

St Antony's Catholic College

Bradfield Road, Urmston, Manchester M41 9PD

Inspection dates

7–8 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders do not use the information they have to gain an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. In the past they have been too slow to take the necessary steps to improve the school.
- Leaders do not routinely check how successful their actions are to improve outcomes for different groups of pupils. They do not use this information sufficiently well to produce high-quality improvement plans.
- Over time, pupils have made very slow progress, especially in English and mathematics. However, current pupils now make better progress.
- Systems to assess the quality of teaching and learning are not focused on the progress that pupils make in response to teaching. Leaders have an overgenerous view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Senior leaders have recently implemented strategies to improve the progress that the most able and disadvantaged pupils make. However, it is still too early to see the effect of these strategies on pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to develop confidence, resilience and perseverance in their learning. This slows pupils' progress.
- Some teachers do not use questioning effectively to review how well pupils are learning. They miss opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and to address misconceptions.
- Some pupils are not routinely challenged to achieve as well as they should, so they disengage from learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The support from a partner school has had a significant impact on improving pupils' attendance and behaviour. Attendance is now above the national average.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have successfully improved standards for pupils in science and in art. Pupils now make good progress in these subjects.
- Some middle leaders, for example the special educational needs coordinator and the literacy leader, use data precisely to target the use of additional funding to bring about improvements.
- Pupils are tolerant, friendly and respectful. They are proud of their school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - refining the school's monitoring systems so that they focus on the impact of teaching on pupils' progress
 - ensuring that teachers plan lessons that stretch and challenge pupils, in particular the most able, so that pupils do not disengage from learning
 - ensuring that teachers use their questions to check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions
 - ensuring that teachers' planning supports the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders use the information they have about pupils' progress to drive further improvement
 - ensuring that leaders make an accurate, realistic evaluation of the school's current position so that they can plan effectively for continued improvement
 - ensuring that improvement plans are sharp and focused.
- Improve pupils' progress across the school, in particular in English and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The sharing of expertise, including the special educational needs coordinator, with a partner school has allowed leaders at St Antony's to have access to high-quality and experienced leadership. However, the pace of change has not yet been sufficient to raise outcomes for the school's pupils. That said, inspection evidence indicates that the school is gathering momentum to improve.
- Despite improvement quickening, leaders still do not use the information that they have to check the effectiveness of the school against national standards. Consequently, their view of the school's effectiveness is inaccurate and this impedes improvement planning.
- Performance management procedures are not robust enough. The evidence provided by the school shows that targets are set to improve the quality of teaching in the classroom but are not sufficiently focused on pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders have reviewed the quality of teaching and understand the relative strengths and weaknesses. However, they do not focus sufficiently well on the impact of teaching over time.
- Assessment of pupils' progress in all subjects at key stage 3 needs to be strengthened. However, in key stage 4, there has been considerable investment in moderating the assessment of pupils' work with staff from other schools, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers' assessments are now accurate.
- The curriculum has not previously met the needs of all pupils and this has resulted in some weak outcomes, particularly for the most able. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it is broad and balanced. Pupils now make better progress.
- Leaders have reviewed the provision for personal, social and health education to ensure that it prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from the new programme.
- The support given through by a partner school has been invaluable. The associate headteacher has been seconded to the school and parents, staff and pupils say that there have been significant positive changes. In particular, pupils' behaviour and attitudes have improved.
- As a result of support from a partner school, some middle leaders now use the information that they have about pupils effectively. They target precisely those pupils who need additional support. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who arrive at the school with very weak literacy skills receive good support as a result of the careful use of additional funding. These pupils now make better progress.
- Leaders' programmes for ongoing teacher training have improved. However, it is too early to see the effect on pupils' outcomes. Additional support for leaders of subjects is provided by the partner school and is highly valued by staff.
- Leaders have instilled a culture of responsibility among pupils, which is evident in many aspects of school life. Pupils are courteous and polite and many go out of their way to

greet adults in a friendly and respectful way. They reported that the vast majority of pupils are tolerant of people who are different from themselves.

- Leaders at all levels are highly committed to the school and want it to be successful. Almost all respondents to the staff survey said that the associate headteacher and her team had brought about significant positive changes to the school over the last three years.
- Leaders are beginning to use pupil premium funding much more effectively to bring about improved progress for those disadvantaged pupils who are furthest behind. Recent rapid improvements in attendance are also due to effective use of the funding.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is targeted effectively. Almost all pupils have made rapid gains in their reading ages. Pupils in Year 8, who have benefited from a whole year of support, now read fluently and with confidence. The use of community volunteers to listen to pupils read was highly valued by those pupils on the scheme. They said it was helping them to understand the words in books that they found difficult.
- Leaders at all levels have made considerable efforts to engage a wider range of parents and carers in pupils' education. Coffee mornings are held for parents of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for pupils who are new to the school. A 'welcome evening' and a family quiz night encourage parents of Year 7 pupils to visit the school on a more informal basis. This has generally had a positive impact but the school recognises that it needs to continue to work on this.
- A newly appointed careers coordinator has recently implemented a programme that provides useful information to pupils about their next steps. The number of pupils who progress to education, employment or training at age 16 has risen considerably and is now close to the national average.
- The local authority effectively supports the school with work scrutiny and some lesson observations.

