

# St Andrew's Catholic School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125275
<b>Local Authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	359876
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Meena Wood HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	820
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	120
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Earl
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alan Mitchell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hillfield Leatherhead KT22 7JP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01372 277881
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<b>Email address</b>	administrator@st-andrews.surrey.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 36 lessons, observed 25 teachers, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, leaders and managers, teaching staff and students and the School Improvement Partner. They carried out a number of short focused visits to classrooms and joint observations of lessons with the school's senior managers. They carefully scrutinised the school development plan and departmental reviews, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, governing body minutes, internal teaching and learning observations, and students' work. Inspectors evaluated questionnaires from 134 parents and carers, 119 students and 23 staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether teaching and assessment practice are sufficiently tailored to students' abilities and prior attainment.
- How well individual students learn, make progress and behave in lessons.
- The quality of safeguarding procedures and the monitoring of behaviour.
- Sixth form provision and whether students are being enabled to make better progress and to attain higher standards.
- The capacity of leaders and managers to make sustained improvements.

## Information about the school

St Andrew's Catholic School is a smaller-than-average secondary school, with a growing sixth form and specialist status in mathematics and computing. The extended school offers family learning classes in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. A high proportion of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A lower number have a statement of special educational needs. Most of these students have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties, or dyslexia. The proportion of students from a minority ethnic background is low. White Other and Asian British are the largest groups; the most common heritage languages spoken are Tagalog, Polish and Portuguese. A small proportion of students are eligible for free school meals.

**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

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Andrew's Catholic School is a satisfactory school. Following the appointment of a new executive headteacher and the current headteacher over the previous ten months, the numbers of students gaining five A\* to C GCSE standards (including English and mathematics) have significantly increased to just above national averages. The headteacher has provided strong leadership in developing a respect for education and has worked highly effectively with his new senior leadership team and staff to instil a culture of raised aspirations and expectations.

This has resulted in considerably improved students' behaviour. Most demonstrate a willing and keen attitude towards their learning. When given the opportunities in lessons to participate in pair and group work, they make highly positive contributions. Most students report that they feel safe in the school. The inspection team found that the monitoring and review of arrangements regarding safeguarding were satisfactory, but that there was limited rigour in monitoring and systematic review of policies. Although behaviour has improved, systems for detailed analysis of improvements and trends in this respect are not established.

A broadening curriculum offers students the choice of academic and vocational subjects most suited to their abilities and interests and this has also contributed to raising Year 11 standards. However, there remains variation in the learning of students, with both higher and lower ability students sometimes making slower progress, and boys achieving better than girls. Too little emphasis is placed on developing literacy and writing skills across the curriculum, resulting in some poor standards of literacy in students' work. Satisfactory teaching results in most students making broadly expected levels of progress, although there is variation in quality between and within subjects. However, assessment practice is highly inconsistent. In those lessons where teaching and assessment activities were well structured and challenged students of higher ability, while providing support for those of lower ability, inspectors observed high levels of enjoyment and engagement and good progress, very often through collaborative activities and structured discussion. In some lessons, however, teachers' learning objectives did not sufficiently assess and take into account the full range of students' prior attainment, and teachers did not check the knowledge and skills students were acquiring before moving on to the next activity. There are a few good examples of assessment and marking but, across the curriculum, the quality of oral and written feedback on students' work, including marking, is inadequate.

Students receive satisfactory academic guidance on their next steps in Years 9, 11 and in the sixth form. Pastoral support is good for students with a statement and satisfactory for those with social, emotional and behavioural needs. There is, however, significant variability in the quality of the academic support received by students, in particular those

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of lower ability or with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. Initial assessments and structured support for some of these students are not timely or effective.

The school sixth form was graded as inadequate at the last inspection and is now good. Standards in A-level and other examinations have continuously improved over the past three years. The self-evaluation that is now in place is accurate and plans for improvement target the most important areas. Given the positive impact of changes that have taken place in a relatively short space of time, this demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve, despite the challenges facing the new headteacher and his leadership team. ♦

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

- Raise the proportion of students, especially of female students, higher and lower ability students, attaining five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, and accelerate the learning and progress of these students by September 2011 through:
  - ? improving the quality of teaching, assessment and learning objectives across all subjects to ensure that activities, tasks and pace of learning are better matched to students' abilities
  - ? ensuring students receive feedback that enables them to improve and that marking is consistently helpful and detailed in all subjects
  - ? developing a literacy strategy that supports students' standards of work across the curriculum and provides structured support for those with dyslexia.
- Strengthen procedures relating to safeguarding and behaviour by February 2011 through:
  - systematically analysing trends relating to bullying, behaviour, exclusions and attendance and using this data to inform self-evaluation processes
  - ensuring all governors and senior leaders undertake child protection and safeguarding training to help them fulfil their monitoring roles more effectively.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Students join the school with broadly average levels of attainment but the school draws a high number of students who are more able. Students' outcomes have been below national averages over the previous three years with the vast majority of students making inadequate progress. In 2010 the school successfully tackled these weaknesses and this resulted in satisfactory progress for the large majority of students, but with some variation between genders and abilities. Students with a statement of special educational needs achieve better than those with less severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and dyslexia.

