

St Anne's Roman Catholic High School, Stockport

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106144
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	336626
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Chambers HMI

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	673
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G MacCarron
Headteacher	Mrs H Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
School address	Glenfield Road Heaton Chapel Stockport SK4 2QP
Telephone number	0161 432 8162
Fax number	0161 443 1105
Email address	headteacher@st-annes.stockport.sch.uk

Age group	11–16
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Inspection number	336626

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 28 lessons, involving 24 teachers. Several of the lessons seen were the result of joint planning between groups of teachers and some involved input from visitors to the school. Meetings were held with groups of students, teaching staff and a member of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including 74 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of current students
- the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and whether the school has an accurate view of them
- how well the curriculum meets the needs of students
- what aspects of leadership and management have contributed to improved outcomes for students.

Information about the school

St Anne's is a smaller than average secondary school, serving mainly the Roman Catholic communities of Stockport and south Manchester. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs, but these numbers vary considerably between different year groups. An above average proportion of students are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are higher than in most schools. Nearly 80% of the students are White British, with several other ethnic groups represented in small numbers. The school was awarded specialist status in arts (media) in September 2009. It holds Extended School status and the Sportsmark award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Anne's is a satisfactory school. Several aspects of provision and outcomes for students are improving and demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school: they particularly value the good care, guidance and support that the school provides and the way that the school keeps them informed about their children's progress and well-being.

Attainment is in line with standards expected nationally. Students who left in 2009 entered the school with average attainment in their Key Stage 2 tests. Their results at GCSE were broadly average and this represents satisfactory achievement given their starting points. Observations during the inspection and scrutiny of the school's monitoring records indicate that, overall, current students make progress at a rate that is in line with similar students in other schools nationally. In general, the less able students make more progress relative to expectations than the more able students. The school has recognised the need to improve the progress of the most able students and to increase the number of students gaining the highest A* and A grades at GCSE. Progress in science lags behind that made in other subjects.

Teaching is satisfactory. The use of 'gold, silver and bronze' lesson objectives is helping students to understand what is expected of them and how they can achieve at a high level. Many teachers build strong relationships with students and promote positive attitudes and high expectations. Students behave well around school and in most lessons, but where they lose interest in the work or where their behaviour is not well managed, a small minority of students show disrespect for staff and learning slows. Students have appropriate targets, such as National Curriculum levels, recorded in their exercise books and, consequently, most know the standards they are aiming for. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent: while many students benefit from feedback focusing on 'what went well' and 'even better if', in other cases marking is cursory and makes insufficient reference to target levels or how to improve. Senior leaders have an accurate view of teaching and learning in the school and have a clear and growing focus on sharing good practice through the school. Although middle leaders are beginning to take more responsibility for developing teaching in their subject areas, they could do more to monitor rigorously the quality of teaching and assessment and the progress that students are making.

Leaders and managers have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have identified appropriate areas of focus for improvement. Since the last inspection, examination results have risen overall and the number of students excluded has dropped considerably. Attendance has improved from average to above average, and the number of students who are persistent absentees, previously an issue

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

for the school, has dropped dramatically in the last year. The quality of provision has also improved: care, guidance and support are now good and the school's records demonstrate that more teaching is good or outstanding.

The school has held specialist status for less than 12 months and the full impact on the curriculum will not be realised until next year. Current students have benefited through additional enrichment opportunities for them to enjoy cultural visits or to become involved in dance and drama activities. Funding has been used to purchase additional equipment, such as cameras and camcorders, and this has enabled students to tackle more ambitious projects, such as producing a video advertisement in business studies.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and improve students' progress, particularly for the most able and in science.
- Improve teaching and learning through:
 - improving the quality and consistency of marking so that students know how to improve
 - ensuring the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy
 - ensuring that middle leaders monitor rigorously the quality of teaching and assessment and students' progress in their subject areas.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall performance is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Although a positive trend is evident, attainment has remained broadly average for each of the last three years. In 2009, 55% of students gained five good GCSEs including English and mathematics, compared with a national average of 50%. While current students' progress is satisfactory overall, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is a direct result of the quality of support they receive for their academic and personal needs, both in lessons and in their school life. Students enjoy their learning and make better progress where they work together in groups and where they understand the link between their learning and potential employment opportunities. They particularly enjoy drama, both in lessons and in the activities available to them outside lessons.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory: students treat each other with respect and contribute to the school's strong community feel. Behaviour is satisfactory. In making this judgement, inspectors took account of the responses to the students' questionnaire, where the large majority of students agreed that behaviour is good but one quarter of students disagreed. Students say that they feel safe; they are confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Students make a good contribution to the school and the local community. Many take part in

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

charity fundraising activities, such as fun runs. Some take on responsibilities within the school, such as acting as prefects or school ambassadors or becoming members of the school council. Students with interests in sport take part in the junior sports leader programme where they help primary school pupils to develop sporting skills. Students develop a range of skills that help to prepare them for the world of work, but too many students show half-hearted attitudes to good punctuality.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan well and give due consideration to the range of abilities in the class. Lessons typically follow a clear structure. In the best lessons the enthusiasm of the teacher engages students in the learning activities; teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well and question students skilfully to encourage high-level responses. In weaker lessons teachers do not manage group work well and, as a result, some members of the group do not contribute. Where the pace of the lesson slackens, students lose focus and remain off-task.

