

## St Anne's Catholic School

URN: 138476

Catholic Schools Inspectorate report on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth

22–23 May 2024

### Summary of key findings

#### Overall effectiveness

The overall quality of Catholic education provided by the school

#### Catholic life and mission (p.3)

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission

1

#### Religious education (p.5)

The quality of curriculum religious education

2

#### Collective worship (p.7)

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

1

The school is fully compliant with the curriculum requirements laid down by the Bishops' Conference

Yes

The school is fully compliant with all requirements of the diocesan bishop

Yes

The school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection

Fully

2

### What the school does well

- Staff, governors, and students are proud of their school and dedicated to improving this deeply caring community. The culture of continuous improvement permeates the school, with progress in religious education and the centrality of collective worship clearly in evidence.
- The Catholic and La Sainte Union identity impacts the whole school, aided by staff and governors who are rightly proud of the progress being made, and in their deeply loving community where every student is known and loved.
- The religious education team are securing excellent outcomes in public examinations.
- Students are taking a leading role in planning and delivering high quality celebrations of prayer and liturgy which are both fit for purpose and inspiring.

- Students, parents and staff are proud of their school, of its love and what makes the school distinctive. They all feel very fortunate to be at this school, and this is reflected in the number of former students returning to work here or electing to send their own children to the school.

### What the school needs to improve

- Ensure the implementation of the new *Religious Education Directory* is not crowded out by the inclusion within religious education of elements of personal social and health education.
- Ensure consistency of challenge and pace in religious education lessons to ensure the energy of learning comes from the students' interactions with the teacher and each other, covering the whole of the class and demonstrating ambition for ever-more deep learning.

## Catholic life and mission

How faithfully the school responds to the call to live as a Catholic community at the service of the Church's educational mission.

### Catholic life and mission key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

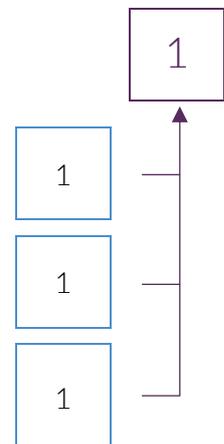
The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### Provision

The quality of provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic life and mission of the school



Students in this happy school value the school's Catholic life and mission, as evidenced by their pride in being a part of the community. One student said, 'This school is so special; the way we come together as a community and show respect for everyone is so amazing'. Students' behaviour is excellent, not only in demonstrating respect, but in their ability to collaborate. They are proud of their founding religious sisters whose own passion for girls' education, and the belief that nothing is out of reach, combined with a set of virtues which the students know well, offers a balanced programme for a flourishing life. Students speak accurately of Catholic social teaching, including in some instances demonstrating how it is, of itself, a powerful source of communal solidarity. One student said, 'Catholic social teaching gives us all, whatever our faith or background, a set of beliefs we can all follow'. The commitment to social justice is excellent, reflected in charitable work and a natural responsiveness to reach out to help. A Muslim student described how her experience of the school has supported her own growth in faith and knowledge.

Staff witness to their faith in the mutual support they provide. One teacher said, 'I have been supported by the school through bereavement and illness. Having worked at six other schools in my 30 year career, I can confidently say that nowhere else I have worked has cared so deeply about the wellbeing of its staff'. For another, 'Pupils respond well to the practical integration of Catholic social teaching in lessons and I have found it creates thinking that is compassionate and counter-cultural. I have found that pupils are proud to be a pupil in a Catholic school and are invested in our LSU values'. The provision for relationships, sex, and health education (RSHE) meets all statutory requirements and is firmly rooted in Church teaching. Some students would welcome a chaplaincy base, though they speak positively of the Oasis and Hub rooms as

supportive spaces. The innovative St Anne's Interconnected Learning programme, providing opportunities for students to participate in a range of activities with which they may not otherwise engage, developing skills and evidencing the school's values, is well-designed, managed and appreciated by students. The pastoral staff regard the ethos of the school and their own professional practice to be complementary.

