



## SECTION 48 INSPECTION REPORT

Canonical Inspection under Canon 806 on behalf of the  
Archbishop of Southwark and Inspection of  
Denominational Education under Section 48  
of the Education Act 2005

**URN 140874**

**St Anselm's School  
Old Dover Road  
Canterbury  
CT1 3EN**

**Inspection date: 8/9 February  
2017**

Chair of Governors:	Dr M Johnstone
Headteacher:	Mr M Walters
Inspectors:	Mr D Fox
	Mr M Scully

### **EDUCATION COMMISSION**

St Edward's House, St Paul's Wood Hill, Orpington, Kent BR5 2SR

Tel 01689 829331 Fax 01689 829255

**Director of Education: Dr Anne Bamford**

# SECTION 48

# Introduction

## Description of the school

St Anselm's Catholic School is a co-educational Catholic Academy within the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership. It is situated in the Canterbury Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. The principal parish the school serves is St Thomas of Canterbury, with smaller numbers of pupils also coming from St Simon's, Ashford, Our Lady Immaculate, Whitstable and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Herne Bay. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 42%. Overall, the weekly proportion of curriculum time given to Religious Education across the school is 10%.

The school takes pupils from ages 11 - 18. Currently there are 1099 pupils on roll, 592 boys and 507 girls. There are 208 in the Sixth Form.

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is below average. 15% of pupils receive Special Education Needs (SEN) support with a further 2% having an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The school receives Pupil Premium for 19% of its pupils.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school in providing Catholic Education

**GRADE  
2**

St Anselm's is a good school with many outstanding features. Governors are aware of the strengths of the school and areas for development. They have established appropriate procedures to challenge and support the Headteacher and staff. The Religious Education link governor is a regular visitor and is very aware of how the school can develop spiritually and academically. The Headteacher is a highly effective leader whose vision continues to have a positive impact on the Catholic Life of the school and standards of teaching and learning. He and the governors are committed to giving pupils opportunities to grow as well educated, Christian young people. The school Chaplain has a powerful and valued presence. She plays a significant role in supporting and shaping the Catholic life of the school. In her words, "The school has a strong identity with the faith." A noted strength of St Anselm's is its inclusive nature, not just within the school, which is excellent, but also within the wider community. Recent admissions include pupils who are new to Britain. They are beginning to flourish. A local primary school Headteacher spoke warmly of the support her parents and pupils have received from St. Anselm's.

Pupils are safe and happy at the school. They appreciate the care teachers give in dealing with their concerns. Bullying is rare. When incidents do occur, they are effectively addressed. Teachers were praised for their support in and outside of the classroom.

There is a strong Catholic identity in religious displays, in the classrooms and around the school. It is complemented by the prayer garden, with a statue of Our Lady, and a memorial garden for deceased members of the community.

Progress has been made improving the links with the parishes the school serves. There are now seven priests who are welcome and regular visitors to the school. Pupils sing at a parish Sunday Mass once a term.

Parents overwhelmingly acknowledge the work the school does for pupils. They appreciate the high level of care given to their children and the school's understanding shown to the families.

### **What steps need to be taken to improve further?**

Governors, Headteacher and staff should:

- Review the school's self-evaluation to ensure it reflects the positive impact of the school's achievements along with plans for future development
- Further develop the monitoring of Collective Worship and the Catholic Life of the school
- Give the Sixth Form Chaplaincy group further opportunities to develop its role and impact across the school.

## **The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life of the school**

Pupils take full advantage of the range of opportunities to contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school. Pupils experience reflection and worship every day. The Mission Statement underpins the work of the school and is lived out by members of the community. Behaviour throughout the school is excellent. Pupils are trusted and respected by teachers. Pupils acknowledge and appreciate the care and support they receive. Older pupils are trained to support younger pupils through peer mentoring and pastoral support. The Chaplain works with senior staff to help pupils using reconciliation and restorative justice as the first way of solving conflicts. The impact is evident in the sense of calm and trust within the school and the excellent relationships between staff and pupils.

Weekly Mass is well attended and there are daily opportunities for pupils to pray privately and as a class. The Chapel is at the centre of school life, spiritually and physically. It is situated in a busy part of the school but pupils show great respect for the Chapel when passing. The school hosted a school mission in January 2016. Subsequently, a Chaplaincy team of Sixth formers was set up. Their impact is already evident. They are excellent role models for younger pupils and their work enhances the use of the Chapel. One pupil said, "The school definitely focuses on faith."

