



# **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE**

**ST BEDE'S COLLEGE**

**INTEGRATED INSPECTION**

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## St Bede's College

Full Name of School	<b>St Bede's College</b>		
DfE Number	<b>352/6032</b>		
Registered Charity Number	<b>700808</b>		
Address	<b>St Bede's College</b> <b>Alexandra Park</b> <b>Manchester</b> <b>Manchester</b> <b>M16 8HX</b>		
Telephone Number	<b>0161 2263323</b>		
Fax Number	<b>0161 2263813</b>		
Email Address	<b>enquiries@stbedescollege.co.uk</b>		
Headmaster	<b>Mr Daniel Kearney</b>		
Chair of Governors	<b>Rt Rev Monsignor MR Quinlan</b>		
Age Range	<b>3 to 19</b>		
Total Number of Pupils	<b>772</b>		
Gender of Pupils	<b>Mixed (431 boys; 341 girls)</b>		
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS):	<b>0</b>	5-11: <b>131</b>
	3-5 (EYFS):	<b>44</b>	11-18: <b>597</b>
Number of Day Pupils	Total:	<b>772</b>	
Head of EYFS Setting	<b>Mrs Claire Hunt</b>		
EYFS Gender	<b>Mixed</b>		
Inspection dates	<b>12 Nov 2013 to 15 Nov 2013</b>		

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule*, which occupies a period of four continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in November 2007.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. The range of these Regulations, which replace those first introduced on 1 September 2003, can be viewed on the website [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). Additionally, inspections will consider the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment introduced by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

The inspection was also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

Both Ofsted and ISI inspect and report on the Independent School Standards Regulations. However, they apply different frameworks and have different criteria for judging school quality that are suited to the different types of schools they inspect. Both use a four point scale when making judgements of quality but, whilst the ISI terminology reflects quality judgements that are at least equivalent to those used by Ofsted, they also reflect the differences in approach. ISI reports do not provide a single overarching judgement for the school but instead give a clear judgement on each aspect of the school's work at the beginning of each section. **These headline statements must include one of the ISI descriptors 'excellent', 'good', 'sound' or 'unsatisfactory', and where Achievement is 'exceptional' that term may be used for the top grade.** Elsewhere in the report, inspectors may use a range of different adjectives to make judgements. **For EYFS registered provision (for pupils aged under three), reports are required to use the same terminology ('outstanding', 'good', 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate') as Ofsted reports.**

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted formal interviews with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the chair of governors and governors, observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. Inspectors visited the facilities for sick or injured pupils. The responses of parents and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Mrs Maureen Bradley	Reporting Inspector
Mr Neil Gabriel	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Ms Ruth Coomber	Team Inspector (Housemistress, HMC school)
Mr Anthony Duffield	Team Inspector (Head of Department, HMC school)
Mr Paul Fisher	Team Inspector (Headmaster, HMC school)
Mrs Pamela Evans	Team Inspector ( Head of Department, GSA school)
Mrs Elizabeth Ferrand	Team Inspector (Deputy Head, HMC school)
Mrs Linda Macfarlane	Team Inspector ( Former Deputy Head, HMC school)
Miss Jacqueline Scotney	Co-ordinating Inspector for Early Years