The satisfactory curriculum meets students' needs. All students in Key Stage 4 study for

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

a qualification in ICT and links with a local further education college have broadened opportunities for students to follow vocational courses. The school's 'learning for life' programme, currently delivered by form tutors, is helping students to reflect on their learning and focus on long-term goals. Students appreciate the benefits of challenge days and the annual enrichment week. The school's newly-acquired specialist status has enabled leaders to undertake a major revision of the curriculum, with an appropriate focus on providing additional opportunities in the media arts.

Evidence for the school's good care, guidance and support is extensive. Learning mentors and pastoral managers have made significant contributions to students' emotional well-being and their involvement in school. For example, as a result of staff building positive relationships with students, and parents and carers, more students are attending school regularly. The school's actions are beginning to have a positive impact on students' behaviour, with considerably fewer students excluded from school this year than last year. Arrangements for new students transferring to the school are good. Information, advice and guidance are strong and result in a larger than average proportion of those leaving the school continuing in education, employment or training. Support for the students whose circumstances make them most vulnerable is effective and contributes to the good progress made by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Teachers are generally well motivated and support the school and its leaders. Target setting is realistic and challenging and the improved use of targets has contributed to improved results at GCSE. Self-evaluation is accurate and involves input from a broad range of staff, including governors, and increasingly from students. Middle managers are beginning to take more responsibility for performance in their subject areas. A new management structure involving clustering subjects together has had a sizeable impact in some areas but only limited impact in others. Senior managers use lesson observations well to monitor and improve the quality of teaching, but the contribution of middle managers to the school's improvement is uneven.

The school fulfils all statutory requirements for safeguarding. Staff enjoy positive relationships with parents and carers, and have engaged their help effectively in promoting good attendance and more positive attitudes, although the school recognises

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

that it could do more to help parents and carers to support out-of-school learning. Governors have an accurate view of the school, its performance in relation to other schools and its key priorities. As a result of recent training, they feel better able to hold the school to account for the performance of students in GCSE examinations. All subject areas have a link to a governor, but the strength of these links is still developing. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to promoting community cohesion. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the context of the school and have worked effectively to enhance cohesion within the school and the local community. Plans to build links with schools and communities further afield are in the early stages of development.

The school has clear policies for promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Managers have correctly identified that the more able students make less progress than would be expected and have initiated action designed to overcome this.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A relatively small number of parents and carers, all with children in Years 7 to 9, contributed their views to the inspection team through the questionnaire. A very large majority of replies indicate positive views of the school in all categories. Inspectors took account of the slightly less positive views on behaviour in making the judgement that behaviour is satisfactory rather than good. The particularly strong support for statements about safety and keeping parents and carers informed about progress supported the inspection team's view that these are strengths of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anne's Roman Catholic High School, Stockport to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 673 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	46	32	43	6	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	50	36	49	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	41	39	53	2	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	45	34	46	3	4	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	28	38	41	55	4	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	22	30	43	58	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	28	43	58	9	12	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	30	45	61	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	38	34	46	7	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	41	31	42	6	8	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	32	39	53	5	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	29	39	41	55	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	51	31	42	4	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



08 July 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of St Anne's Roman Catholic High School, Stockport, SK4 2QP

You will recall that recently a team of inspectors and I inspected your school. This letter is to let you know what we found. I would like to say thank you for your openness and courtesy during the inspection; we enjoyed meeting you and talking to you in classrooms and around the school.

We judged St Anne's to be a satisfactory school. Parents and carers are strongly supportive of the school: they particularly value the good care, guidance and support that the school provides and the way that the school keeps them informed about your progress and well-being. You make satisfactory progress in your learning. The use of gold, silver and bronze objectives is helping you to understand what is expected in lessons and how you can achieve at a high level. You benefit from strong relationships with many of your teachers, who share with you their positive attitudes and high expectations. You told us that you feel safe in school and that where bullying occurs it is dealt with effectively.

Several aspects of the school are improving: examination results have risen, more of you are attending school regularly, you are benefiting from better care, guidance and support, and more teaching is good or outstanding. You are beginning to benefit from the school's new specialist status. You told us that you particularly enjoy drama, and some of you have already become involved in additional dance and drama activities. The school's leaders are confident that the new subjects and activities on offer from next year will provide you with exciting new opportunities.

To help the school improve, we have asked senior leaders to ensure that:

- you make more progress and attain better results, particularly the most able among you
- you achieve more in science
- marking helps you know how to improve
- the small minority of you who find it difficult to concentrate on your work make a more positive contribution to lessons
- managers check more on your lessons and your work.

You can play your part in making St Anne's a better school. Keep up your much

improved attendance and, in lessons, try to concentrate on what you are being asked to do for longer periods.

Yours sincerely

Paul Chambers

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.