Leaders, including governors, are proud of their school, its focus on kindness and love, and express great confidence in their acting head teacher who works tirelessly for the good of the school. His placing the child at the centre is appreciated by parents and students alike, 'You can always speak to him,' said one student. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school and their treatment as employees. They strongly believe Christ is at the centre, that students behave respectfully, and that their own spiritual growth is supported through the programme of training, including the highly regarded 'Ethos Day'. Early career stage teachers are confident in the way they are inducted into the school, including its Catholic identity. Parents' role as the first educators of their children is strengthened by the communication they receive from school. The acting head teacher is committed to supporting the Bishop's vision, but there is a need to align the current GCSE religious education specification with those endorsed by the Diocese. The sixth form leadership team are committed to growing and developing the excellent provision. For one Year 12 student, 'I stayed into sixth form because it is different to other places – the sense of community, individual attention and support is something you don't get anywhere else'.

## Religious education

The quality of curriculum religious education

### Religious education key judgement grade

#### Pupil outcomes

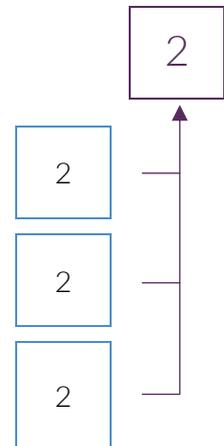
How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in religious education

#### Provision

The quality of teaching, learning, and assessment in religious education

#### Leadership

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for religious education



Achievement in public examinations is very good with progress in lessons typically good, with some examples of excellent lessons and some elements requiring improvement. Examples of learning that were reviewed through book scrutiny were generally well-planned, allowing for progression. While there were examples of excellent written work in key stage 3, the significant uplift in quality begins in Year 9 and into the key stage 4 phase, consistent with the subsequent public examination results, but pointing to a need for consistency over time. Students can work independently or in pairs or groups, being naturally collaborative reflecting their expectations and sense of security. Students enjoy the subject and value the opportunity for discussion and debate, which is conducted with courtesy and respect in this highly inclusive school. Students enjoy their lessons, in particular learning about a range of faiths and having the opportunity to discuss, all of which is recorded accurately in their books. The current inclusion of elements of learning proper to the personal social and health education curriculum impedes the natural progression of curriculum religious education in students' exercise books. There is evidence of progress with students responding to feedback, but not yet everywhere and with every teacher. Feedback allows students to think more deeply about their learning and take their understanding further, though sometimes by asking students to repeat or correct learning, with missed opportunities to add depth.

Teachers are confident and committed, celebrating student success readily and meaningfully. Relationships are very positive. The use of reflection time consolidates thinking and strengthens the climate for learning. Examples of cold calling, extended questioning, recall and challenge, when used, were highly effective, reflecting the experience in the department, which also contains staff who are in an earlier stage of their career. The ease with which the students enter discussions shows the trust they have in their teacher and each other. There is evidence of varied

pedagogy being used effectively to meet the needs of all students e.g. collaborative learning in a fascinating A Level religious education lesson, or the quality of debate in a Year 12 applied religious studies lesson. One student said, 'The RE department is so central to the school and keeps faith at the core'. Some others said they would welcome a 'chaplaincy department' with a full time chaplain, though they believed they could access what they needed from the current provision.

Leaders and governors are following the old version of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory in Years 7 to 9, however the school has not yet begun to implement the new Religious Education curriculum although they plan to do so in September 2025. The school's current choice of GCSE specification for years 9 to 11 is not within the Bishop's preferred list and so leaders, including governors need to consider their choice of specification in order to meet the demands of the new 14-19 curriculum. The school's budget for religious education positively supports the subject which enjoys parity with other subjects. An ongoing school building project is also enhancing the site, which is recognised by students as an investment in their education. Professional development takes place throughout the year, and the head of religious education undertakes training. The head of religious education is an excellent practitioner who embodies a clear vision for excellent education in an LSU school. The curriculum is understood by all, well sequenced and offers opportunities for enrichment. Ensuring consistency of pace and challenge across all teachers, and across the key stages will ensure even better learning. Regular book scrutiny and appropriate challenge where necessary will ensure a more consistent house style.