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## 1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 St Bede's College is an independent Roman Catholic co-educational day school for children aged 3 to 18 years. The school was founded in 1875 by Cardinal Vaughan, the Bishop of Salford. In 1877 it moved to its present site in Whalley Range, three miles from the centre of the city of Manchester, taking over the buildings of the former Manchester Aquarium.
- 1.2 There are 772 pupils in the school, 431 boys and 341 girls. Of these, 175 are in the junior school including 44 children aged 3 to 5 in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The school opened the nursery in 2012. In the senior school there are 597 pupils of whom 161 are in the sixth-form. The school no longer provides boarding education for any of its pupils. Pupils travel to the school from the Greater Manchester region and 85 per cent of pupils are Catholic. It is a multicultural school with a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds. Many of the pupils are from professional families and from families running their own businesses. The school has identified 77 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and 47 of these receive specialist learning support from the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. There are 84 pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and 18 of these receive support for their English.
- 1.3 The ability profile of the junior school is slightly above the national average, with a fairly wide spread of abilities represented. The ability profile of the senior school is also slightly above the national average but with most pupils having ability that is above or in line with the average. The vision of Cardinal Vaughan was to provide the Catholic children of Manchester with the opportunity to pursue educational excellence. This continues to be the main aim of the school today. In an atmosphere of support and encouragement the school aims to develop and nurture a child's academic and spiritual development and to prepare pupils emotionally, socially and morally to face the rigorous demands of contemporary society.
- 1.4 The school is administered by a board of governors. The majority of governors have been newly appointed during 2013. Since the previous inspection the school has gone into partnership with the Manchester City Football Club Academy (MCFA) and educates 69 boys on a bespoke timetable arrangement. The sixth-form centre and both the junior and senior refectories have been refurbished. The junior facilities have been reorganised and refurbished to provide a new base for Years 6 and 7, the nursery and reception, and an information and communication technology (ICT) classroom.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The junior school uses National Curriculum nomenclature. The year group nomenclature used by the senior school and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

***Senior School***

School	NC name
U3	Year 7
L4	Year 8
U4	Year 9
L5	Year 10
U5	Year 11
L6	Year 12
U6	Year 13

## **2. THE SUCCESS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **2.(a) Main findings**

- 2.1 The achievement of pupils throughout the school is good. Pupils of all ages develop a good standard of knowledge, understanding and skill across all subject areas and there are some examples of excellent achievement especially in examination success. In the EYFS and in the junior school, achievement is highest where teaching places pupils at the centre of their own learning. In the senior school, achievement is good where the teaching actively engages the interest of the pupils and makes learning fun, especially in sixth-form work. Pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, make good progress. The progress of the more able is improved when their learning is extended. The curriculum is sound and is supported by a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. It strongly supports the Catholic ethos of the school. The junior school curriculum covers all the required areas of learning but recent changes to the structure of the timetable for Years 5 and 6 have not been sufficiently well planned to enhance learning. The creative and technological curriculum for Years 7 to 9 in the senior school does not fully promote the school's aim to develop pupils' interests and talents. The provision for careers education in the senior school is limited and personal, social and health education is not well developed or monitored throughout the junior and senior schools. Teaching throughout the school is good and is marked by excellent relationships between the teachers and the pupils. All pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- 2.2 The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. In the EYFS the children are provided with many opportunities to develop their personal, social and emotional qualities and are fully involved in the spiritual life of the school. Throughout the school pupils play an active role in chapel services and assembly and their personal development is supported by the promotion of strong Christian values. They show strong moral development and a good sense of right and wrong and demonstrate excellent behaviour. Pupils of all ages have excellent social skills and mix happily across all age groups. Respect for those from different cultures is evident in this multi-cultural school. The pupils' personal development is supported by good pastoral care and sound arrangements to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- 2.3 The current governing body has only recently been appointed but governance since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. The governing body has not fulfilled its responsibilities sufficiently well to ensure that safe recruitment processes are fully compliant with regulations and being effectively implemented across the school. They have not acted upon the recommendations of the previous inspection to agree a long term strategic plan for the future of the school. The new governing body have put suitable plans in place to target the areas of weakness. The overall leadership and management for the school is sound. There is some good practice in both senior and middle management but leadership of the school has weaknesses. There is no school development planning and no shared vision for the whole school. A recommendation from the previous inspection report to improve systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision has not been met. The school has maintained good links with parents.



## **2.(b) Action points**

### **(i) Compliance with regulatory requirements**

2.4 The school does not meet all the requirements of the Independent School Standards Regulations 2010, and therefore it is required to:

- undertake safe recruitment checks on all staff before they begin work and record them accurately on the single central register [Part 4, paragraphs 19 (2)(a),(b)(iii) (3); 20(2)(a); 22(3)(b), 22(4), 22(5)(a)(i) under Suitability of staff and proprietors].
- undertake effective annual reviews of safeguarding arrangements to ensure the policy is appropriate and fully implemented [Part 3, paragraph 7.(a) and (b), under Welfare, health and safety];

