

# St Anthony's School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119037
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	379711
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 October 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Charles Hackett

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	104
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Carole Stanion
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Rees-Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	St Anthony's Way Margate CT9 3RA
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons, covering all year groups, and saw 14 teachers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at lesson planning, data on pupils' achievements, a range of school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings. They met with staff, pupils and a member of the governing body. The responses to questionnaires from 29 parents and carers, 65 pupils and 35 staff were considered.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- The rates of progress of pupils with different disabilities and difficulties, such as those with moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and how these match national expectations.
- The impact of school development planning on meeting the needs of the school's changing pupil population.
- How the recent emphasis on the use of assessment impacts on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils are making.
- Whether changes being made to the curriculum are having a positive impact on pupil outcomes.

## Information about the school

St Anthony's, originally a school for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, is now catering for pupils who have both behavioural and learning difficulties. In the last two years, pupils with more complex difficulties, such as being on the autistic spectrum, have also been admitted. Within the primary department, there is provision for up to 12 pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Currently there are six such pupils. The number of pupils admitted who are in the care of the local authority is well above the national average and the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Boys outnumber girls by a ratio of four to one.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

St Anthony's is a good school. All groups of pupils benefit positively from the good quality of provision available, which addresses their differing needs well. Through good self-evaluation processes the headteacher and his senior team are successfully moving the school forward at a good pace and have a clear vision for its further development.

Pupils achieve well, often because they enjoy learning, in the classroom and when engaged in the many additional activities on offer, such as the college placements undertaken by Year 11 pupils. Pupils' progress is good overall, although previously it was no better than satisfactory in mathematics in the secondary department because of weaknesses in its teaching and the use of assessment. Records show that behavioural incidents occur but behaviour in lessons is usually good and impacts positively on pupils' learning. Excellent relationships with parents and carers are very effective in supporting pupils and their families to engage with the school. Attendance is consistently above average, with only a very few poor attendees lowering the school's overall attendance figures.

Staff have very positive relationships with pupils and this helps create good learning environments in classrooms. Teachers consistently prepare a good range of resources and activities that will interest pupils. Lesson starter activities are well thought out, with the aim of settling pupils and engaging them in learning. Occasionally, teachers do not fully consider what the thorough assessment systems tell them about pupils' different abilities. This means that at times, all pupils engage in the same activity rather than tasks more specific to their differing abilities.

The curriculum has been successfully reviewed to meet the changing needs of the pupil population. This is particularly so in the primary department where recent changes have led to improved behaviour and engagement in learning. The effective care and support provided for pupils is enhanced by the positive links the school has developed with outside agencies. These partnerships are ensuring that pupils, including those in the care of the local authority, feel safe in school and are making excellent progress in improving both their physical and emotional health. Pupils make their own very positive contributions to the school community, for example through their anti-bullying council which considers incidents and recommends actions.

The senior team has successfully managed a cultural change within the staff team to develop increased understanding and awareness of the skills required to work

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effectively with the increased number of pupils with behavioural difficulties. Good behaviour monitoring systems are in place but there are some inconsistencies in the way that individual staff implement strategies for the management of pupils' behaviour. The effectiveness of the governing body has been clearly increased since the previous inspection. New members have added experience and expertise and these are being used well to monitor and challenge the senior team. Evidence shows much has been achieved in the transformation of the school to meet the needs of its changing pupil population. This bodes well for the future, showing that the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

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

- Ensure that all teachers consistently give prominence to pupils' different ability levels in the planning of their lessons.
- Improve secondary pupils' progress in mathematics by addressing the legacy of underachievement because of previous weaknesses in its teaching and the use of assessment.
- Ensure that all staff adopt a consistent and effective approach to managing the increasing number of pupils with behavioural difficulties.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils respond well to staff, often following carefully what is said to them. For example, in a design and technology lesson, Year 7 pupils listened carefully to the teacher's explanation and demonstration of how to drill a hole in the plastic fobs before they eagerly completed their own. Similarly, two primary pupils with complex needs carefully followed the teacher reading a story about an African journey featuring different fruits. They enjoyed tasting samples of the different fruit prepared for them and successfully completed an evaluation of what they thought of the taste of each one.

Progress records show that in previous years, rates of progress had dropped below those of similar schools. Data now show that this has been rectified, although in mathematics in the secondary department, pupils' achievements are still well below expected levels. The achievement of the different groups in the school is very similar, with the pupils in the care of the local authority making the same good progress as other pupils. Girls broadly achieve at least as well as boys.

Pupils gain an excellent understanding of the benefits of being healthy. They drink water when in the fitness suite and eagerly participate in games in lessons and breaks. They say how safe they feel, enjoying being part of mixed-age tutor groups, where those in Year 11 'buddy' and support younger pupils in Year 7.

Pupils engage extremely well with the local community through a number of projects. For example, an 'inter-generation' group involves pupils working closely to support a group of elderly local residents. Additionally, pupils participate in fundraising events

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and those in Year 11 take part in a wide range of work experience placements. These activities and pupils' positive response to the variety of spiritual and cultural aspects covered in assemblies mean that they make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Teachers put a strong focus on seeking to make the lessons interesting and challenging for pupils. For example, in physical education, pupils throughout the secondary department are focused on achieving specific challenges. These include pupils earning a sticker on a chart that equates to covering the distance of cycling from Margate to London by cycling for ten minutes on a cycling machine. In an excellent art lesson, pupils were enthralled by their achievements in creating animated slide shows with their drawings. The excellent subject knowledge of the teacher was used to good effect to ensure that all pupils, whatever their ability levels, were able to achieve very well. Recent changes are ensuring that the teaching of secondary mathematics has improved and now matches that for other subjects.

