

# St Aloysius RC College

Hornsey Lane, Highgate, London N6 5LY

## Inspection dates

6–7 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	<b>Outstanding</b>

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching, over time, has not been good enough to ensure that pupils make strong progress across subjects.
- Teachers do not routinely plan activities that meet pupils' needs. They do not use assessment information to plan work which builds on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding. This limits pupils' progress.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, can achieve are too low.
- Pupils' outcomes have declined in the past two years. Progress is now average overall, and varies between subjects.
- Over time, leaders of the sixth form have not ensured that teaching is routinely effective. As a result, there is wide variation in students' outcomes across the subjects. Provisional 2018 information shows that, overall, students made below average progress, especially in vocational courses.
- Students have insufficient opportunities for work experience. They feel that leaders do not give them enough opportunities to share their views on how to improve the provision.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new senior leaders and members of the interim executive board have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are taking decisive action to secure improvements in all aspects of the school's work. Their actions are leading to more effective middle leadership, and to improving teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils behave well. They attend school regularly, and persistent absence is low.
- Pupils are safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Leaders provide students with high-quality information and guidance to inform their choices for the next stage of their lives.
- The curriculum and enrichment opportunities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the sixth form, by ensuring that:
  - teachers use assessment information to plan activities to meet pupils’ needs and abilities and that build on pupils’ prior learning
  - teachers have higher expectations of what pupils, especially the most able, can achieve, and that they set them work that is more appropriately challenging
  - teachers learn from best practice in the school, and from other schools that are outstanding
  - leaders continue the training programme for teachers and teaching assistants
  - leaders further develop their processes for holding teachers to account for their pupils’ progress.
- Reduce the variability in outcomes by:
  - subject leaders making sure that pupils routinely make strong progress in their subjects.
- Improve the leadership of the sixth form by ensuring that:
  - students have opportunities for work experience
  - students have opportunities to voice their opinions and work with leaders to improve the provision.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- In 2017, pupils' overall outcomes declined significantly. There were no noticeable improvements during the next academic year. Following their appointment in summer 2018, new senior leaders, together with the interim executive board, set about reversing the school's decline. Additional leaders who took up their posts at the start of this academic year have added significant capacity to improving the school. Leaders have raised expectations for staff performance, and they encourage pupils to aspire to higher academic success.
- Senior leaders have a clear understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses. They have ambitious goals and are taking decisive actions to secure improvements, especially in middle leadership and teaching.
- Middle leaders, such as for subjects and inclusion, benefit from a comprehensive programme of leadership training and support. They have begun to learn from best practice from colleagues in other schools. Middle leaders are learning how to develop teaching, and how to hold their colleagues to account. Senior leaders train them on how to analyse and use pupils' performance data, and how to plan for improvements. There are early indications that this training is beginning to have a positive effect on improving teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders recently introduced a programme of training teachers and teaching assistants. They regularly visit classes to check teaching and learning. They introduced formal appraisal systems – a first in the school – in order to hold teachers to account. These new practices are beginning to improve teaching, despite not being welcomed by some teachers.
- Leaders have brought in new assessment systems to check on pupils' progress. Leaders use this information to identify pupils who need extra support. Furthermore, they check how effectively they spend additional funding, such as for the pupil premium, Year 7 catch-up and special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is helping to improve the outcomes for these groups of pupils.
- New inclusion leaders have reorganised support for pupils who need help to catch up with their peers. This includes disadvantaged pupils, those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders have identified these pupils' needs, and they have arranged targeted support. In addition, they have provided specific SEN training, for instance, for teaching assistants. Leaders will shortly be training all teachers on how to better support pupils with SEN, and others who need to catch up. Inspectors saw effective small group and one-to-one support for pupils with SEN, which helps them to learn successfully.
- The curriculum covers all areas of the national curriculum. Leaders place a strong emphasis on enabling pupils to follow an academic curriculum at key stage 4. A much higher proportion of pupils than found nationally enter the English Baccalaureate. There is also a vocational option available.
- Leaders reviewed curriculum plans and discovered weaknesses. They gave subject leaders and departments time to rewrite and update their curriculum plans. This is

because, in a few instances, subjects had not revised their plans to meet the new GCSE examination requirements. In some instances, staff did not plan learning in a way that systematically builds on pupils' knowledge and deepens their understanding. It is too early to measure how effectively these changes are helping pupils to make stronger progress.

- During 2017, more than one in ten pupils left the school at the end of Year 10. This is an exceptionally high proportion. This was replicated on a smaller scale last year. New leaders have put a stop to this practice by establishing more effective ways to support pupils who are having difficulties.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They foster this, for instance, through worship, singing assemblies and visitors to the school, and through learning about other faiths. Pupils can choose to participate in many sports clubs, choirs and national debating competitions.
- Leaders extended the school day. Pupils now have an earlier start and an extended tutor period. During this time, pupils have the chance to read, to revise their work, to seek advice from their tutors and to discuss current affairs, for example. Pupils have welcomed this change as they feel it gives them a good start to the day, preparing them well for learning.