### **(ii) Recommendations for further improvement**

2.5 In addition to the above regulatory action points, the school is advised to make the following improvements.

1. Ensure that the governing body has effective processes to monitor the full range of statutory policies and that they are being followed appropriately.
2. Implement appraisal and link it to professional development in order to raise performance of all staff at all levels of the school.
3. Ensure that governors agree a long-term strategic plan designed to plan the future development of the school
4. Improve the provision of creative subjects for pupils Years 7 to 9 and improve timetable provision for Years 5 and 6 so that the timings of lessons are in the best interests of the pupils.
5. Implement the newly created plan in the EYFS for staff supervision.
6. Integrate outdoor learning consistently across the EYFS.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **3.(a) The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning**

- 3.1 The quality of the pupils' achievement and learning is good.
- 3.2 The good progress and achievement of the pupils is helping the school to move towards satisfying its aim of pursuing educational excellence, producing pupils who are intellectually curious.
- 3.3 Children across the EYFS make good progress in relation to their starting points. The school's assessment data, alongside the EYFS Profile scores at the end of Reception, indicate that the majority of children are working at levels above those expected for their age. Older children in the EYFS demonstrate a good knowledge of phonics. They explain their learning and use their skills to read and write words, sometimes independently. They listen carefully and recall prior learning confidently. They enjoy number work and demonstrate an understanding of quantity and numerals to 10. Small group work enables appropriate targeted learning that successfully builds on children's skills and develops confidence. Younger children enjoy looking at books independently and demonstrate a growing awareness of positional language. They are beginning to demonstrate an awareness of numbers, for example through counting stamps in the role-play post office. Children across the EYFS display well developed skills in ICT and are independently able to complete a program using a mouse.
- 3.4 Pupils in the junior school attain good standards across the curriculum. Literacy skills are strong. By Year 6 pupils have an extremely good grasp of genre, pejorative arguments, reasoning, simile and metaphor. In numeracy they develop mental skills which they use competently, as in Year 1, where pupils are able to calculate the number and value of coins required for a bus fare. Outside the classroom pupils' demonstrate significant achievements in group and individual activities as well as in clubs.
- 3.5 In the senior school, pupils demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of a good standard across the curriculum, showing them to be logical thinkers and sympathetic listeners. They are conscientious and organized in the production of good written work and capable of independent thinking where they have the opportunity; they are not afraid to put forward their own ideas. Well developed skills in numeracy are applied across all areas of learning. They have achieved much significant success at regional and national levels in Mathematics and Science Olympiads and Challenges. These qualities develop as the pupils move through the school, and in the sixth form, reveal aspects of excellence in many subjects. The quality of attainment in the sixth form is further exemplified by the university destinations and high proportion of first choices to which the Year 13 leavers depart. Pupils have good and sometimes excellent levels of achievement in extra-curricular pursuits where their creative and physical skills are highlighted. There is a range of success in music, art, drama, debating and public speaking and in team and individual sport. Notable achievements have been gained in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme up to silver level.
- 3.6 The following analysis uses the national data for the years 2010 to 2012. These are the most recent three years for which comparative statistics are currently available. Results in standardised tests of attainment in the junior school indicate that pupils' achievements in English and mathematics are higher than national norms. In the

senior school, GCSE results have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. Between 2010 and 2012 girls performed slightly better than boys, achieving 56 per cent of all grades at A\* to A and boys achieving 51 per cent A\* to A. The 2013 results show that the proportion of A\* or A grades overall was 43 per cent. At IGCSE, results in mathematics are above the worldwide average. Results at A level have been above the national average for maintained schools and similar to the national average for maintained selective schools. In the years 2010 to 2012 almost 70 per cent of all A-level grades were A\* to B. The 2013 results show similar success with the girls again out-performing the boys.

