

St Anne's Catholic High School for Girls

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102053
Local Authority	Enfield
Inspection number	323578
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Gill Close HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number on roll	
School (total)	1045
Sixth form	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tony Murphy
Headteacher	Mrs Cheryl Byamukama
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2005
School address	Oakthorpe Road Palmers Green London N13 5TY
Telephone number	020 8886 2165
Fax number	020 8886 6552

Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2009
Inspection number	323578

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

St Anne's serves a diverse community. Two thirds of the students are Catholic and most of the others are Christian. Over three quarters are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group, about a third, being of Black African heritage. One third of the students speak a first language other than English but only a very few are at an early stage of learning English. There is an average proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; most of these are moderate learning or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. Students come from a wide area, including localities with high deprivation, although the proportion eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Two thirds live in the London Borough of Enfield.

St Anne's gained specialist status in business and enterprise in 2006. It has Investors in People accreditation, the Healthy Schools Award, the Challenge Award from the National Association for Able Children in Education, and the Foundation Level of the International School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Anne's is a good school. The good teaching and excellent care enable students to make good progress and to reach exceptional standards of personal development. Students show excellent attitudes to learning and behaviour, get on extremely well with each other and enjoy their time at school. There is a real sense of a shared community. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They adopt healthy lifestyles, make an excellent contribution to the community and develop very well the skills they need for their future economic well-being. They feel very safe. Staff work together very effectively to ensure students' well-being, which is outstanding.

Students reach above average standards by the end of Key Stage 4, having joined the school with broadly average attainment. Following some inconsistency last year in performance across subjects and in the sixth form, sometimes due to staffing difficulties, leaders and managers identified accurately where improvement was needed. They have put in place measures that are already having an effect so that progress is good in the main school and sixth form. Teaching is good overall but some lessons do not provide activities that meet students' different needs well enough or develop students' independence in learning or assessing their own progress. The excellent support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities gives them the access that enables them to make similar progress to others. The good curriculum meets students' needs well.

Leadership and management are good. Through accurate evaluation and effective planning, the school has made good improvement since the last inspection and demonstrated its good capacity for continued improvement. It has correctly identified the need for greater consistency in monitoring students' progress and introduced systems to deliver this. There is room for improvement in the sharpness of evaluation of the take-up of initiatives and their impact. The school rightly plans to involve students more in decision-making.

The school's specialism has contributed to the development of good links with the local community, for example through enterprise activities with primary schools, information and communication technology (ICT) courses for senior citizens and activities with local businesses such as the 'Women in Business' day.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The students who choose to join the sixth form do so with prior attainment that is slightly below average. Following satisfactory performance in 2008, the school has now put in place measures that are enabling students to make good progress and be on track to reach average standards. Students enjoy their sixth form experience. They are developing into mature, sensible and caring young women who make an excellent contribution to the school and the wider community, through, for example the help they give in organising activities for students lower down the school, and the money they raise for a range of charities. Students are very well prepared for their future economic well-being and receive thorough, impartial and up-to-date advice about future options. They gain an excellent understanding of the wider world through, for example, trips abroad, and involvement in 'Fair Trade' activities. Students are very appreciative of the help their teachers give them. Teachers know their students well, and they take care to check their understanding and progress during lessons. They are enthusiastic and

knowledgeable about their subjects, and use their expertise well. They do not always give students sufficient opportunities during lessons for independent learning, for example in relating topics to their own experience. The school, in collaboration with other local providers, enables students to choose from a number of courses that meet their needs, interests and abilities. They enjoy taking part in a good range of extra-curricular activities, including sports, cultural and careers-related activities such as trips to universities and enterprise events. Students benefit from the same highly effective systems and high levels of support that they receive in the main school. Staff are wholly committed to students' well-being and progress, and have succeeded in creating a happy and harmonious environment in which individuals feel valued. Students' progress is carefully monitored, and action is taken, for example to involve parents, if students underachieve. New sixth form leaders have accurately identified areas for improvement, for example variations in performance between different subjects, and have acted decisively and effectively to bring about improvement that has raised students' levels of academic progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the consistency and quality of teaching to meet all students' needs more closely.
- Increase students' involvement in decision-making and independence in learning and self-assessment.
- Enhance the sharpness and consistency of the monitoring and evaluation of students' progress and of the impact and take-up of initiatives.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students join the school with broadly average attainment. Standards at Key Stage 4 have risen since the last inspection and are above average. In 2008, there was some variation between subjects. The school has taken steps to improve standards in the weaker areas. They are already having a good effect. Students make good progress by the end of Key Stage 4 and reach above average standards. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities receive outstanding support that enables them to do as well as their peers. At Key Stage 3, standards are above average in English and broadly average in mathematics and science. At the last inspection, standards and achievement in science were identified as areas for improvement. After some continued weaker performance, these standards have now improved. In 2008, the school met its targets, including specialist school targets.