## **Governance of the school**

- In May 2018, the local authority replaced the governing body with an interim executive board (IEB), which is now responsible for governance. Governors are highly experienced and bring a wide range of expertise to their work.
- Each governor works closely with a designated senior leader. Governors visit the school often. In this way, they keep a very close eye on the school's work and check on the implementation and effect of new approaches to school improvement.
- Minutes of their meetings confirm that governors undertake their statutory duties. They hold leaders to account for school improvement. Equally, they support school leaders in their work. They make a strong contribution to school improvement.
- The IEB is planning to re-establish a full governing body next term. All IEB members intend to continue as governors, and they will organise elections for new parent and staff governors.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding team makes sure that they train all staff in accordance with the latest government guidance. Staff are aware of the range of potential safeguarding issues, especially those that are more prevalent in the local community. Staff are vigilant. They know that they need to report in person to a safeguarding leader should they have any concerns about a pupil's safety or welfare.
- Leaders have established strong links with the local safeguarding team, and with other external agencies. They work with them and parents to make sure that pupils are safe

and supported.

- There is a police officer based at the school. He delivers workshops to help pupils to understand how to keep safe in different situations. Pupils know they can turn to him if they encounter any trouble. In addition, he accompanies pupils to Archway at the end of the school day to make sure that pupils safely access public transport.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- Overall, the quality of teaching is not good enough to ensure that pupils routinely make strong progress across subjects and year groups.
- In some classes, teachers do not use assessment information to help them plan activities that meet the needs of pupils. Sometimes, teachers do not plan learning sequentially to build on and consolidate pupils' previous learning. This limits pupils from deepening their understanding and applying their knowledge to solve problems in different situations.
- Too few teachers are ambitious enough for their pupils. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve, especially the most able, are too low. This means that teachers set work which is not challenging enough to ensure that pupils reach their potential. Teachers ask closed questions, and too readily accept superficial answers. This limits pupils from thinking deeply and making the strong progress of which they are capable.
- Where teaching is effective, teachers plan a variety of challenging activities that meet the needs of the range of pupils' abilities. They use questioning to probe pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding. They are alert to pupils' misconceptions and address them effectively. In line with the school's latest policy, teachers give pupils regular verbal and written feedback and direct them to correct their mistakes and improve their work. In these instances, pupils make strong and sometimes substantial progress. This is not typical practice across the school.
- Teachers have established clear routines, so pupils arrive punctually, behave well in lessons and waste little time.
- There are already early indications that the support and guidance for teachers are beginning to work well. They are helping disadvantaged pupils, those who have SEN and those who speak English as an additional language to make stronger progress.

### Personal development, behaviour and welfare

### Good

#### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- As they progress through the school, pupils grow in self-confidence. They express their points of view clearly, and know that they need to work hard to succeed in their future lives. The good-quality, impartial careers guidance helps them to consider a range of post-16 options that meet their interests and aptitudes.
- Pupils know that they can trust adults to help them. They say that bullying is rare and adults would take effective action if it occurred. They can confide any concerns through

the anonymous worry box system, or by approaching an adult. If appropriate, leaders refer pupils to the school counsellor or other external agencies for professional help. This ensures pupils' welfare.

- Pupils are aware of dangers and learn how to stay safe. For example, they have had talks from former gang members and rehabilitated convicts about how not to get involved in knife crime.
- Pupils have opportunities to take part in extra-curricular sporting activities. Leaders have, however, reduced physical education (PE) lessons at key stage 4 to one lesson a week. For those pupils who choose not to engage in extra voluntary exercise, this reduction in PE decreases their fitness.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are very polite and welcome visitors. They take very good care of the environment, so there is virtually no litter in the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. Disruption in lessons is rare. Occasionally, however, pupils are off task when the teaching is uninspiring.
- Historically, attendance rates have been high and persistent absence low. Last year, however, attendance rates dropped to be in line with other schools nationally. Persistent absence also rose but remained below average. Leaders have arrested this decline, and attendance, so far this year, has increased.
- There is a very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision for one day a week. Since the start of the year, their attendance has been good.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Pupils in key stages 3 and 4 make average progress overall. There is too much variability across subjects, and there is some fluctuation year-on-year. This is because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement.
- In 2017, pupils working towards GCSE examinations made inadequate progress in science, humanities and the subjects counted in the open element of Progress 8. They made outstanding progress in the EBacc qualification and languages. In other subjects, outcomes were less variable, but broadly average, overall.
- In 2018, provisional information shows that there was a slight improvement in most subjects. In the subjects counted in the open element of Progress 8, there was a marked improvement. There was a decline, however, in mathematics. Languages dropped sharply from 'outstanding' to 'inadequate' progress.
- In 2017 and 2018, the most able Year 11 pupils made less progress from their starting points than similar pupils nationally. They also made less progress than their peers from low and middle starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils made weaker overall progress than other pupils nationally in the last two years. In 2017 and 2018, there were a few subjects in which they made stronger progress than others nationally. However, the subjects differed in the two

years, demonstrating year-on-year and subject variability.