- 3.7 These test and examination results, interpreted in the light of both the nationally standardised progress data that are available and evidence from work observed during the inspection, indicate that pupils across the school make good progress in relation to their ability. Responses from the pre-inspection pupil and parent questionnaires reveal a high satisfaction level with the progress being made.
- 3.8 Pupils with SEND achieve well at all levels of the school. Additional support is sought for EYFS children who require it, both through internal sources and specialist external support. This helps the children to make good progress. Across the school the good quality of support for pupils with SEND enables them to achieve of their best. Pupils with EAL similarly achieve well as a result of the support they receive. The most able pupils achieve a high standard both in the classroom and in examination work.
- 3.9 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good and sometimes excellent. In the EYFS, children demonstrate enjoyment whilst participating in the range of activities provided by staff. Pupils in the junior school have excellent attitudes to learning. Their exemplary behaviour in the classroom strongly supports their overall achievement. They are good learners, capable of working both independently and co-operatively and can organise their work efficiently.
- 3.10 Senior school pupils are enthusiastic in the classroom and enjoy working collaboratively. They have the ability to concentrate and operate independently. Pupils value their relationship with their teachers and are well behaved and co-operative, although at times this results in them being too passive in their learning.

### **3.(b) The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision**

- 3.11 The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is sound.
- 3.12 The curriculum aims to provide a distinct Catholic education in which the talents of all pupils are fulfilled. The school is successful in supporting the strong Catholic ethos of the school, although the structure of the timetable does not always allow the pupils' creative talents to be fully explored.
- 3.13 The EYFS setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of children who attend. The educational programmes cover all the required areas of learning and the children learn through a balance of purposeful play-based activities alongside the teaching of formal skills. The Catholic ethos is woven throughout classroom life and the curriculum at an appropriate level for their age. This is in line with the settings' aims.
- 3.14 Most of the curriculum in the junior school is good. It meets the needs of the pupils and is balanced and stimulating. Curriculum planning up to Year 4 is thorough and

incorporates many cross-curricular themes. Schemes of work are generally detailed and comprehensive. Throughout the junior school there is a strong focus on numeracy and literacy. Access to some facilities in the senior school such as the science laboratories enhances the curriculum and fills the children with enthusiasm for the subject. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is sound. It is taught informally during form time and through religion and science; although a scheme of work exists for the subject this is not followed consistently in all areas. Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced an enhanced curriculum for Years 5 and 6. This involves the teaching of some specialist subjects such as languages, science and music by senior teachers. Progress in these subjects is inhibited by timetabling problems caused by the senior school ten-day timetable being superimposed on the weekly cycle of the junior classes. The lack of suitable planning for the introduction of this enhanced curriculum is affecting the ability of the junior school to create a truly age-appropriate and pupil-focused curriculum. In addition, on occasions, teaching time is lost whilst waiting for teachers to complete their commitments to the senior timetable.

- 3.15 The curriculum in the senior school provides access to the required areas of learning and contains a range of options, although provision is not always successful in meeting the needs of all pupils. Its strength lies in its diversity at both GCSE and A level. "Enterprise", a business-based course designed to give project and presentation experience, and an investigation-based science project are recent additions. Pupils are introduced to a broad range of foreign languages in Years 7 and 8. The curriculum has recently been modified following a review, but the changes made have not always worked in the pupils' best interests. Provision for the creative subjects, especially in Years 7 to 9, is limited. It is possible for pupils not to study a creative subject after Year 8 and the time available for music and art in Years 7 and 8 has been reduced. The range of technology subjects is also limited. There is no access to design elements such as textiles or food technology. Personal, social and moral education (PSME) is not delivered consistently within the curriculum in the senior school and there is little provision for careers education below the sixth form.
- 3.16 Support is available both by specialist teachers and in the classroom for pupils with SEND and EAL. There is some provision for extension work for the most able, but this is not tailored to their individual needs. The philosophy of the school is that all pupils are talented and any extension work provided is open to all. A good feature of the school's provision is the large number of drop-in clinics available, both at lunchtime and after school, to provide extra help, whilst some activities and visiting speakers do provide access to challenging topics. Pupils attending the football academy have a suitable curriculum designed to meet their needs.
- 3.17 There is a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered for all ages. A suitable range of sports, both competitive and for fun, are on offer and the DofE scheme is popular. The junior school offers many creative activities whilst in the senior school, pupils enjoy their involvement in drama productions, music and debating. A new Saturday enrichment programme offers subjects ranging from Mandarin to first aid. Academic clubs and societies, including share trading, geography and critical theory, offer challenge to senior pupils. Many trips and visits, both international and home based, enhance and enrich the curriculum.

