opportunities to consolidate general principles by coherent exemplification across a range of topics. Moreover, it complicates issues of responsibility for preparation of students for national tests. In mathematics, students in Year 9 are grouped in wide ability sets because the arrangement is determined by performance in another subject besides mathematics. In an excellent Year 9 lesson, a teacher adapted planned work, for example, by getting students completing a task to assist others, which helped consolidate the skills of the more able while supporting others who were less confident. Elsewhere, some Year 9 mathematics teaching called for more focused planning to meet the range of ability. There has been insufficient review of the organisation of science and mathematics in Year 9 to raise achievement from good to outstanding.

Learning in lessons, and evidence in students' books, is consistently outstanding. They are eager to improve their knowledge and skills. In lessons seen, teaching ranged from satisfactory to outstanding; it was predominantly very good. The best teaching is characterised by high expectations, clarity of objectives, perceptive use of questioning, and excellent relationships. Work challenges students; stimulating methods and adroit intervention enable them to master it. Occasionally teaching is dull, does not involve the students sufficiently or does not cater as well as it might for all abilities. Marking is good and helps students to improve their work. Students have sensible and achievable short-term targets and know what they have to do to improve their work.

The curriculum is good. It meets the needs of most students well. Opportunities in Key Stage 4 are appropriate, particularly for students who struggle with GCSE.

However, some aspects of the curriculum are not as strong as others, for example, ICT courses throughout the school and the arrangements for mathematics and science provision in Year 9. An effective range of after school and lunch time activities helps to consolidate learning and social and emotional development.

Students' personal development is outstanding and behaviour is excellent. Attendance is above average. Students understand the school's high expectations of them and few fail to live up to these aspirations. Students are ardent learners who apply themselves well in lessons. They are confident and feel well cared for; this contributes to a feeling of safety in school. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. It is supported robustly by the work of tutors, courses on citizenship and programmes on social and health awareness. There are extensive opportunities to develop appreciation of other cultures through the curriculum and enrichment activities, such as trips abroad and field study. Social skills are developed well. Students increasingly adopt healthy lifestyles, with healthy options in the canteen – the school has Healthy School status. Students feel that their opinions are valued. There is good opportunity for students to learn to manage independence and to take responsibility for themselves, for example, through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. They are prepared very well for their post-16 career and college choices, with particularly strong basic skills and careers education. Students are rightly proud of their school and appreciate the way they are treated.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. There is a high level of concern for, and commitment to, students' welfare; this underpins their excellent progress, enjoyment and well-being. Vulnerable students make impressive progress because of the highly effective care and support received. The pastoral system offers excellent guidance to students, who know they are valued and feel safe in a secure environment. By canvassing students' views systematically, the school is able to adapt quickly and meet needs. Progress reviews are regular, with checks on students' personal targets. Effective checks are maintained through reports. Progress evenings are well attended. Students are supported well in making choices post-16, and the local college endorses the school's highly effective work in this regard. Parents are justifiably pleased with the school's efforts. The vast majority of the 500 parents' questionnaires returned were overwhelmingly positive. Many parents expressed staunch support for the school in extensive written comments; some were over the moon. It is evident that family support for students in their learning and engagement with school life is a significant contributory factor to the school's success, and one that the school has harnessed well.

Leadership is charismatic and resilient; therefore, everyone gives of their best. Staff, students and the wider school community are bound in common commitment to the school and its aspirations. High achievement has been established and sustained through rigorous monitoring, evaluation and action. Management is meticulously efficient and highly effective. The school's quality is rigorously assured by a perceptive and tenacious governing body. The outstanding success of this school in its academic and pastoral work and its mission as a Church School is underpinned by outstanding leadership and management at all levels. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best.
- Review and improve curriculum arrangements for ICT and in Year 9 for mathematics and science.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



18 May 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Bishop Rawstone Church of England Language College,
Leyland, Lancashire. PR2 6HJ

Your school is Outstanding.

When we inspected your school we were deeply impressed by the high quality of all aspects of its work. The progress made during the five years you are at school places Bishop Rawstone in the top ten percent of schools nationally. When we visited lessons, looked at your books and talked to you about your work, we found that learning is exceptionally effective throughout the school. Much of this is due to the high quality of teaching. It is also a tribute to your very positive attitude to school life. You clearly enjoy school and get on very well together, doing your best in classrooms and other activities, and doing your bit in making the school a happy Christian community. As you know, Mr Lloyd is a fine Headteacher; he and other senior staff leave no stone unturned in making the school outstanding – and your parents agree.

Whilst teaching is generally very good (and we saw several outstanding examples of teaching), occasionally the work could be planned just a little better or made more enjoyable. We think ICT courses could be improved a little, and we have talked with staff about how things might be organised a little better in science and mathematics in Year 9.

Carry on doing your bit in making Bishop Rawstone C of E Language College one of the best schools in the country. And one small but important point: some of your parents said that students from the school sometimes look scruffy in uniform. You should be really proud to be at this school, and we know you are. Boys and girls, show it by getting those ties sorted out!

Thank you for all your help and for making us so welcome. We wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jim Bennetts'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent 'J' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jim Bennetts
Her Majesty's Inspector