



St Anne's Roman Catholic High School, Stockport

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106144
LEA Stockport
Inspection number 277498
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ms Julie Price Grimshaw HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Glenfield Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Heaton Chapel
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Stockport, Cheshire SK4 2QP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 432 8162
Number on roll	710	Fax number	0161 443 1105
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs C Little
Date of previous inspection	14 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs H Kelly

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 277498
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Anne's Roman Catholic High School is a smaller than average comprehensive school with 710 pupils on roll. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is a little higher than the national average. The school's population is largely white British with a small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Only 1.6% of pupils have English as a second language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average. Overall, pupils' attainment on entry to the school is close to the national average. The current acting headteacher took up post in April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to standards and achievement, teaching and learning, and leadership and management.

The school's evaluation of its work is accurate in that it recognises the main strengths and areas of weakness in the provision. Results in tests and general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) examinations are below average and pupils do not make satisfactory progress. There is too much unsatisfactory teaching, and pupils are not always told what they need to do in order to improve their work. The school recognises the need to review the curriculum so that it provides an appropriate range of learning activities for all pupils, and it plans to carry out such a review in the very near future. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is good and on the whole parents are supportive of the school. However, too many pupils do not adopt healthy lifestyles, and there is no structured programme of health education for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

Inadequate leadership and management at all levels have contributed to these shortcomings. Governance is inadequate as until recently, the governing body has had far too little involvement in the running of the school, and some statutory requirements have not been met. The inspection team agrees with the school's judgement that improvement since the previous inspection is inadequate.

The senior leadership team underwent radical change in April 2005 when a new acting headteacher was appointed and the school entered into a federation with another Roman Catholic school in the diocese. An acting deputy headteacher and two assistant headteachers were appointed and the federation headteacher provides good quality support to the new senior leadership team. Together they have planned a range of appropriate strategies to move the school forward. Consequently, although the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate the recently appointed managers have demonstrated the capacity to make the necessary improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Urgently improve standards and the quality of teaching, particularly in science, through rigorous monitoring.
- Analyse reasons for the underachievement of some pupils, especially girls, and take immediate action to ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress.
- Ensure that the governing body fulfils all responsibilities and takes an active role in securing all necessary improvements.
- Establish a coherent health education programme to ensure that learners adopt healthy lifestyles.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are too low and progress is inadequate. Pupils enter the school with standards that are broadly average but by the time they leave their standards have dropped. Standards at the end of both Year 9 and Year 11 remain significantly below average. Boys make better progress than girls but the school has not yet discovered why. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress to their classmates.

The school recognises that its recent examination results have been inadequate. The school met only one of its targets for GCSE results in 2005 (which were broadly similar to those for 2004); the poor performance of science had a significant impact on the overall results. Targets for the tests in Year 9 were exceeded in mathematics but missed in English and science. There is considerable variation in GCSE results across the subjects, reflecting inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that pupils receive.

However, the school's analysis of performance is becoming more rigorous and the root causes of much of the poor performance have been identified; underachieving pupils are targeted much earlier and, although it is early days, intervention strategies show signs of some impact on raising standards. For example, the Year 9 test results for 2005 do show some improvement, particularly in mathematics, and results from GCSE modular course work already completed indicate that results are on course to improve for 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory and this is correctly identified through the school's self evaluation. There have been recent substantial improvements in pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour. The standard of pupils' behaviour in lessons is now satisfactory overall and this ensures that learning is the main focus of their attention and energy. Levels of short-term exclusion have declined recently. Pupils enjoy coming to school and enjoy lessons in which they are encouraged to take an active part. They don't enjoy lessons, however, which involve 'lots of copying off the board or out of books'. Attendance is unsatisfactory, but absence is now followed up more quickly.

The school tackles bullying effectively. Pupils feel safe and know exactly what action to take if bullying occurs. A team of older pupils have been trained as peer mediators. They provide a welcome first port of call for anyone who feels they have been bullied and wants to talk about this. The school council works well; its members are enthusiastic and are committed to making a range of improvements, and there is a healthy competition for places on the council. One member of the school council said, 'we want to make a difference and we take this responsibility seriously.' The council has been successful in giving pupils a voice and making some improvements to school life. For example, the school council promoted the installation of closed circuit television cameras, which help pupils feel safe around school. On other issues, such as the very poor state of the toilets, less progress has been made.