### **3.(c) The contribution of teaching**

- 3.18 The contribution of teaching is good
- 3.19 Teaching is successful in promoting good standards of achievement and progress. It supports the aim of the school to allow pupils to learn effectively and strive towards academic excellence. Following the recommendation from the previous inspection, ICT is now starting to be used more effectively to promote learning across the school.
- 3.20 Within the EYFS, teaching is good. A good range of interesting activities is well planned, covering all areas of learning. The lessons are enriched through practical experiences, for example, mounted police officers and firemen visit the school to help children learn about their work. Such activities bring topics alive and they promote interest and understanding. In most lessons, the teaching displays a secure understanding of how children learn. Consequently, planned activities are purposeful and engage children well. Most, though not all, teaching makes good use of both the indoor and outdoor environment, so that children are active learners who enjoy exploring and display good levels of creativity. In the small number of less successful sessions, opportunities for children to immerse themselves fully in self-chosen activities for suitable periods of time are less evident.
- 3.21 Throughout the junior school, much of the teaching is well planned, incorporates a wide variety of activities, and sets out clear connections between learning objectives and the lesson's focus. Pupils are very positive about the way teaching helps them to learn, enjoying devices such as games and role play to enliven their learning. In a few cases, teaching lacks challenge causing the more able pupils to lose interest and concentration and their progress slows. Key features of the excellent teaching seen includes placing pupils at the centre of their learning, engaging them in independent and collaborative work which contributes much to their understanding, and allowing them to think for themselves. Carefully-structured prompts and individual help provide additional support for pupils who find work particularly hard.
- 3.22 The quality of teaching in the senior school is good overall, with some areas of excellence. In almost all cases, teaching is characterised by a suitable pace of learning and the active engagement and enjoyment of the pupils. The good subject knowledge of the teachers and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils contribute significantly to the pupils' progress. At its most successful, work is well-planned to stretch the most able and create opportunities for all pupils to develop as independent thinkers and learners. In the small number of cases where teaching is unsatisfactory, lessons are over-controlled by the teacher, proceed at a slow pace and lack clear learning objectives, leaving pupils unenthused and passive in their learning. On occasion teaching time was lost because pupils arrived late to lessons.
- 3.23 The pupils with SEND and EAL are well supported by specialist teachers, enabling them to progress well, especially in their grasp of language. In contrast, the planning of work in normal classes sometimes fails to reflect their needs, but teachers often offer extra support at other times.
- 3.24 Assessment across the school is good. Tracking systems in the EYFS help teachers to identify children's individual needs and how they progress term by term against national guidelines. Good practice in the junior school is characterised by detailed marking with helpful comments and clear targets set for improvement. There is a clear assessment policy in the senior school and work is generally

marked conscientiously. In some subjects marking sometimes lacks constructive comments to inform pupils of what they need to do to improve. Data about performance is starting to be used to track progress, set targets and inform planning, but this is not yet well developed.

## **4. THE QUALITY OF THE PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.(a) The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils**

- 4.1 The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is excellent.
- 4.2 Throughout the whole school the Catholic ethos creates a caring and friendly community where every individual is valued. Spiritual development is strong and underpins the strengths identified in the personal development of the pupils. In the EYFS the children's personal, social and emotional development skills are good. Children are increasingly provided with opportunities to develop independence in their self-care routines and in their personal, social and emotional qualities. This helps to prepare children for the next stage of their learning when they move classes at the end of the school year.
- 4.3 Pupils throughout the school have a strong sense of the spiritual aspects of life. They are reflective and thoughtful young people showing confidence in their beliefs and in their understanding of who they are. Pupils understand the importance of religion in their life. They make effective use of the opportunities for worship and personal reflection and take pride in their participation in the regular assemblies, chapel services and faculty masses. Pupils feel comfortable in prayer and meditation and are thoughtful and insightful, having a strong sense of self-worth and not being afraid to be themselves. Older pupils become more aware of the values important to them and grow in appreciation of the non-material side of life through pilgrimage to Lourdes and participation in their many charitable concerns.
- 4.4 The moral development of the pupils is excellent. They have a clear sense of right and wrong, and of fairness and justice, fostered through discussions in lessons, which reflects the values and attitudes promoted by the school. Pupils fully understand the need for considerate and respectful behaviour and put it into practice. In the EYFS staff act as good role models to children and they promote good standards of behaviour through positive behaviour strategies. Throughout the school pupils are positive, respectful and courteous and show themselves to be helpful in the many roles of responsibility they enjoy undertaking. In the EYFS teachers have good routines in place that children follow well, such as being responsible for tidying up. Junior and senior pupils develop fair and responsible attitudes to others through their work as prefects, house and sports captains.
- 4.5 Pupils' social development is excellent. The school strongly encourages social interaction between all age groups whether it is in extra-curricular activities or within the house system in the senior school. In the EYFS, children enjoy learning together through play based activities, for example, reception children work well together whilst gathering sticks to make an owl's nest. Junior school pupils are friendly, caring and kind to each other and play together across all ages, with older pupils eager to help the younger pupils. In the senior school they reflect on issues such as prejudice and discrimination and develop good political, social and economic awareness through the broader curriculum. Pupils of all ages demonstrate genuine concern for those less fortunate than themselves through a strong commitment to the different charitable concerns they support, such as providing food for the homeless and the Philippines Disaster Appeal.
- 4.6 Pupils show good cultural development. They understand and respect other faiths and cultures, for example by participating in the festivals of other religions and traditions. They also have an understanding of the Western cultural tradition through

