

St Anthony's School

St Anthony's Way, Margate, Kent, CT9 3RA

Inspection dates 1–2 July 2015

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good leadership has resulted in teaching and achievement that have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school continues to improve.
- Effective staff training and regular checks on the quality of teaching ensure that most students make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Students in Year 11 all achieve some formal accreditation and qualifications before they leave the school. As a result, students are well prepared for their futures.
- The small number of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 make good progress at the school and achieve well in English and mathematics.
- The governing body has a good range of skills and knows how well the school works. Governors regularly challenge leaders about students' progress and behaviour to ensure that students achieve well. Governors use additional government funding effectively.
- A wide range of exciting activities contributes well to students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The good range of subjects and topics provided meets students' needs and abilities well. Additional therapies and individual support help students to catch up with past inadequacies and enjoy school. There are high quality opportunities for work experience.
- Students' behaviour is good. Students get on well together and most work hard to succeed. The school's reward systems are very effective in engaging most students in learning.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Almost all students improve their attendance from low starting points. They value the individual support that they receive and most are anxious to do well.
- Teaching is good. Helpful marking of books is particularly evident in the primary department. All students have good support from teaching assistants.
- Staff are positive about the way leaders and managers have maintained and improved the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' progress in mathematics in Years 7 to 11 is not as good as it is in English.
- Teachers' marking in Years 7 to 11 is not always effective in helping students improve.
- Students' individual emotional and/or mental health needs are not always identified as well as their other needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed students' learning in eight lessons, some jointly with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors also listened to some younger students read.
- Inspectors had lunch with students and talked to different groups about their school and about their progress.
- The inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, other senior staff, and the headteacher by telephone.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at several documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' books.
- School leaders provided inspectors with the school's own parent questionnaires because there were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) questionnaire to be considered. Questionnaires from 32 staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Peter Hare

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school caters for primary and secondary-aged pupils from across East Kent. The primary pupils have social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. Not all of them transfer to the secondary department at the age of 11. Some re-integrate into mainstream schools and others go on to secondary behaviour placements. There are no pupils under the age of six currently at the school.
- Secondary students have social, emotional and mental health needs and usually stay at the school until the end of Year 11.
- All students at St. Anthony's have a statement of special educational needs. About a quarter of students also have a diagnosis of autism spectrum conditions.
- Many students have been out of school for some considerable time before they start at the school.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and no students speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for those who are looked after.
- The school also receives primary school physical education and sport additional funding.
- Some students in Key Stage 4 attend accredited vocational courses at East Kent College. Other students in Key Stage 4 have a wide range of alternative placement opportunities to learn about the world of work. These include a local farm, local businesses and a centre for military programmes.
- The school is currently undergoing considerable re-development and a new sports hall is about to be opened.
- The headteacher was on a residential trip to Wales with some students in Year 10 during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve students' progress in mathematics in Years 7 to 11 by ensuring that allocated time is sufficient and improve marking in these year groups so that students know what they need to do next to improve.
- Develop a clear plan across the school to identify and support students' underlying emotional and/or mental health issues so they achieve even better.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management is good

