



# St Anne's Catholic School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 116509  
**Local Authority** Southampton  
**Inspection number** 290556  
**Inspection date** 22 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Gehane Gordelier HMI

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>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Carlton Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Southampton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19		SO15 2WZ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	023 8032 8200
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1096	<b>Fax number</b>	023 8033 1767
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	96		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C Fearon
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs B Murtagh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 11–19	<b>Inspection date</b> 22 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 290556
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

St Anne's is a larger-than-average Catholic school for girls. It is within the diocese of Portsmouth under the trusteeship of La Sainte Union Sisters. The school admits students from over 50 primary schools and from a wide catchment area. As from September the school has started to admit boys into the sixth form. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than in most schools as is the percentage of students with learning difficulties or disabilities. The number of students from ethnic minority groups or who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average.

In September 2004 St Anne's was awarded specialist college status in science and mathematics. The school also has Investors in People Status and a Sportsmark award.

The current headteacher has been in post since January 2006 and the school appointed a new deputy headteacher the following September.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The relationship between staff and students is very good, the curriculum is good, students are well taught and the students themselves demonstrate a strong work ethic. Consequently, achievement and standards are outstanding as is students' overall personal development. The school helps to prepare students very well for later life. While at St Anne's, students gain an extremely good range of skills and knowledge about how to be healthy, keep themselves safe, how to contribute to their local community and help to secure their future economic well-being. The standards as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are also good. The quality of care, guidance and support for sixth formers is outstanding and they themselves contribute very effectively to other areas of school life which help to make St Anne's a happy and safe environment.

The school has made effective use of the designation of specialist status for science and mathematics to help improve courses as well as resources available to students. This has helped to bring about very good levels of progress, although this has been better in science than mathematics. While the overall quality of teaching is good, there are some inconsistencies which are reducing the rate of progress in a few lessons. The use of a range of different teaching and learning styles have yet to become firmly embedded and the quality of marking is still too variable in some parts of the school. Nevertheless, the effective use of well-structured support leading up to external assessments as well as effective revision and booster classes and the use of additional support where needed ensures that different groups of students make equally good levels of progress by the end of all key stages. This includes those for whom English is an additional language as well as those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The level of additional provision is very good and includes enrichment opportunities for those students identified as being gifted and talented.

The overall quality of leadership and management is good. Given the nature of the school, there is a strong emphasis on promoting spirituality so that this permeates all aspects of school life. There are effective systems of self-evaluation in place and these have led to the school developing clear priorities for improvement. The school has correctly identified the need to develop the role of middle managers as well as aspects of the curriculum and teaching. There is already good evidence of progress in these areas. Departmental action plans have clearly identified areas for development. However, these plans are not of an equally good quality and some require improvement.

The excellent links with outside agencies enhance the already very good levels of support for vulnerable students and contribute very well to the excellent provision for students' personal development and well-being.

The school has made very good progress in addressing those issues raised at the time of the last inspection and demonstrates that its capacity to make further progress is good overall with some aspects being outstanding.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The effectiveness and efficiency of leadership and management within the sixth form are good. Consequently, students achieve well and standards in Years 12 and 13 are above average. GCE AS and A level results improved in 2006 following a dip in 2005, when achievement was only satisfactory in Year 12. Students are rightly impressed by the excellent care, support and guidance that they receive. One student stated, 'Teachers really care about your work and about you as a person.'

Students particularly appreciate the support provided as they move from Year 11 into the sixth form and their personal development is outstanding. They develop into mature, responsible adults who contribute willingly to their community. They provide valuable support to staff and younger students in the main school. Good teaching ensures that students know what they need to do to improve. In the best lessons, teachers provide good opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning carry out their own research and share their ideas. A few lessons lack pace when teachers do not vary activities enough. Considering the relatively small number of students in the sixth form, the school provides a good range of subjects. However, it recognises the need to offer more choice, and additional subjects were offered last year in order to attract more students. The sixth form provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure the use of different teaching and learning styles is firmly embedded throughout the school and that marking is consistently good.
- Ensure that department action and development plans are all equally good to ensure a sharper focus on areas identified for improvement and how the success of the school's work will be monitored and measured.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students enter the school with standards that are well above the national average. They make excellent progress and attain high standards by the end of Year 11. They meet challenging targets in English, mathematics and science in Years 7 to 9. In mathematics and science, results in National Curriculum tests have improved significantly since the school gained specialist school status in these subjects. Students continue to achieve very well during Years 10 and 11 and they reach high standards at GCSE in many subjects. Results in music, drama, English literature and technology are particularly impressive. Students with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language benefit from very good support and achieve as well as other pupils.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

#### Grade for sixth form: 1

The overall personal development and well-being of students is outstanding. The school helps students to develop into confident young people with the appropriate range of academic and social skills to ensure they are well prepared for the future.

Students contribute extremely well to their community, they enjoy coming to school and demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. The school helps to prepare students extremely well for their future economic well-being, not just by the high standards they achieve, but in helping students to work collaboratively, and by providing high quality work experience as well as opportunities for students to develop a very good understanding of how to manage a budget. The school has made very good progress in improving the provision for personal, social and health education and this is ensuring very good levels of progress.

The headteacher provides the school with strong spiritual leadership. Consequently, spirituality is developing very well and is actively promoted in all aspects of school life and is evident in curriculum and departmental plans. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent overall, although students' knowledge of other cultures could be even better.