their work in the curriculum, especially those pupils who have sufficient access to creative subjects. Many nationalities are represented within the school and pupils of all ages are tolerant and understanding of the many customs and traditions. They enjoy harmonious relations with those whose families are different from their own.

#### **4.(b) The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care**

- 4.7 The contribution of arrangements for pastoral care in the school is good.
- 4.8 Support and guidance for pupils is good and is in accordance with the school's aim to provide a secure and family orientated community. Pupils in the junior school say they feel happy, valued and cared for and senior pupils express their appreciation of the care they receive in school. In the pre-inspection questionnaire almost all pupils said they like being a pupil at St Bede's.
- 4.9 In the EYFS, class teachers are effective in their roles as key people for the children in their care. Staff know the children well. Most adults use this information appropriately to ensure that children's needs are met suitably. However, in a small number of instances, children's choices are over-managed by adults and there is a lack of regard to their individual interests and learning styles. Form teachers are the main point of contact for pupils in the junior school and, knowing them well, encourage them to take advantage of all the school offers and support them in their work. Relationships between pupils and staff, as well as with other pupils, are excellent. Pupils report they are confident that they can go to any member of staff, including the acting head, at any time. In the senior school the learning environment is disciplined and caring and is enhanced by a comprehensive pastoral support network of form tutors and heads of house, led by the deputy head responsible for pastoral care. The pastoral team meets weekly to discuss any issues or concerns. Relationships between staff and pupils, and amongst pupils themselves, are positive, both in and out of the classroom.
- 4.10 In their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire a small minority of pupils indicated that they felt they had no one to turn to in school with a concern but inspectors' discussions with pupils did not support this view. Pupil questionnaire results also indicate that a small minority of pupils feel that the school does not ask for their opinions or respond to them. Inspectors found that pupils in the junior school said they feel they are listened to and are able to express views and opinions to their teachers. In the senior school, inspectors found some justification for the concern. There is no school council through which the pupils' views may be expressed, although house captains and sixth form prefects do meet with the head once a week to raise matters of concern.
- 4.11 Pupils respect and understand the school rules and readily accept that sanctions are sometimes necessary. In interviews and in the questionnaire a small minority of pupils expressed the view that rewards and sanctions are not always given fairly. Inspectors found that the school has a comprehensive behaviour policy, giving written guidance on the range of sanctions together with a section on rewards. The junior school children report there are many excellent rewards given and sanctions are rare. In the senior school, however, there is a notable imbalance between the sections on sanctions and those on rewards, with the weight of the policy focusing on sanctions for bad behaviour. Senior school inspectors observed that at times sanctions were rigidly and arbitrarily applied, supporting the pupils' views. The school has effective procedures for guarding against harassment and bullying. Pupils throughout the school report in pupil interviews that bullying is not a problem



and if it were to happen, they feel confident that staff would deal with it speedily and fully. Appropriate records are kept of any incidents of unpleasantness that occur.