Pupils have an awareness of the needs of others in the school and the wider community. St. Anslem's is an inclusive school in which pupils of all abilities, physical and learning, are treated equally and with respect. Fundraising for charities is a feature of the school. Each pupil engages in at least one charity event each year. Pupils can also choose their House and Tutor group activities such as a Zumbathon for 'Meningitis Now' and the 'Operation Christmas Child' shoebox appeal. This year a group of pupils are launching a initiative with a visit to a school in Malawi.

## **How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education**

Lesson observations showed a good level of pupils' engagement in learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Behaviour is very good and their written work is well presented showing that pupils take pride in their achievements. In several lessons, pupils were enthusiastic and willing to contribute their ideas. GCSE results are consistently in line with or above other core subjects. There was a downturn in results for the 2015/2016 academic year, which was not in line with the consistently upwards trend in attainment and progress over previous years. Inspectors noted a high level of engagement and enjoyment of the pupils during Religious Education lessons. Pupils were able to articulate this. Achievement of A-level pupils is significantly above national averages. There is no evidence of gaps in attainment between Catholic and non-Catholic children. Pupils said that they enjoy Religious Education lessons and felt supported.

## **How well pupils respond to and participate in Collective Worship**

Pupils confirmed that there are regular opportunities to come together and worship. They always participate in House assemblies. The assembly observed, for example, was prepared and led by Year 9 pupils. It was effective in drawing attention to the problems vulnerable young people face with human trafficking throughout the world. Other Christian

pupils feel supported on their faith journey and know that they are welcome to prepare and lead acts of worship. Visiting priests confirmed that acts of worship engage all pupils and that they show great respect by participating reverently at all times.

The Chapel is regularly used for prayer and worship in the school. It is used for the weekly Friday Mass and is open throughout the day for pupils to pray. On Thursdays the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at lunchtime is well attended by pupils who come, light a candle and pray. Older pupils said that they often use the prayer jar for private intentions and a lolly stick if they want to write a person's name who needs prayers. Re-introducing the pupils' prayer book would help them experience prayer on a more personal level.

The new Sixth Form Chaplaincy team are becoming more effective in leading and supporting events in the school such as the 'Year of Mercy' day. They are responsible for 'Light Fever' every week, a time of exposition and prayer. Overall participation is improving. The school acknowledges that participation would improve through the use of music and drama more regularly. There is a team of Sixth Form Eucharistic Ministers who were commissioned by the Area Bishop this year. A Sixth Form pupil is Chair of the Diocesan Youth Executive Board. The school should ensure that the Chaplaincy group becomes a real strength in encouraging more pupils across the school to take responsibility for preparing liturgy.

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**How well leaders, governors and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life of the school and plan and implement improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leadership throughout the school is good. Governors understand their role in monitoring and developing the Catholic life of the school. They are passionate about maintaining and strengthening the spiritual ethos and ensuring the school continues to be inclusive of everybody. One governor said, "Nothing will be done which negatively affects the Catholic life of the school." In a skills audit for new governors, top priorities are a good knowledge, understanding of the importance of a Catholic school and to be supportive of the faith and its practice. The Religious Education link governor regularly meets with school leaders to receive an update on the quality of provision, challenging and supporting as appropriate. The Headteacher's personal faith and vision for the school have a major impact on the growth of spirituality in the school community. A parent said, "The Headteacher always speaks so passionately about his vision."

Leaders ensure that Chaplaincy continues to be an integral part of the school, providing weekly prayers and reflections and working closely with the student chaplaincy group. It provides many opportunities for prayer and for giving pastoral support for younger pupils. Senior leaders and the Head of Department work closely with the Chaplain to develop the Catholic life of the school. Prayer and Collective Worship are a constant focus for the school. The quality of morning prayer and acts of worship in tutor time is monitored, but it is suggested that this could be more systematic to highlight professional development needs of staff.

**How well leaders, governors and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education and plan and implement for improvement to outcomes for pupils**

Leaders, governors and managers are determined to support the development of the Religious Education department to ensure standards of teaching and learning continue to improve. Governors' minutes acknowledge that A Level and the GCSE need to be a higher priority. Governors are determined to ensure that all pupils, including in-year admissions, are given the opportunity to achieve well in the Religious Education GCSE. Governors are increasingly more proactive in looking at attainment and progress. They know the school well through regular learning walks and strategy meetings. This ensures that they are informed of progress and when to challenge or offer support.