The vast majority of students are very well behaved. Punctuality and attendance are good and is very good for most students. The vast majority of students go on to Higher Education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

#### Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The basis for this lies in the high aspirations of students, the strong subject knowledge of teachers as well as the very good relationships between teachers and students. On the whole teaching includes a good variety of activities that interest and motivate pupils, enabling them to share and discuss ideas thoughtfully. Good teaching uses questions skilfully to help students to think and extend their learning. In the sixth form, teachers make particularly good use of computers to support students' research and independent learning.

Where marking is good, it is clearly linked to learning objectives and students use teachers' comments as well as the school's 'learning ladders' to help them to progress. Where teaching could be better, learning objectives are not precise enough and insufficient reference is made to them during lessons. In some lessons students sit

passively for too long, and teaching does not take sufficient account of the best and different ways in which students learn.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of curriculum provision is good and is enriched well by extra-curricular activities. There is also very good additional provision for those students who are identified as being gifted and talented. The curriculum has been reviewed in the light of the Secondary National Strategy. The review has also led to a stronger emphasis on spirituality in accordance with the school's own ethos and mission statement.

In 2005, the school introduced a very effective science programme at Key Stage 3 which has helped to challenge and extend the learning of some of the highest attaining students. The school recognises the importance of continuing to develop the Key Stage 3 curriculum so that it provides even greater challenge and breadth for all pupils and an even more solid base for work at Key Stage 4. During the course of the inspection some students and parents indicated that they would like more educational visits as well as links with other schools.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4 is good. The school provides a good range of courses from traditional GCSEs to applied GCSEs as well as level 1 courses. Specialist status has enabled a broadening of the science curriculum and the school now offers a very good GCSE astronomy course as an option as well as triple science GCSE as an extra-curricular activity.

Work-related learning is tracked well across the curriculum and enhanced by specifically designed industry-related activities as well as input from the companies associated with the specialist status.

In the sixth form there are good pathways to 19 which develop naturally from Key Stage 4. Although the sixth form is largely academic, there are also vocational courses. The school has correctly identified the need to continue to seek collaboration with other colleges in light of the 14-19 curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall and outstanding in the sixth form. Staff at the school are highly committed and together they contribute very effectively to students' personal development. The very good arrangements for the transition of students from one phase of their education to the next help students to settle quickly and ensure that those who are new to the school are made to feel welcome. There are very effective systems in place to ensure that students who speak English as an additional language or who are vulnerable, at risk or have learning

difficulties and disabilities are very well supported. Consequently, most of these students make very good if not excellent progress.

However, there are inconsistencies in the way some staff implement a few of the school's agreed policies including the marking of students' work. Furthermore, some students are not confident that all staff will follow up issues which they have raised with them, including issues relating to the behaviour of others. Nevertheless, they are confident that most staff would deal appropriately with anything that was deemed to be very serious.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of leadership and management of the school is good with some outstanding features. The new headteacher has quickly gained the trust and respect of staff, students and parents. She provides strong leadership and is very well supported by the senior leadership team. Consequently, there is an appropriate focus on standards, very good tracking of the progress made by students and clear priorities for improvement. The school has correctly identified the need to develop the role of middle managers and ensure greater levels of consistency throughout the school. The sharp focus by the leadership team on the personal development and well-being of learners has led to improved levels of provision and outstanding outcomes in this area.

All departments evaluate their own effectiveness well and produce action plans which underpin the school's overall improvement plan. However, not all departmental plans provide equally detailed information about targeted groups of students, or success criteria which is sufficiently quantifiable and measurable. There is also at times insufficient information about when monitoring of proposed actions in some departments will take place. The leadership of the science and more recently in mathematics has led to improved facilities and raised achievement. There is good leadership in English and technology where staff are nominated lead teachers for the local authority.

The school is inclusive and ensures excellent levels of equality of opportunity. Students for whom English is an additional language are identified on admission and given appropriate support and additional resources to ensure they make the best progress they can. Furthermore, the school works very effectively with outside agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable students are provided with as much support as possible. While the vast majority of parents are very supportive of the work of the school, during the course of the inspection a small minority of parents indicated that they would welcome clearer lines of communication.

The quality of governance is good and ensures the school complies with all statutory duties. The school ensures the suitability of staff to work in the school and all appropriate checks are made.



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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	1

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you for contributing to the inspection and to share with you a brief summary of some of our findings. My colleague and I enjoyed the discussions that we had with some of you. We agree that you attend a good school and that some aspects of the school are outstanding. We were also interested in your views about what you think could be improved and have taken these into account. I have listed below some of the key strengths that were identified during the course of the inspection.

- You get on very well with the staff who work at the school and the vast majority of you have very good attitudes to learning.
- You work very hard and the progress you make as well as results that you achieve are outstanding.
- You have highly developed social skills and an excellent sense of right and wrong.
- You know how to keep yourselves safe, what you need to do to be healthy, how to contribute to your local community and are developing excellent skills that will serve you well in the future.
- There is outstanding care, support and guidance for sixth formers during their time at school and to help prepare them for when they leave school.

The school is aware of a range of issues which will help to make St Anne's an even better school and there are good plans in place to help the school to make the necessary changes. We have suggested two key areas which would benefit from further improvement.

- The school needs to ensure that all teaching takes good account of the different ways that help you to learn as effectively as possible, and that the work you do is consistently well marked so that you always have a good understanding of what you have done well and what you need to do to improve.
- Some of the plans used by the school require more information about how the school will monitor progress and measure success.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing you every success and happiness for the future.

Yours sincerely

G Gordelier

Her Majesty's Inspector