Governance of the school

- Governors show passion and ambition for the school. They are a highly skilled group who ask pertinent and challenging questions of the associate headteacher. However, they are presented with an analysis of data which lacks rigour in its comparisons. Consequently, governors have an overgenerous view of the quality of education that the school provides.
- A core group of the governing body meets frequently with both the executive headteacher and associate headteacher to challenge them to improve the school quickly and to support them in their roles. One governor is on the governing board of both St Antony's Catholic College and the partner school. This brings expertise, experience and a holistic view of the partnership to both schools.
- Performance management of the associate headteacher is carried out robustly by governors and is used as an effective tool to raise standards at the school.
- Governors know that they need to review their policies more frequently to ensure that they are consistent with the school's practice.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at the school and that, in the rare instances of bullying, positive action is always taken. Parents are positive about the work that leaders do to keep their children safe. Pupils are aware of the range of dangers when using the internet and social media. However, they cannot always recall what they have learned in personal, social and health education about online safety. The nature of the curriculum means that there are too few opportunities for reinforcing messages other than briefly in assemblies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders expect that all teachers provide pupils with appropriate challenge to support pupils' learning and progress. They say that this should not be through simply giving additional work, as had sometimes been the case previously. The use of a 'challenge task' was seen in many lessons but its effect on learning was variable depending on the sophistication with which it was used. The level of work in all subjects was often too low for the most able.
- When teachers do not use their assessment information to plan or adapt their lessons, pupils become bored and off-task behaviour increases. Teaching does not consistently address pupils' misconceptions or probe pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils do not demonstrate a deep understanding of the topics studied.
- In mathematics, teaching sometimes relies on a simplistic approach to working out an answer with pupils, rather than adopting a problem-solving approach. Where this is the case, pupils' progress is limited because they cannot transfer their prior learning to new mathematical problems. Pupils do not have the resilience needed to tackle more-complex questions and tasks. The most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to tackle problems to deepen their knowledge and understanding that would enable them to achieve higher outcomes.
- An increasing number of teachers adapt their lessons quickly and effectively when pupils are ready to move on. They also provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and to think for themselves at different points in their lessons. This aids pupils' progress.
- The school has introduced a system to highlight in teachers' planning those pupils who are disadvantaged and the most able. Most teachers complete the document but do not necessarily use the information to support learning and progress for these pupils. When teachers do use this information, such as in English, the impact on learning is profound.
- A positive classroom environment supports pupils' learning. When pupils lose concentration, teachers challenge their behaviour and there is always immediate compliance. Where pupils are under-challenged they sometimes lose concentration.
- The presentation of pupils' work is generally of a high standard. Most pupils underline headings and set their work out as neatly as possible. This has been a focus for improvement by leaders and has been very successful.
- Homework of a good quality was seen in many subjects, but not all. Most of the homework tasks contributed well to pupils' learning.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. In many lessons, teachers use this well to devise activities that interest pupils and foster the development of key knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, inspectors saw pupils' thinking skills being developed particularly well in science.
- When teaching assistants are present in lessons they make a strong contribution to pupils' learning. This is because they know the pupils very well and understand their needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are very proud to be members of the school community. Almost all are smartly dressed in their uniform. They present their work well and this is important to them. Pupils speak warmly of the school's teaching of tolerance. Pupils also work to support others who are different and are less well off than themselves. Homophobic or other derogatory language is rare because of the school's ethos of caring for people in their community.
- The school has a strong ethos of support for the many pupils who have complex needs. The school's 'Padua Centre' is an effective support mechanism for pupils with short-term behavioural issues or who have vulnerability issues outside school. It is well regarded by the pupils, for whom it provides respite and preparation to return to their normal education programme.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported by the special educational needs coordinator, who is highly strategic and effective in ensuring that the use of the funding for these pupils is making a positive difference to them.
- The progress of children who are looked after by the local authority is tracked effectively and appropriate actions implemented to provide individualised support so that they achieve well.
- Off-site provision on a programme focused on life skills and experiential learning for a group of Year 11 boys is making a significant difference to their attitudes to learning. Their excellent attendance is having a strong effect on the progress they make in their learning.
- Assemblies, form time and computer science lessons contribute to pupils' learning about staying safe but these are not always delivered in an effective manner. As a result, the intended messages are not necessarily clear to all pupils. Pupils say that they feel safe and understand the basics about keeping safe. However, their knowledge of keeping safe on the internet is not always secure.
- Bullying at the school is rare, and when it occurs, pupils say that it is dealt with effectively. However, the analysis of patterns of bullying so that leaders can provide additional support and guidance to pupils is in its infancy. The school's internet filtering system is robust and pupils are tracked and followed up if they attempt to use the internet inappropriately. These incidents are well documented.