A good system of marking work in such a way as to ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve has been developed. This was seen to be effective in a food technology lesson where the teacher carefully talked through work from a previous lesson, explaining why the learning and effort were graded green, amber or red. She made it clear to each pupil what was needed to improve the grading with the work planned for that day. This lesson clearly built on the assessment of previous

<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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work but this good practice is not always evident in other lessons. At times, all pupils are asked to complete the same task even though for some it may be too difficult and for a few others it may not be stretching them to achieve more.

The curriculum has been successfully revised in both primary and secondary departments to meet the changing needs of pupils. As a result, it now both engages and challenges pupils. In the primary department, it has a strong focus on skill development and gives pupils the chance to be involved in their own learning through choosing topics. In the secondary department, the curriculum has a good focus on practical activities and provides pupils with good opportunities to engage in projects with community groups, such as the local theatre.

Undoubtedly the work of the pupils' welfare manager plays a pivotal role in the excellent practices in place to support pupils' pastoral needs. These include attendance and family issues. Good systems exist to track pupils' behaviour and new individual personal learning plans are being developed to incorporate individual education plans and behaviour plans. Some good examples of effective behaviour management were observed but evidence shows that staff skills vary and not all are consistently effective in managing the behaviour of pupils with more complex needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The strong leadership team has a clear vision for the school's development. It has maintained the good practice reported in the previous inspection report in working with pupils with learning difficulties and is now beginning to extend the skills of staff in supporting pupils with behaviour issues. Through shared distributed leadership, all aspects of the school's work are carefully monitored and weaknesses addressed. Subject leadership is being developed. It is not yet secure for all subjects, which led to the weaknesses in teaching and assessment being unidentified in secondary mathematics over the previous year.

The governing body has been strengthened since the previous inspection. The new members have widened the group's expertise and the benefits of this can be seen in the greater degree of monitoring and challenge now in place. Rigorous reviews of safeguarding aspects ensure that pupils are safe. Child protection and staff recruitment are very thorough and benefit from the excellent links established with other agencies.

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Parents and carers are fully involved in their child’s education from the outset. Home visits prior to pupils starting at school are carried out and regular contact is maintained through weekly reports from tutors. Parental support groups provide parents and carers with good opportunities to meet and share their experiences with each other. Good use is made of the links the school has with other agencies to support both care of pupils and the development of the school curriculum.

Much is done to ensure that pupils have equal access to all aspects of the school’s provision. Diversity is celebrated well and, through the effective approach of the staff team, there is a strong emphasis on avoiding any form of discrimination. Community cohesion has been carefully considered and audited. Links with the local community are now well established and wider links, including some international contacts, are being developed very well. The determination of the senior team and members of the governing body to address the needs of all pupils, and the clear evidence of the positive impact leadership and management have had on extending the quality of provision, show that the capacity to sustain improvement is good.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

An above average percentage of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Parents and carers are positive about the impact of the school on their children. ‘The school does an excellent job’, ‘I haven’t got one bad word to say about the school’ and ‘St Anthony’s is an excellent school and has done wonders with my child’ are examples of the very positive comments made. Some parents and carers noted concerns about how staff manage behaviour and inspectors agree that there is some inconsistency in this. Inspectors concur with the positive observations made by parents and carers.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anthony’s 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 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 104 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	13	45	13	45	4	14	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	45	11	38	5	17	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	16	56	11	38	1	3	1	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	52	9	31	3	10	2	6
The teaching is good at this school	16	56	11	38	0	0	1	3
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	14	48	11	38	2	6	2	6
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	38	6	21	1	3	1	3
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)	14	48	13	45	0	0	2	6
The school meets my child’s particular needs	15	52	9	31	2	6	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	52	6	21	4	14	2	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	48	12	41	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	15	52	10	34	2	6	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	15	52	8	28	3	10	2	6

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

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

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



10 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Anthony's School, Margate CT9 3RA**

Thank you for making Mrs McCarthy and me so very welcome when we recently came into school. We really enjoyed meeting you all. I know some of you will not be able to read and understand this letter but I hope your parents, carers or staff will help you.

We have judged your school to be good. From your responses to the questionnaire, we know you and your parents and carers agree with this. We can see you enjoy learning and are making very good progress in understanding the benefits of being healthy. You work and behave well in lessons and out of school on activities. We particularly like the way you support the school and local community through projects like the inter-generation group and the links with the local theatre.

We can see that the headteacher and his senior colleagues lead and manage the school well. All the staff support this and this makes the school such a positive place to be. We have suggested three things to make the school even better.

- Ensure that all lessons are planned to match your different ability levels.
- Improve progress in mathematics for those of you in the secondary department.
- Ensure that all staff use effective strategies to manage your behaviour.

Once again, thank you so much for being so friendly and helpful. Keep working hard!

Yours sincerely

Charles Hackett  
Lead inspector

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