- Pupils with SEND made less progress overall than similar pupils nationally in both years. This is because leadership of inclusion and provision for pupils who have SEN were weak. Inspection evidence shows that under the new leadership this group is starting to make stronger progress.
- Inspection evidence shows that leaders' initiatives are beginning to improve teaching. The changes have not yet had enough time to ensure routinely good teaching across subjects. As a result, pupils' overall progress is still too variable and requires improvement.
- Last year, almost all Year 11 pupils moved on to post-16 education or apprenticeships.

### 16 to 19 study programmes

**Requires improvement**

- As in the main school, new leaders of the sixth form have a firm understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. A month ago, they commissioned an external audit to verify their view and to help them in planning actions to secure improvement.
- Leaders, from the start of the year, raised expectations for students and teachers. They put in place a raft of changes. They introduced pastoral support by assigning students to tutors, who assist them in their learning and support their well-being. Furthermore, during the day when students do not have classes, they have to work in the study room. Leaders and subject leaders now check students' work regularly, and help them if they fall behind. Year 13 students speak positively about these changes, and say that they are working harder than in the past.
- Retention from Year 12 into Year 13 has been lower than average. In some cases, this is because students studied subjects in Year 12 that were not suitable for them, and, in other cases, because teaching was weak. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum offer. Students still have access to a good range of academic and vocational courses. Leaders have, however, withdrawn courses that had very low uptake and/or poor outcomes.
- Generally, teachers in the sixth form also teach in the main school. There is the same issue of wide variation across subjects and, consequently, teaching, learning and assessment require improvement. Leaders are training the teachers and holding them to account. It is too soon to judge how effectively recent changes will deliver substantial improvements.
- In 2016 and 2017, overall progress was broadly average, but with high variability between subjects. Provisional data for 2018 shows an overall decline. Progress in academic subjects is below average overall, and significantly below average in vocational subjects.
- Students' work and the result of the school's latest students' assessments show that current students' outcomes remain variable. Students learn particularly well in a government, politics and economics course and in a vocational physical education course. Progress is particularly weak in biology and mathematics.
- Attainment in English and mathematics GCSE resits has been strong over the past few years.

- Students benefit from a good programme of careers advice, which includes visits to universities and businesses. Last year, very few students participated in work experience. Those who did made their own arrangements. This limited students' preparedness for the world of work. Leaders plan to arrange work experience placements for all Year 12 students later this year.
- Students in the sixth form behave well in lessons and around the school. They work collaboratively in the study room, supporting each other's learning. Attendance is high.
- Students mentor younger pupils and help them with their reading and mathematics. They contribute to the wider community by raising funds for charity, for example. Students told inspectors that they would like leaders to create a mechanism through which they can communicate their ideas and contribute to improving the provision. They are keen to take an active role in improving their outcomes and preparing for their future lives.



## School details

Unique reference number	100459
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10052799

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1020
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	155
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Father David Evans
Executive Headteacher	Jane Heffernan
Associate Headteacher	Andy English
Telephone number	020 7561 7800
Website	<a href="http://www.sta.islington.sch.uk">www.sta.islington.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@sta.islington.sch.uk">enquiries@sta.islington.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 March 2012

## Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average.
- There is a well above-average proportion of pupils with SEN. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is similar to that found nationally.
- The local authority replaced the governing body with an interim executive board in May

2018.

- The school is led by an executive headteacher appointed in April 2018, and an associate headteacher, appointed in September 2018. A number of other leaders took up their posts in September 2018.
- A very small number of Year 11 pupils attend alternative provision on one day a week at King's Cross Construction Skills Centre, York Way, King's Cross.
- The school is part of the Islington sixth-form consortium, a partnership of four schools.
- The school had a Section 48 denominational inspection in November 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in 39 parts of lessons. Senior leaders joined inspectors during most of these observations.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work to inform judgements made about pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Inspectors met with four groups of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during social times. Inspectors met with school leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with the chair and another member of the interim executive board, and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation, such as that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, and minutes of the interim executive board meetings. They also looked at records and documentation about pupils' behaviour, attendance and exclusions, and about the ways staff help to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the 27 responses to the online questionnaire for parents, which included some text responses. Inspectors took account of the views of 28 pupils and the 43 members of staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire, as well as the two members of staff who telephoned Ofsted directly to express their views.

## Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Hall	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Bailey	Ofsted Inspector

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