- Pupils can be heard speaking confidently at times but more often in lessons they give limited answers and are not expected to improve them. When asked what makes a good piece of work, pupils focus on the presentation of their work rather than how well they apply their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The personal, social and health education programme focuses on a wide range of issues such as making a difference to vulnerable groups in the community, including those who are homeless. However, the programme to improve pupils' emotional and physical health is not taught with sufficient frequency. Pupils say that they enjoy learning about British values. They show a very good understanding of the potential dangers associated with extremism.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- They move calmly and sensibly around the building, which has some very narrow areas. At lunchtimes and breaks they form orderly queues for food and there is very little litter.
- Disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions when they need further guidance. The recently refined behaviour policy has made a positive difference to pupils' attitudes to learning. Although some staff follow the policy effectively in lessons, some pupils reported that there is inconsistency, which confuses them at times.
- Whole-school attendance has improved considerably during this academic year from well below national average to just above national average. Improvements have been made in every year group. This has been due to increased rigour in using a proportionate approach to differing levels of absence. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved substantially and is now much closer to the national average of other pupils.
- There has also been a reduction of the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school. However, this is not yet at national average levels for boys and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their levels of absence remain too high.
- Fixed-term exclusions remain high but there is a declining trend. Leaders employ a range of effective strategies to reduce exclusions. Also, leaders now know which strategies make a difference to improving behaviour. Currently, exclusions remain above the national average for boys, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those on free school meals. Previously the school has not analysed the data in comparison to national averages and so support was not precisely targeted.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In previous years outcomes at the school have been weak, especially in English and mathematics. The progress of pupils was too slow. This was, in part, due to the curriculum not being appropriate for all pupils at the school, particularly the most able. A focus on improving provision for the most able is evident in lessons, but the strategies are not yet being used in a sufficiently effective way to have a positive effect

on pupils' progress. Consequently, these pupils do not make strong progress. During the inspection, scrutiny of pupils' work, along with lesson observations, indicated that there were missed opportunities for challenge for the most able.

- Middle leaders are not responsible for, or involved in, setting targets. This means that they are not always sure about why certain pupils have particular targets. This affects their planning for pupils' progress.
- Recent changes to the staffing in mathematics have strengthened provision and are leading to better rates of progress in lessons. However, this is not embedded across all classes. At times least-able and middle-ability pupils were observed doing more-challenging work than high-ability pupils.
- In English there are examples of good extended writing skills being developed. There is still, however, better teaching in key stage 3 than in key stage 4. This is because the impact of support to raise pupils' basic skills is having the desired effect in key stage 3. However, teachers did not demonstrate that they had the skills to regularly devise lessons that accelerated learning enough to make progress strong.
- Assessment in all subjects is robust due to the networks formed between departments in St Antony's Catholic College and its partner school. This allows the expertise across the schools to be used in checking assessments of pupils' work. Middle leaders value the additional capacity the partnership has brought.
- The lack of comparison of school outcomes with national averages has led to middle leaders assuming that outcomes for pupils are better than they are. This in turn has created a lack of urgency about focusing on the progress that pupils make over time. This has been compounded by the analysis of the quality of teaching, which has focused on what the teacher does rather than what progress pupils are learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving. Previously, disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally. The evidence gathered by inspectors shows that the difference in outcomes between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- Leaders expect that all teachers will plan for interventions to tackle underperformance. Although it is not yet fully embedded across the school, teachers now analyse the performance of disadvantaged pupils and higher-ability pupils and consider how they can improve it. Interventions are funded from the pupil premium funding, which is now used more effectively to bring about change.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities generally progress at a good rate. This is due to the strong leadership of this area, which provides highly targeted and precise support.
- Generally boys perform less well than girls, although in French the boys outperform the girls.
- In 2016 there were some considerable improvements to pupils' outcomes, for example, in science, where least-able and middle-ability pupils performed particularly well. In modern foreign languages, middle-ability boys and the least-able girls also performed well. Outcomes have also improved in art since the previous inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	106372
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10032196

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	447
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joanne Clarke
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Beever
Telephone number	0161 911 8001
Website	www.st-antonys.com
Email address	stantonys.admin@trafford.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information in relation to the content of the curriculum.
- The school has an informal partnership with a partner school. The school is run on a day-to-day basis by an associate headteacher who is a deputy headteacher from the partner school. The headteacher of the partner school, who is a national leader of education (NLE), is the executive headteacher and spends just over one day each week at the school.
- The school is a much smaller than average-sized secondary school operating in a borough where there is selection at age 11. There are more boys than girls.
- Pupils are largely White British, although approximately 35% are from other backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 47%, is above the national average.

- The school has an increasing number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school did not meet national floor standards in 2015.
- The school uses the registered alternative provision provider Gripadventure.co.uk.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 25 lessons. Two observations were carried out jointly with members of the senior team.
- Two work scrutinies took place, one jointly with a middle leader.
- Meetings were held with a range of middle leaders, members of the governing body, the local authority representative and several groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Year 7 and Year 8.
- There were 77 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses from 44 staff and 112 pupils to Ofsted surveys which took place during the inspection.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Haddock, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Pennington	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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