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is good. They have a strong sense of their responsibilities as part of the school community, and show understanding and respect for other cultures and religions. Some steps have been taken to promote healthy eating but too many pupils do not adopt healthy lifestyles. There is no personal, social and health education programme for pupils in Years 7 to 9.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

There is too much teaching that does not allow pupils to learn enough in Years 7 to 11. In making this judgement, inspectors broadly agree with the school's own analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. To tackle shortcomings, the school has introduced initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning. While these have started to have some impact, it still remains the case that the quality of teaching remains inconsistent and pupils' standards are still not high enough.

In the better lessons, teachers have high expectations of how pupils will work and behave. Such lessons are well prepared, resources are carefully selected and stimulating and the pace is brisk. Plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate what pupils have learnt.

In inadequate lessons, teachers do not provide enough challenge for pupils, the tasks they set are undemanding and pupils lose interest. When the pace is too slow, pupils become restless, their behaviour deteriorates and the teacher spends too much time controlling pupils instead of teaching them. In other less effective lessons, teachers require pupils to be passive and do not create opportunities for them to participate actively.

The quality of marking and assessment is variable. At best, it is thorough and tells pupils what they need to do to improve. However, too much of it is inadequate. In some cases the marking is very superficial and gives pupils no guidance about how to improve. In others, books had not been marked for a number of weeks. A number of pupils expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of marking and with how long it took some teachers to return books to them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

An appropriate range of subjects is provided in Years 7 to 9. There is a sound balance of mixed ability and settled groups, with increased setting being introduced in Years 8 and 9. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 has been expanded to meet better the needs of a wider range of pupils. This includes the opportunity for pupils gifted in mathematics or drama to take GCSE courses early and then to take more demanding courses in Year 11. A good variety of vocational courses is also available and are run in conjunction with local colleges. However, the way in which these courses have been timetabled means that pupils miss some lessons in other subjects and a number of

them have difficulty in catching up. The teaching of citizenship throughout the school and of personal and social education in Years 7 to 9 is inadequate. The ten minutes allocated for the tutor period at the end of the day is not used efficiently. The school has identified these shortcomings and intends to rectify them in the forthcoming curriculum review.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory. The school is good at identifying pupils, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who need extra help to succeed, and at carefully monitoring their progress. The progress made by all pupils is formally assessed three times a year. However, between these times there are wide variations between subjects in how thoroughly pupils are informed about their progress.

Pupils are confident that they can speak to their form tutors about any matters that are worrying them. There is a specialist team of Year 7 tutors who concentrate on ensuring that pupils enjoy a smooth transfer from primary schools. The role of the form tutor in other years and the use of tutor time are not sufficiently well defined. Systems for child protection are good and are well understood by staff. There is a specialised careers guidance office and library which many pupils use.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management have been ineffective in raising achievement and supporting all learners, and are therefore judged to be inadequate. However, the current senior leadership team is beginning to implement strategies in order to tackle shortcomings and raise attainment although it has been in place for only a short period of time. The diocese has provided support by engaging the services of a federation headteacher for three days a week and he carries out valuable work in providing strategic management and supporting the senior leadership team. With his support and guidance, school managers have produced a good quality plan for raising attainment across the school.

The quality of the school's self evaluation is satisfactory and is beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and pupil attainment. The senior leadership team are showing that they are prepared to make difficult decisions and take appropriate action in order to deal with unsatisfactory teaching. The views of parents and other stakeholders are sought, and communication between the school and parents is improving. Some parents have commented on recent improvements to the school, linking these to strengths of the new school managers.

The governing body does not adequately discharge its responsibilities, and this aspect of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Since the school leadership team has been reorganised, the governing body is beginning to become more actively involved in school management.

Because of the weaknesses identified, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	4	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following our visit to your school we would like to thank you for making us feel welcome and for sharing your views with us. We would like to tell you what we found out about your school.

You told us that the lessons you enjoy most are those where you take a very active part, and that some of your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting for you. You also said that sometimes you are asked to do less interesting tasks, such as copying out of books, and that you do not find this very helpful or enjoyable. Some of your teachers give you lots of feedback on your work and help you to improve, but you were unhappy that sometimes your work was not marked.

The school council is very keen to help make the school a better place for all of you. You told us that you feel safe around the school, partly because of the CCTV cameras. However, you are very unhappy about the state of the school toilets, and we agree that these need to be improved.

We believe that your school needs to make some improvements. The examination results at St Anne's have not been as good as we would expect and some of you are not making as much progress as we think you should. We know that Mrs Kelly and the other school managers have not been in post for very long, but we can see that they have already made some changes that should help you all to make more progress. We have asked your teachers to try and make learning as enjoyable as possible for you.

You have an important part to play in improving your school. We would like you to work even harder and continue to put your views forward through the school council. We and your teachers want you to achieve your full potential and make the most of your time at St. Anne's.