- 4.12 Pupils across the whole school are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits and to take regular exercise. Healthy living is promoted effectively during EYFS lessons such as physical education and topics such as 'all about me'. Children are also provided with healthy snack choices. School meals offer a range of healthy options. The PSHE and PSME schemes of work cover healthy living, although monitoring of what is taught is too limited to guarantee consistency of provision. The physical education and extra-curricular sports programmes are popular and encourage healthy exercise. Children with EAL and SEND are appropriately supported and the school has recently produced a suitable accessibility plan.

#### **4.(c) The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety**

- 4.13 The contribution of arrangements for welfare, health and safety is sound.
- 4.14 The school is committed in its desire to keep the pupils safe from harm and the staff are caring in their daily contact with the pupils which contributes considerably to their excellent personal development. In the pre-inspection questionnaire almost all pupils said they felt safe in the school and well cared for.
- 4.15 Throughout the school the pupils are suitably supervised and care by teaching and support staff is of a high standard. The governors, leadership and management of the school have not, however, maintained sufficiently rigorous procedures regarding recruitment of staff, including the EYFS. The school now operates safe recruitment procedures for the appointment of staff, governors and volunteers but in the past, due attention has not always been paid in securing necessary barred list checks before appointments were taken up and criminal record checks obtained. The statutory requirements in relation to the recruitment of staff, such as medical checks, have not always been undertaken. The central register of appointments is not completed correctly and does not show all the required safer recruitment procedures or precise dates of appointments and dates of checks. Child protection issues within the school are well handled at the day-to-day level. The designated staff for child protection in the EYFS, junior and senior schools have had appropriate training and all staff are trained, as required.
- 4.16 The school has a suitable written policy for health and safety, with arrangements in place to deal with concerns. The EYFS staff demonstrate a good understanding of the procedures for keeping children safe from harm. Risk assessments are conducted and are in place for all areas of the school and the site is well maintained. The school has suitable arrangements to guard against the risk of fire. Fire safety procedures are outlined for staff and equipment is tested regularly and carefully maintained. Fire drills are practised each term but although some evaluation of drills takes place these are not always sufficiently detailed.
- 4.17 Pupils benefit from a comfortable medical centre run by a well qualified nurse. Health records are stored securely and carefully maintained. Communication of health matters is efficient and essential information is distributed wisely. Medicines are stored securely. A suitable number of staff are trained in first aid.
- 4.18 Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained and stored.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

### **5.(a) The quality of governance**

- 5.1 The quality of governance is unsatisfactory.
- 5.2 Since the previous inspection the governing body has not always given sufficient attention to fulfilling its responsibilities. Governors have not always maintained careful oversight of the financial management of the school. The review and monitoring of the main school policies, including for child protection, has not been completed satisfactorily and they have not ensured they have been successfully implemented. The implementation of safer recruitment procedures has not been monitored with sufficient rigour. Governors are now fully aware of their responsibilities for child protection and safeguarding and a nominated governor has now been suitably trained in procedures.
- 5.3 The newly appointed governing body has clear aims for the future development of the school. Its members bring a wide range of appropriate experience in areas of the church, business, human resources, finance and education and are beginning to provide good guidance and support to the leadership and management team. Almost all members of the current governing body have been appointed within recent months and they are aware of their legal responsibilities and the procedures needed to promote the development of the school. The need to restructure the governing body into delegated committees has been identified and each committee has clearly designated areas of responsibility. Targets have been set to improve areas of financial management, educational provision, staffing and people management, strategic development and pupil welfare. Governance of the EYFS is sound. Recent changes in the governing body have resulted in an increasing understanding of the EYFS through the regular visits to the junior school and discussion with the EYFS management.
- 5.4 Changes to the structure of the school have been introduced without sufficient planning or attention to the educational implications for the pupils. Strategic development planning has not yet taken place and there is little evidence of any constructive school self-evaluation as a background to this. The recommendation of the previous report to ensure that governors agree a long-term strategic plan designed to plot out the future development of the college and the preparatory school has not been met. The new governing body has identified the need for a performance management programme for the head and staff but little progress has yet been made in agreeing or implementing such a programme in the senior school. The new governing body has, however, significantly increased its support and guidance to the leadership and management of the school to ensure that identified areas of weakness are handled as a matter of urgency.