Students enter the sixth form with standards that are slightly below average. The 2008 results show that they reached below-average standards and made satisfactory progress. The school correctly identified some subject areas that were underperforming and put in place measures that are already improving progress in these subjects and across the board. The evidence from lessons and the school's data show that students are now making good progress and are on track to reach broadly average standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding as are their attitudes to learning. Although a few parents expressed some concerns about behaviour and inspectors found a small amount of inattention in a few lessons, behaviour overall is considered to be outstanding. Relationships between students are excellent and there is a strong sense of a 'shared community'; as one student said 'we are a family in this school'. Students show a high

level of cooperation and consideration for each other. They are also friendly and welcoming to others. Attendance is good and most students enjoy coming to school where they also feel very safe. Students know that if they have a worry there is always an adult they can talk to in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and will be supported. The achievement leaders, in particular, are very accessible and help students to resolve their problems as well as to achieve both socially and academically. Bullying is rare and the ethos of the school is such that racism 'just does not happen'. Students have a good understanding of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles and indeed some Year 11 students said they would like more time to take part in physical activity during the school day. Students have a highly developed sense of social responsibility. This is shown by their willingness to take the initiative, and to raise money for a range of charities including Children in Need and the Autistic Society. Students also play an active role in the life of the school as prefects and form representatives. They lead assemblies and act as ambassadors for the school. The school council is developing but the students would welcome the opportunity to be more involved in the school's decision-making. Students are well prepared for the world of work and have developed very good key skills that will enable them to be economically successful in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall and this helps to explain students' good achievement. Students are well motivated and keen to succeed. They work hard and show a high level of concentration and perseverance when tackling tasks. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to explain topics and extend students' learning. Teachers are increasingly using assessment and tracking information when they plan lessons. Some teachers use group work, peer- or self-assessment and a variety of teaching strategies and, in these lessons, there is a high degree of active participation in lessons. Although these opportunities for developing independence are improving, the school has rightly identified this as an area for improvement. Technology has been used effectively to enhance learning. This has been a priority for development through the specialist status.

Good teaching is characterised by lessons that are well planned, have learning objectives that students understand, and make good use of assessment and the plenary to evaluate learning. It is supported by regular marking that provides detailed guidance to students on how to improve their work. Where lessons are comparatively less successful, students spend too much time listening to teachers' expositions. Planning does not take sufficient account of students' different capabilities and prior learning to ensure that tasks are matched closely to their individual needs. Although planning for students with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who are gifted or talented is inconsistent, it is improving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets the needs of all the students well. Spanish is now being offered as an alternative to French in Year 7 and the percentage of students opting to study a foreign language in Years 10 and 11 is well above average. The school has broadened the range of options in Key Stage 4. For example, its specialist status as a business and enterprise school has led to the introduction of applied GCSE courses in business and in health and social care. More able

