

# Inspection of an outstanding school: St Anne's Catholic School

Carlton Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO15 2WZ

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Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

## Outcome

St Anne's Catholic School continues to be an outstanding school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

St Anne's is a lively, diverse and inclusive school. The founders' values of service to the school's community run through every aspect of life. Pupils are well cared for and have excellent opportunities. Staff feel valued and love working there. Parents are very positive about their experience, describing the school as 'amazing' and 'wonderful'.

Leaders are ambitious for themselves and for the whole school. They are always looking for ways to make things better. Staff and pupils respond well to this, constantly striving for improvement.

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. Those from different backgrounds do equally well. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged, those who speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. School rules are clear and fair. Sixth-form students set an excellent example to their community. Bullying is extremely rare and staff tackle it expertly if it happens. The school keeps its pupils safe.

Pupils have access to an enormous selection of activities outside the classroom, including clubs, sports and trips. The school library is impressive and stimulating. It gives pupils of all abilities an exciting reading experience.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Governors bring a wealth of experience to their role. They know the school well and give wise counsel. They champion the founders' Catholic virtues and values. School leaders apply these values, setting out sound principles for the school. Workload is streamlined so that teachers can focus their time and energy on how pupils learn best.

Senior leaders make sure that pupils get a broad choice of subjects. They review this offer regularly to see if they can make improvements. For example, last year they introduced a

second modern foreign language in Year 7. This was to encourage pupils to be even more ambitious in their future academic choices.

Experienced subject leaders know exactly which concepts to put into their curriculum and when. They ensure that teachers lay strong foundations for what comes later. For example, science teachers introduce concepts in key stage 3 that pupils will later use in GCSE, or as A-level chemistry students.

Teachers carefully support pupils to learn and remember the most useful facts. They make sure that learners have the right knowledge at their fingertips. Subject leaders design courses that revisit key knowledge at a more advanced level, as pupils work their way up the school. Older learners use this knowledge to take on tougher challenges. For instance, sixth-form students master complicated grammar structures in A-level French because they have fluent knowledge of tenses from key stages 3 and 4.

Teachers are highly expert in their subjects. They accurately check what pupils know and have remembered. Teachers skilfully ask questions to see how far pupils understand the subject. Well-planned tasks enable pupils to tackle challenging, academic concepts. Teachers are also very good at identifying where pupils need extra help. Lessons are refined to fill any gaps. Additional support is provided when needed. This particularly helps pupils with SEND so that they can learn at a similar rate to their peers. As a result, pupils produce an extremely high standard of work, and they achieve very well in public examinations.

The school strongly supports pupils at an early stage of reading. These pupils are quickly identified and provided with the help they need. This includes many pupils who speak English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent, both in and out of lessons. They treat each other with courtesy. They value and respect other people's beliefs whether they are the same or different from their own.

School pupils and sixth-form students are well prepared for their next steps. There is comprehensive careers guidance. It meets all of aspects of the Gatsby Benchmarks, a framework that defines the best careers provision in schools. Sixth-form students get appropriate advice and support. Many go on to higher education or apprenticeships.

School leaders provide exceptionally well for pupils' wider development. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities. This develops their character and resilience. Sixth-form students often lead their younger peers in clubs and sports. Leaders check carefully that all pupils are given the opportunity to participate in these activities. Spiritual values are celebrated all around the school. In keeping with the founders' values, staff strongly encourage all pupils to 'live life to the full'.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team is well led and properly trained. School leaders keep up to date with potential hazards in the community. They are vigilant in identifying any pupils who need help or intervention. Staff supervise pupils carefully and are alert to risks. They report any concerns quickly.

The school keeps thorough records. Employment checks are meticulous when new staff are appointed. Leaders get help from outside agencies when appropriate to support pupils. Pupils and staff have strong relationships which foster a high level of trust. Staff provide the right support for pupils to stay safe, including online safety guidance.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2016.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138476
<b>Local authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211925
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,224
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Linda Bate
<b>Headteacher</b>	James Rouse
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-annes.uk.com">www.st-annes.uk.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 March 2016 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- St Anne's is a Catholic foundation in a trust, formed by the sisters of La Sainte Union.
- The school had its last section 48 inspection in March 2017, when it was judged to be outstanding in all areas.
- A small number of pupils attend a registered provider of alternative provision, for part of each week. They attend St Anne's for the remainder of their timetable.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the executive headteacher and the senior leadership team. The lead inspector also met with trustees and governors.
- The lead inspector spoke to representatives of the registered alternative provision that some pupils attend.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with staff and pupils to understand how well the school keeps its pupils safe. They also inspected the school's single central record of employment checks.
- The lead inspector scrutinised other documents and information from the school's website.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour between lessons, during social times and before and after the school day. They also visited assemblies and tutor times.
- The lead inspector visited the school's library and met with student leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents, pupils and staff.

## Inspection team

Keith Pailthorpe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Willman	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Doherty	Ofsted Inspector

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