## **5.(b) The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians**

- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management, including links with parents, carers and guardians, is sound.
- 5.6 The senior leadership team is successful in supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and enabling pupils to reach good standards of achievement and to excel in aspects of personal development. A small number of parents answering the pre-inspection questionnaire reported a lack of satisfaction with how well the school was led and managed. The inspection found areas where good practice is evident but also some significant weaknesses where the quality of leadership is failing to provide clear educational direction. The vision for the future of the whole school has not been clearly identified or shared with staff, pupils and parents.
- 5.7 The leadership and management of the EYFS are sound. The setting has recently undergone considerable change and the structure is in its infancy. As a result, a number of systems such as self-evaluation are not yet embedded. The new management has a clear vision for future development and has established a good team ethos. Regular meetings for staff to meet individually with the EYFS management to discuss issues concerning the new plan for staff supervision have not yet been undertaken, but a system is now in place ready, for implementation. The regular cycle of appraisal provides staff with opportunities to identify specific training needs. The EYFS management supports staff in seeking additional training and keeping up to date with current practice in order to improve the children's experiences.
- 5.8 The leadership and management in the junior school shows a sound understanding of the pupils' needs and planning is in place for the identified areas of future development. The appraisal programme for junior staff has provided support and useful targets for improving teaching and learning.
- 5.9 Within senior management in the senior school, there is some sound planning for aspects of improvement, for example in the use of data in school to track progress, although these are still at an early stage. There are members of the senior management team who have good systems in place to support the pastoral care of the pupils and to promote their personal development. Middle management supports and encourages staff. The new faculty heads are beginning to work on a number of educational initiatives such as peer observation and the use of assessment to set targets. Some progress is evident but longer-term weaknesses in leadership and guidance means that these initiatives have not yet had any significant impact on improving teaching and learning.
- 5.10 The school does not formally manage the performance of staff in the senior school. There is some good, and sometimes excellent, practice in the teaching which is not sufficiently shared and few training opportunities are provided. Staff throughout the school are well qualified and enthusiastic and they are dedicated to achieving success for their pupils, but many lack the motivation for further development because of the lack of clear educational guidance and support.
- 5.11 There is little evidence of rigorous self-evaluation or school development planning across the whole school and as a consequence there is no coherent sense of direction or of key priorities. A recommendation from the previous report to tighten

the structure of line management to improve the systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision at every level has not been fully met. The recent restructuring of Year 6 in the junior school and the development of an enhanced curriculum for Years 5 and 6, have not been devised with sufficient care or consultation, resulting in difficulties with the curriculum, timetabling and teaching and this is having an adverse impact on learning.

- 5.12 Compliance with the regulatory requirements for schools has not been given sufficient attention since the previous inspection. The procedures for the safeguarding of children in relation to recruitment checks on members of staff have not been fully implemented. The monitoring of policies has not always been carried out with sufficient rigour, for example when checking that they meet regulatory requirements. Nor has their implementation been checked sufficiently well. As a consequence, contradictory advice has been given to staff and the variation in practice which exists between the senior and junior school fails to promote the whole-school ethos intended.
- 5.13 The school maintains constructive relationships with parents in accordance with its aim to have relationships that grow, last and work in partnership. The parents have good opportunities to be actively involved in the work and progress of their children. The Parents and Friends' Association is active in social and fund raising events and recently a new development forum has been founded to help with major projects.
- 5.14 The school website provides the required information and the quality of published materials is good. The newsletter provides an informative overview of the weekly activities and highlights the main successes of the pupils. The school annually produces a colourful and high quality magazine which celebrates achievements and draws attention to all the international and domestic trips and extra-curricular activities the school supports. Many parents commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire that they are satisfied with the quality of communication and support the school provides about the progress their child is making. Parents are encouraged to speak to the school to discuss any concerns or queries they have. The school has a sound complaints procedure and concerns are dealt with appropriately in accordance with the published procedure.
- 5.15 Useful reports and parent evenings throughout the year provide general information on pupils' work, but reports are not always sufficiently clear on how pupils can improve their work further. However, when combined with interim grades in the senior school, they do give good indicators of progress.

**What the school should do to improve is given at the beginning of the report in section 2.**