While the school's own data suggest continuing improvement for current Year 11 students, inspectors observed variability in learning, progress and the standard of work in students' books during lessons. Standards of some students' written work, especially those of lower ability, are not reflective of their potential, especially in terms of presentation and layout. The school does not have a literacy strategy that effectively addresses common

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weaknesses in spelling, grammar and punctuation, across all subjects and year groups, including in the sixth form. Owing to weak written and oral skills, a number of students do not demonstrate the necessary skills for the world of work. However, a high number of students exhibit strong computing skills. In the best lessons observed in English and history, students are responsive to challenge through well-structured paired or group tasks, actively contribute to discussions and provide mature responses, visibly enjoying their work. In some mathematics lessons, a significant minority of students are not achieving their potential because of low levels of challenge or inappropriate pace and activities.

Students report that the school is a safe environment. They have a satisfactory awareness of healthy lifestyles, although the school has not monitored participation in sporting activities by student grouping. Students' spiritual and moral awareness is better than their cultural and social development because there are limited opportunities in lessons for students to improve the latter. Exclusions and persistent absences have reduced since the last inspection. Students report that they wish to be more proactive in shaping school activities and contributing to their local communities. In response, the school is reviewing students' roles and responsibilities, to enable a greater number across the school to be involved, thus building on the good practice already in place. For instance, Year 10 students work effectively with younger pupils as mentors and as 'buddy readers'. Students' punctuality and attendance are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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## How effective is the provision?

Most teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and, in the best lessons observed by inspectors, use this effectively to inspire learning. In an information and communication technology lesson, students were skilfully guided to understand and apply their knowledge to design a website. Explanations are clear and a range of resources are used well. In a history lesson and an art lesson, high expectations of students, clear learning objectives and effective use of peer- and self-assessment by the teacher encouraged good levels of progress. However, even within subjects, there is significant variation. In certain subjects, especially in some science, English and mathematics lessons, teachers and support staff do not consistently plan lesson activities, tasks and pace of lesson in line with the wide range of students' needs. This results in too much teacher input and whole-class activities for long periods of time. In these instances, too few students respond to questions or participate in discussions, and a minority of students waste time in social chatter.

Too little use is made of assessment activities to check students' learning before moving on to the next activity or input. The marking of students' work is of inconsistent quality across subjects. Even where marking is helpfully detailed, teachers do not consistently ensure that students redraft work as necessary. Little targeted work is in place that ensures students know how to improve against their learning objectives. Pastoral support is mainly good, although there is too much variability in the academic support offered to students through teaching assistants.

The range of qualifications offered has enabled a small number of Year 11 students following an effective vocational programme at the local college to gain good outcomes. Suitable accreditations for students with learning difficulties are in place. The work-related learning curriculum is gradually encouraging greater understanding in economic and business. However, cross-curricular links that guide students to transfer their knowledge and skills to everyday contexts and to go beyond the examination or text book are underdeveloped. An increasing number of extra-curricular activities and clubs are available at lunchtimes and after school and this is valued by students. The school's specialist computing status has led to effective partnerships with local primary schools and the establishment of family learning classes, with relatively fewer developments in place for mathematics.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has worked successfully to transform the learning culture of the school for students and staff. This development is highly valued by staff, students, parents and the governing body. Delegated leadership and management and greater staff accountability, although an aspiration for the school, are still emerging. However, through good professional development, middle managers are developing into a more cohesive team. There is greater emphasis on analysis of performance data by senior and middle managers to ensure support for individual underachieving students. The school has recognised that there is insufficient focus at present, despite student gender variations, on interrogating performance data to structure interventions, in line with its equalities policy. Although the school monitors racist incidents, the monitoring of incidents of bullying is less rigorous. Self-evaluation at whole-school level is sharply self-critical and plans fully reflect the need to raise attainment across subjects and year groups. Departmental plans are more variable in quality and some have limited analysis of learning and progress, work samples or discussions with staff and students.

The monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by the senior and middle leadership team is still developing, but that observed by inspectors was rigorous. This has clearly contributed to raising staff expectations and successfully raising attainment in 2010. However, the school's internal lesson observations are not always focused on learning and whether all groups of students make the progress of which they are capable. Good opportunities for staff to share good practice in teaching and assessment are still at an early stage, which is one explanation of the hitherto uneven quality of teaching.

Support provided by the governors is satisfactory, but the governing body has not challenged the school sufficiently about its policies and monitoring procedures regarding safeguarding and behaviour issues. Safeguarding procedures are sufficient to ensure students' safety; there are minor administrative lapses in risk assessments, detailed recording and follow-through of procedures. The school inherited a financial deficit and a recovery plan is in the process of being established; but, in view of the recent much-improved attainment and rising rolls, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

An area that the school has found challenging has been communicating to parents and carers the changes taking place and the impact of these on their children. The school's focus on community activities and partnerships is still developing under the new headteacher, who has clear aspirations for a more cohesive learning community and is implementing effective plans that promote engagement with local groups and communities.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Sixth form

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good and the capacity to improve is good. Following the last inspection, self-evaluation rigorously identified the full extent of its weaknesses and the senior leader took timely action to address these. Robust monitoring of performance data, students' attendance, and quality of teaching has had a positive impact on students' learning experiences and outcomes. In addition, tracking and monitoring arrangements of students' progress are effective. Academic guidance is good, as students have good opportunities to review their personal learning targets and receive feedback on their progress through one-to-one tutorials, and these are highly valued.

Outcomes are good. A-level, AS-level and vocational examinations standards are just above national averages and the numbers of students achieving high grades has improved year on year. National published data over three years indicate that students, who enter the sixth form with broadly average levels of GCSE attainment, are helped to make good progress. Although learning and progress are good in most lessons, a small minority of students do not make the progress they should across all subjects. In a few subjects, especially in business studies, a high number of students do not continue their studies from Year 12 to Year 13. Induction to the sixth form does not include a sufficiently detailed assessment of students' levels and skills and this is now being prioritised by the school.

Overall, the quality of teaching and assessment is good, with less variation in the quality across subjects, than in the rest of the school. Students observed in lessons demonstrated a sense of self-direction and ambition and most enjoyed their learning.

The school has provided levels of qualifications that best serve all its students, especially the minority that enter with low levels of GCSE attainment. These are enabled to make a successful transition to further education or employment.

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*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

The majority of parents and carers report very favourably on their satisfaction with the school, the satisfactory levels of students' healthy lifestyles and the academic support received by their children. A small number expressed a desire for more homework and more information on their children's progress. The school has been made aware of this. Some also expressed concerns at some disruptive behaviour in the school. Inspectors did not find evidence of significant behaviour problems.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's Catholic School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 134 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 820 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	51	61	46	4	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	67	50	64	48	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	40	74	55	2	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	44	67	50	1	1	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	48	36	78	58	4	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	29	80	60	10	7	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	20	91	67	9	7	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	25	74	55	6	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	31	80	30	5	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	36	69	57	7	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	31	74	55	5	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	59	44	64	48	5	4	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	62	46	65	49	3	2	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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 learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



12 November 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of St Andrew's Catholic School, Leatherhead, KT22 7JP**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to you and we were impressed by how well behaved and polite you were. These were the main things we found out about your school.

- St Andrew's Catholic School provides you with a satisfactory education. Most of you make satisfactory progress in your learning between Years 7 and 11. Since the arrival of your new headteacher and senior managers the standards you attain have improved and in 2010 Year 11 students attained slightly above average standards of work. The school is helping the current Year 11 students to make even better progress and attain higher grades.
- The care, guidance and support you receive are satisfactory. The school is committed to increasing the external and internal responsibilities that you are involved in, to help you develop greater social and cultural awareness.
- The school provides you with a curriculum that broadly meets your needs and helps you to improve your attainment, especially those of you who attend the college courses.
- Those of you in the sixth form achieve good outcomes, owing to the good teaching, personal tutorials, which many of you told us you appreciate, and appropriate courses you follow.

To help the school improve further, the school's leaders have agreed to ensure that:

- all teachers consistently match lesson activities more closely to your abilities, involve all of you in your learning and give you precise feedback on how to improve
- you are helped to produce better standards of work through additional support for presentation, spelling and grammar
- they monitor safeguarding and behaviour even more closely.

We would like you, too, to pay particular attention to your presentation of written work. We wish you all the best for your future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood Her Majesty's Inspector

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