students can study the three separate sciences in Key Stage 4 and have the opportunity to take part in a number of enrichment activities such as the young film makers club. A small group of girls attend a health and beauty vocational course in the local college. All students study ICT throughout their time in school and the provision for literacy and numeracy is good. Students receive good advice on possible progression routes in Years 9 and 11. Although there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and trips, there is room for a greater number of students to benefit from opportunities to widen their experiences and enrich their learning from the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's focus on providing very high levels of care and support for all its students is extremely effective in promoting students' personal development and well-being. Staff know the students very well. They all cooperate very well with one another, as well as with parents and a very wide range of outside agencies, to ensure that students receive care and advice which is appropriate to their individual needs. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive outstanding support. The school takes great care to identify such students' additional needs as quickly as possible and makes adaptations, for example to the curriculum. This support begins before students join the school, through the school's strong links with primary schools, and continues throughout students' school careers. Students receive comprehensive guidance and support at the various transition points, for example from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4. The school takes great care to inform parents about and involve them in, for example, the decision-making processes related to GCSE and sixth form options. The school makes its high expectations of students in terms of behaviour very clear, and is prepared to act firmly when students do not live up to them, with the result that standards of behaviour in lessons and around the school are very high. Systems for safeguarding students, for example vetting staff appointments and ensuring risk assessments are carried out regularly and thoroughly, are robust.

The school carefully monitors students' progress, and takes appropriate action to intervene when they are not doing as well as they could. A range of formats is used for tracking students' performance. The school has correctly identified that they do not readily provide consistent information and has introduced an additional centralised system. Data are not used as well as they could be to inform differentiated teaching or pupils' involvement in self-assessment or to evaluate performance of subjects and groups of students.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The drive and commitment of the headteacher to do the very best for the students in St Anne's is a key feature of this good school. Very ably supported by senior leaders and with a sustained strong commitment from staff, she has developed a culture where every student matters. Students' good achievement in academic development and outstanding personal development, are testament to the school's success. The process of school improvement planning and self-evaluation is thorough. Consequently, staff and governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and what is needed to continue to improve. Nevertheless, monitoring and evaluation of students' progress and the impact and take-up of initiatives is not sharp enough. Middle managers are well supported and are effectively held to account for their areas

of responsibility. The school has a sound knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Senior managers invest time, energy and support where teaching is inconsistent and this well-focused professional development for teachers has underpinned the progress made in strengthening the quality of teaching and learning. However, parents and students express some concerns about the impact of the number of changes in staffing and temporary staff. This contributes to some of the inconsistency in provision. Self-evaluation at a whole-school level is accurate and the school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

Building on the strong sense of community within the school and locality, the school has developed a far-reaching approach to community cohesion. Strong links have been made with schools in China to exchange ideas and share practice. The school has achieved the Foundation Level International School Award which is reflected in the way that students are eager to raise global issues and have learnt to respect diversity and equality. The school maintains close and positive relationships with parents and local churches. The governing body provides an appropriate level of support and challenge to the senior leaders. It has worked well with a range of partners to address the school's accommodation difficulties. Concerns raised by parents about the school's premises are being dealt with. Some parents consider that their children's views are not taken into account sufficiently. There is room for them to have greater involvement and the school has identified this as a priority. Plans are in place to increase students' involvement in the review of the quality of teaching across the school and to seek out their views more effectively.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 February 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of St Anne's Catholic High School for Girls, London, N13 5TY

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school and for telling us about it. We found that your school is a good school. You make good progress and reach above-average standards by the end of Year 11. In the sixth form you also make good progress.

You work hard and get on with each other extremely well. Your behaviour is excellent. You feel very safe and know well how to stay healthy. The staff know you very well and provide excellent care and support. You are very keen to help others and you take part in raising money for charity. Some of you take on responsibilities, for example as prefects or form representatives, very actively. You would like to have more involvement in making decisions and the school has plans for this. In addition to this, we have asked the school to help more of you take part in extra-curricular activities.

You have a good range of subjects and courses to study and the teaching is good. You told us you enjoy the lessons where you are busily involved in challenging and interesting activities. Sometimes the work is too easy or hard for you, or does not give you enough opportunity to become more independent or assess how you are doing. We have asked the school to improve this.

Your headteacher and the senior staff lead the school well. They know its strengths and what it needs to do to become better. They have made many improvements, including recently in the sixth form. Staff keep track of how well each of you is doing and help you if you fall behind. We have asked the school to improve its records so it can better evaluate how successful its actions are and who is involved.

I wish you success at school and in helping the school to become even better. You can help by becoming more involved in activities, including decision-making, and by thinking hard in lessons and checking how well you are doing.

Yours faithfully

Gill Close

Her Majesty's Inspector