The departmental improvement plan and the Individual Action Plan for Religious Education reflect leaders' understanding of how to improve the quality of teaching and learning and their commitment to developing staff expertise. School leaders have ensured that they are fully staffed with Religious Education specialists and that they work together. Strategies and more rigorous monitoring are in place so that the GCSE results return to the consistent trend of recent years. The Head of Department and the Line Manager ensure that moderation of work is rigorous and robust. They are very clear about what to do and how to do it. There is detailed tracking and targeting. Pupils are regularly assessed and are given opportunities to revisit and revise identified areas of knowledge and understanding. Inspectors are confident that this will lead to an immediate and sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

**The quality of teaching and how purposeful learning is in Religious Education**

Nearly all teaching is highly effective in enthusing pupils and ensuring that they learn and progress according to their ability. Lessons that were at least good were characterised by activities that engaged pupils in their own learning. Questioning overall was good and, in some cases, outstanding, encouraging pupils to think for themselves and to make good contributions to the lesson. Collaborative work was a feature of most lessons and was effective in helping pupils make progress. Pupils confirmed that lessons often include a range of interesting activities. There was evidence of successful differentiation, for example, by strategically pairing pupils to work together. The school's observation data is accurate and clearly highlights areas of teaching that need addressing. The school's strategies should result in the continuing improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

Relationships between teachers and pupils are outstanding. Although there were occasions when some pupils became disengaged, they were promptly and effectively addressed. Behaviour overall was excellent. The quality of pupils' work was generally good. They take pride in their learning. It is clear that pupils know what is expected of them in lessons. Sixth Formers, in particular, said they were well taught throughout the school and they expressed appreciation of the teachers' support.

Marking and dialogue between teachers and pupils is regular, meaningful and is effective in supporting pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers suggest ways to improve or ask questions to develop pupils' thinking. It informs teachers of individual strengths and areas that need extra support or intervention. Pupils understand the assessments and know their grades and targets.

**The extent to which the Religious Education curriculum promotes pupils' learning**

The time allocated for Religious Education meets the 10% requirement. A designated suite of teaching rooms is an excellent use of resources. Schemes of work are currently being updated in line with the school policy. The school has chosen to follow the new 50% Catholic Christianity AQA B specification for GCSE with Judaism chosen as the second Religion to be studied. A-level pupils now follow the Eduquas Ethics and Philosophy syllabus. Core Sixth Form Religious Education follows the NOCN guidance, covering a range of religious and contemporary issues. It is internally assessed. Staff plan and moderate together. This ensures that the curriculum delivery includes all pupils in learning. Staff and pupils respond positively to the programme as seen in lessons, in the quality of the work pupils produce and their enthusiasm in learning. The curriculum is adapted to encourage creativity in order to motivate pupils. They are given opportunities to research topics independently and collaboratively. Pupils learn about Other Faiths through the curriculum. Pupils were supported and challenged through effective questioning by teachers.

The impact of the curriculum in its wider sense is excellent. Throughout the school the many displays reflect the deep commitment of the school to its Catholic identity and pupils' learning. Of special note was the high quality of display in corridor areas and most classrooms. These include examples of pupils' work and relevant exam material such as

GCSE and A-level key words. The curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities for charity work throughout the year such as 'Jammies for Jack' day and 'Parcels for People' in the Pilgrim's Hospice. This year a group of Sixth formers are going to Malawi to visit a school with which St Anselm's has recently twinned.

### **The quality of Collective Worship provided by the school**

Overall, the quality of Collective Worship provided by the school is good. The visiting clergy said that the quality of Collective Worship has improved a great deal over recent years. Every Friday there is a voluntary Mass which the visiting priests say is very well attended by staff and pupils. They were particularly impressed by the number of non-Catholic members of the community who attend. There are daily House assemblies that are prepared and led by pupils. Inspectors were impressed by the effectiveness of the programme delivered during form time which includes an act of worship which follows the themes of the week from the Sunday Gospel. Whole school liturgical celebrations are enhanced by thoughtfully chosen music and the school choir. The outdoor Mass for Saints Peter and Paul was highlighted especially by priests and pupils as a very impressive and prayerful experience. The school acknowledges that they do not regularly make the most of music and drama, but they are aware that it would enhance Collective Worship throughout the school.

The Chaplain's contribution to Collective Worship is outstanding. Prayers and readings are prepared each week and the Chapel is used daily and reverently by groups and individuals. In addition to formal acts of worship, there are opportunities for private reflection and worship in Tutor time and in the Chapel. The Thursday 'Light Fever' is the responsibility of the Sixth Form Chaplaincy Team. It was a spiritual and moving occasion. There was exposition and many pupils chose to come and light a candle and pray.

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