- Good leadership since the previous inspection has enabled students to continue achieving and behaving well. The headteacher is effectively supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, staff and governors. This strong team ensures that students achieve well because of improvements to teaching and the curriculum. The nurturing environment results in good teaching and students' positive attitudes and relationships.
- Governors challenge leaders and have high expectations of staff, who support the work of the school well. This ensures that students' progress is good in English, mathematics and science. Primary pupils make particularly strong progress in reading because of recent training for all school staff in the teaching of phonics. Secondary students achieve better in reading and writing than in mathematics.
- Leaders ensure that teachers provide challenging work for students by setting targets for them linked to their achievement. Increases in teachers' salaries are closely linked to how well they meet their targets.
- Middle leaders support their teams well and place a high focus on checking outcomes in their subjects. They work closely with staff in other similar schools to ensure that their judgements about students' progress are accurate. Regular monitoring of assessments by senior leaders ensures that progress is robust. They recognise, however, that students' progress in Years 7 to 11 in mathematics is not as strong as other subjects.
- Recent good improvements to the subjects and topics that students study have had a positive impact on raising achievement across the school. An effective range of therapies supports the varied behavioural needs of students, so that progress improves. Ways of managing and improving students' behaviour are effective. However, leaders do not always ensure that students' emotional and mental health needs are taken fully into account when trying to improve their behaviour.
- Students told inspectors about the wide range of visits and activities that they really enjoy. A group of 10 secondary students, for example, were on a residential trip to Wales during the inspection, where they could take part in a wide variety of outdoor pursuits.
- Students enjoy school and once they start most begin to attend regularly, often from previously low attendance. A few students still do not attend often enough, despite the best efforts of leaders.
- Responses to the staff inspection questionnaires show that they are proud to work at this school and that they are pleased with the support that they receive from leaders.
- Students benefit from good opportunities to learn about British values. For example, students vote for their own school council, showing good understanding of democracy. Members of the council make decisions about activities, as well as identifying improvement to the school grounds.
- The school ensures that there is equality of opportunity for all students through the rich curriculum. Students learn about the different cultures and faiths that make up modern Britain. As a result, there is no discrimination at the school and students' attitudes are positive. 'We get on really well with each other,' commented one student. Regular fundraising activities and close links within the community reinforce the good promotion of students' social, spiritual, moral, and cultural development.
- Secondary students learn about the prevention of sexual exploitation, extremism and radicalisation in their personal education sessions.
- Leaders have developed a new assessment system to measure accurately and monitor the assessment of students' skills. They check these assessments with other similar schools to ensure that they are accurate.
- Leaders visit off-site provision regularly to check that students' achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- The local authority works well with the school, offers regular support and regularly checks progress. It recognises the good improvements that the school has made in the use of information on students' progress and in the management of behaviour.
- The school's parent survey shows that parents who responded are pleased with the school and with their child's education.
- A wide range of work experience is available to students who feel they would benefit from it. Students receive good quality careers guidance to prepare them for their futures.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged students to provide extra support and resources, such as additional therapies and technology. As a result, these students make similar or better progress than their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Leaders use the additional physical education and sport funding well to provide a wide range of sports and physical activities in the community. This has meant that students benefit from a rich range of activities, such as the residential trip.

- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Staff receive regular training to ensure they know how to identify any pupil at risk of harm. Good quality procedures ensure that students are safe. Risk assessments are thorough.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors have a good range of skills and many are highly skilled. They use their expertise very well to challenge leaders and hold them to account for students' achievements. Governors are well aware of the strengths of teaching and of the areas for improvement.
 - Governors check performance information with other similar schools so that they know it is accurate. They receive good quality information about the relative performance of staff. Governors are fully aware of procedures for setting targets for teachers. They use these to make sure the best teachers are rewarded and that others receive support and training to improve their practice.
 - Governors manage the school's finances well. They ensure that additional funding benefits those students who are eligible for it. This ensures that these students make similar progress to their classmates. Governors check that the school leaders make effective use of additional sport funding to provide sporting opportunities that benefit students' health.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. Most students in Years 7 to 11 behave particularly well, as they are sensible and respond enthusiastically to all aspects of learning. Primary pupils' sometimes challenging behaviour, due to their social emotional difficulties, is well managed by staff. Behaviour overall has improved over the past few years. This is because of some successful new therapies that help students to improve their attitudes.
- School policies identify high quality ways for managing students' behaviour and these are having a positive impact. However, the school does not always identify how it supports the emotional and/or mental health needs of secondary students to help improve their general well-being further.
- Boys and girls get on well together, although the number of girls is very small. Girls themselves say, 'It's not about boys or girls, we just get on.' Students respect the school rules and really like the rewards that they receive. Students' behaviour on trips, visits and when attending off-site provision is good.
- Students benefit from a wide range of activities and these help to keep them focused on their work. Occasionally, the behaviour of a few students disrupts the learning of others, but this is always well managed by staff.
- There has only been one permanent exclusions in the past few years. Regular monitoring by leaders and the good quality of support provided ensure that almost all students improve their behaviour and attitudes by the time they leave. There are still some short-term exclusions from a small number of students, but the school is identifying ways of reducing them.
- Students learn about democracy through voting for their school council. They fully understand that the council makes decisions for them.
- The school prepares students well for their futures through their good achievement, experiences gained from different work placements and the way they work with others.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. School policies to ensure their safety are securely in place and leaders make sure that all staff fully understand them. Excellent risk assessments are in place for trips and visits. Leaders ensure that the safety procedures are checked regularly.
- Students fully understand the importance of staying safe on the internet and say that they are taught about e-safety procedures. They understand the impact of risks, which helps them to feel extremely safe.
- Leaders regularly check students' behaviour, safety and attendance at their alternative provision to ensure that these are consistently good.
- Students are fully aware of different forms of bullying. They say that, although there is some bullying at the school, it is rare; and staff always deal with it quickly and fairly.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching through the school helps students achieve well in English, mathematics and science. The very positive impact of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) training for all staff has

resulted in students improving their English skills, particularly reading and writing. In mathematics in Years 7 to 11, teaching is not as effective. Students make good progress in many subjects including art and design and technology.