## Collective worship

The quality and range of liturgy and prayer provided by the school

### Collective worship key judgement grade

**Pupil outcomes**

How well pupils participate in and respond to the school's collective worship

1

**Provision**

The quality of collective worship provided by the school

1

**Leadership**

How well leaders and governors promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for collective worship

1

1

The culture of prayer and liturgy is outstanding at this school; it is deeply embedded and valued by the whole community, including parents. It is increasingly led by students and offers a meaningful and inclusive experience for this diverse school. Students' prayerful silence and attentiveness is outstanding, supported by the ability to join in communal singing in a mutually supportive manner, without anyone being made to feel uncomfortable. Students could identify a number of traditional, and bespoke Catholic prayers, and non-Catholic students said they valued the school prayer as something that unified them all, reflecting the importance of union to their ethos. In an outstanding assembly, the head girl and a Year 10 girl took over, leading not only a communal act of worship, but also delivering notices. Chaplaincy prefects are leaders of prayer and liturgy, and able to evaluate the effectiveness of what they, and staff, offer. In a Year 8 assembly, scripture was unpacked and brought to life by a sixth form house captain for the benefit of the younger students. Students can link prayer, learning and the overall curriculum, one student remarking, 'To pray for someone and also help them in other ways all comes from the same place'.

Prayer and liturgy feature as a natural centre to the school's sense of self, are appropriately sequenced across the school year, reflect the Church's seasons, the scripture of the day, as well as commemorating key dates in the La Sainte Union calendar. Provision for students of other faiths to pray is well-established and appreciated. The use of music, singing, quiet prayer and intercession provides a range of access points to building a relationship with God. Staff provide scaffolded guidance to help students effectively move from being mere recipients to active co-creators of prayer and liturgy. This is seen in tutor periods and assemblies where students feel empowered to take centre stage. Music and singing are strong points and students testify to the regularity of such features. Form rooms and other spaces speak to the ethos and history of the

school, including Catholic social teaching. The local clergy, both new in post, who say Mass every week, speak of a positive and growing relationship with the school, as well as the preparedness of the students to take part in liturgical events with reverence and courtesy. An example is a recent visit to the school for the Sacrament of Reconciliation where the students were so enthusiastic that twice the time was needed to allow all to access the sacrament. The school's policy on prayer and liturgy is effectively managed by governors and senior leaders, leading to outstanding outcomes.

There is regular monitoring of prayer and liturgy by all leaders, with governors encouraged to attend Mass, for example the chair of governors acting as Eucharistic Minister. The head of religious education visits each tutor group to monitor and set targets and meets with student leaders who monitor this too. Prayer and liturgy reflect the Church's year. The Ethos Days are highly valued by staff and ensure continuous spiritual formation, one commenting that they 'promote values as our common language'. The empowering of students to take such a leading role in prayer and liturgy reflects the trust they place in staff. One member of staff said, 'What I was told in professional development was already being done by the girls'. Early career stage teachers appreciate the support they receive, including conversations with the acting head teacher and others about working in a Catholic school. The whole staff were given training in how their subject contributes to an authentic Catholic world view, which is now embedding. This culture of being well-supported runs very deep at this school.

## Information about the school

Full name of school	St Anne's Catholic School
School unique reference number (URN)	138476
School DfE Number (LAESTAB)	8525417
Full postal address of the school	St Anne's Catholic School, Carlton Road, Southampton, SO15 2WZ
School phone number	02380328200
Head teacher	Julian Waterfield
Chair of Trustees	Mary Gobbi
School Website	<a href="http://www.st-annes.uk.com/">http://www.st-annes.uk.com/</a>
Trusteeship	La Sainte Union
Multi-academy trust or company (if applicable)	St Anne's Catholic School
Phase	Secondary
Type of school	Academy
Admissions policy	Non-selective
Age-range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Girls and Mixed Sixth Form
Date of last denominational inspection	March 2017
Previous denominational inspection grade	Outstanding

## The inspection team

Simon Uttley	Lead
Jo Smith	Team
Dave Legrand	Team

## Key to grade judgements

Grade	England	Wales
1	Outstanding	Excellent
2	Good	Good
3	Requires improvement	Adequate and requires improvement
4	Inadequate	Unsatisfactory and in need of urgent improvement