- Planned activities meet individual students' abilities and needs well so that most are successful and achieve their tasks. Leaders monitor students' learning in lessons effectively to make sure that they achieve well. Staff are fully aware of what is expected of them through their good quality training and through regular and effective monitoring.
- The most-able students are well challenged by the additional tasks set for them, so that they make at least good progress.
- Those students with autistic spectrum conditions are well supported in lessons. They benefit from high levels of support and tasks that are well matched to their individual abilities. As a result, their progress is good.
- The use of literacy and numeracy across other subjects is particularly strong, helping students to improve their skills in different contexts.
- Students' work is usually marked well. In Years 1 to 6, marking is particularly effective. Teachers use a variety of effective methods to help pupils improve their work. Marking is not quite as effective in helping secondary students improve their work, particularly in mathematics.
- Students in Years 7 to 11 do not have as much time allocated to mathematics as English. This often limits the amount of work that they complete and their overall progress.
- Teaching for all students with additional needs and for disadvantaged students is good, enabling these groups to achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, others in the class.
- Teaching of writing is fostered well through many other subjects of the curriculum in both primary and secondary classes.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable part in supporting students' learning well and in managing students' behaviour effectively so that lessons are calm and orderly.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because the quality of marking is not consistently good across the school, and not enough time is allocated to the teaching of mathematics in some classes in Years 7 to 11.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students' attainment on entry to the school is almost always well below expected levels for their age. This is due to past missed schooling because of their social, emotional and/or mental health needs. When they start at the school at either the primary or secondary level, they quickly begin to catch up, making at least good progress from their own starting points.
- School-based information shows that students in Years 7 to 11 make the best progress in English. From Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4, students make higher average point scores in English than in mathematics. However, the impact of some mathematics support shows that progress from students' starting points is good and improving.
- Almost all students achieve well. School records show that achievement of all groups of students is improving over time. As a result, students in Year 11 now attain GCSE examinations at grades A* to G, BTEC qualifications and entry level qualifications. Students' achievement in their alternative provision is good.
- Primary-aged pupils make at least good progress because of the very high quality of support that they receive. Information about their progress is limited because many have been out of school prior to attending this school due to their behaviour difficulties. However, they make at least the progress expected of them in English and mathematics from their own individual starting points.
- Students' literacy and numeracy skills are well promoted through many subjects. This was evident in design and technology where students in Year 9 were measuring lengths of wood to make artefacts in their Second World War project.
- Students with additional special needs, such as autism spectrum conditions achieve well. In Years 4 to 6, for example, primary pupils learned about the functions of the heart in science. They benefited from a variety of effective approaches which helped them to understand the lesson and join in with answers to questions.
- Students achieve well in reading in the primary and secondary phases of the school because of high levels of support. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 benefit from daily reading, regular phonics sessions and often take their books home. Years 5 and 6 pupils read fluently and confidently to the inspectors, showing good understanding of what they read.

- All groups of students, including disadvantaged pupils, those who are eligible for additional funding and those with additional special educational needs, achieve equally well. This is because of good support by teaching assistants who provide guidance to help them succeed.
- Extremely effective marking in Years 1 to 6 helps the pupils to know exactly how they could improve their writing skills. This enables them to improve at a fast pace. Marking for students in Years 7 to 11 is accurate and regular, although it is not always effective in helping students improve their work.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium funding achieve similar results to others in the school and achieve well.
- The most-able students are well challenged so that they make very good progress in English and mathematics. Individual tasks help them to improve quickly so that they extend their skills.
- The oldest students in Years 10 and 11 all develop vocational skills through courses that will support them well in their futures. For example, students have opportunities to work on a local farm, learn about teamwork in preparation for joining the armed forces, learn about hospitality in local restaurants, and develop engineering and construction skills from local businesses. Some also attend courses at a local college to acquire additional vocational qualifications.
- Students have many opportunities to improve their physical health and fitness through the wide range of expeditions and activities provided for them through the sport grant. All students are offered breakfast on arrival to school, which they highly value and say that it gives them a good start to the school day.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade | Judgement | Description |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
| | Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| | Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 119037 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 449483 |

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

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| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Community special |
| Age range of pupils | 5–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 101 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Russell Sullivan |
| Headteacher | Neil Rees-Davies |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6–7 October 2011 |
| Telephone number | 01843 292015 |
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