

**INSPECTION REPORT**

**St Anne’s RC High School, Glenfield Road, Stockport, SK4 2QP**

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Inspection date 16 January 2017

Reporting Inspectors Mr S Smith  
 Mr L Conley  
 Mr M Neill

Inspection carried out in accordance with Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

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Type of School Secondary  
 URN 106144  
 Age range of pupils 11-16  
 Number on roll 599  
 Appropriate authority The Governing Body  
 Chair of Governors Mr J Flynn  
 Headteacher (Acting) Ms L Corrigan  
 Head of Religious Education Mrs R Ganderton-Burns  
 Date of previous inspection February 2010

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<b>The Inspection judgements are:</b>	<b>Grade</b>	Explanation of the Grades  1 = Outstanding  2 = Good  3=Requires Improvement  4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	
The quality of Catholic Leadership	3	
The quality of the Word	2	
The quality of the Welcome	2	
The quality of Welfare	2	
The quality of Worship	3	
The quality of Witness	3	
The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements		

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL**

St Anne's is a smaller than average Roman Catholic 11-16 comprehensive school serving the area to the north of Stockport and drawing from the main partner primary schools and parishes of St Joseph and St Winifred's in Reddish. Whilst the planned admission number (PAN) in each year group is 150, there are 600 pupils on roll of which 55% are Roman Catholic; 33% of employed adults are Roman Catholic; 38% of students are in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant; 20% are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and the number of students who have an Education Health Care Plan is well below the national average with 8 pupils. The vast majority of pupils are from white British heritage. The school specialises in arts and media. Over the last two years, the school has been led by a number of temporary headteachers. A permanent headteacher will start at St Anne's at the beginning of the summer term 2017.

## **OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

The role of the governors and senior leaders needs to be strengthened in supporting further development of the Catholic mission and vision of the school. Senior leaders do not yet have sufficient resources to develop chaplaincy further and involve parishes, pupils and parents in supporting the formation and spiritual development of those in the school. Outcomes in religious education are above average and well above comparable subjects in school, and this is because of strong, visionary leadership of the head of religious education ably supported by a small but strong team. The part time lay chaplain is beginning to have some impact but it is not yet embedded in all areas of school life. Training and development for all staff around the religious life and mission in a Catholic school would benefit from greater priority.

## **KEY STRENGTHS OF THE SCHOOL INCLUDE:**

- Word, and specifically religious education teaching is strong and well led, where outcomes are above average and well above other comparable core subjects in the school.
- Clear and unequivocal support is provided to pupils who are vulnerable or in need of additional support through a well-defined and developed pastoral system; it ensures the value and dignity of every child by every adult.
- Pupils' commitment to stewardship and to charitable fundraising for the vulnerable, needy and poor is celebrated in school and in the community; Catholic Gospel Values are known and applied with the support of governors, school leaders and adults in the school.

## **THE QUALITY OF CATHOLIC LEADERSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

The continuous focus on improving standards at St Anne's over the past few years has meant that school leaders and governors have not sufficiently embedded aspects of self-evaluation of the religious life of the school effectively. This has led to a steadily improving religious education department and curriculum which is now good but there is yet to be a similar impact in the wider Catholic life and mission of the school. Promoting scripture and Catholic values more visibly, and celebrating acts of witness more prominently, would model and apply the already high expectations pupils have in relation to the church's mission. Parish links have recently developed in one contributory parish, though there is limited evidence that the perceptions of a lack of confidence in the school in some parishes are being challenged by governors. Although there is clear direction from senior leaders and governors for school improvement, it is not joined up with plans for improving and further engaging parishes, pupils and parents in the religious life of St Anne's. Governors and senior leaders do give energy and vision to the more marginalised in the community as demonstrated in the tireless work undertaken for charitable causes, often for Catholic causes close to the community's heart, such as homelessness and feeding the hungry. The commitment of senior leaders to the welfare and safeguarding of the pupils is strong and unequivocal. The very high standards of leadership of the religious education department has led to clear monitoring and impact systems which has contributed to

the overall impact of the department not just on school improvement but on the school's Catholic ethos, vision and mission.

### **THE QUALITY OF THE WORD IS GOOD**

The school's mission statement - that includes the qualities of tolerance, respect, honesty, cooperation and mutual respect - is evident in the relationships that exist. Pupils described how the mission statement is used in assemblies, form time and by pupils who work hard to improve the school through the student council. In religious education, pupils are challenged to consider some of the 'big questions'. Through highly effective leadership in religious education, this is made easier because pupils have a very good degree of religious literacy and are able to exemplify this in lessons. Those lessons seen in Years 10 and 11 were able to draw on this to describe Jewish beliefs about God; the positive climate allowed the teacher to wonderfully shape the learning towards challenging and applying the knowledge acquired through high quality answers. A lesson seen in Year 7 was characterised by extremely positive relationships, and mutual respect was much in evidence ensuring that the pupils were comfortable to respond appropriately to high order questioning. Teaching was well differentiated and enabled all pupils to access the lessons. They achieve better than the national average in outcomes because teaching is always at least good, sometimes outstanding. Teachers' planning was of good quality and assessments are used informatively to move pupils forward and to plan follow up sequences of lessons. In other lessons that the inspectors observed, social, moral, spiritual and cultural education (SMSC) were woven into the lessons seamlessly. In a biology lesson, the subject of obesity and health related problems was tactfully and firmly delivered, yet the excellent teacher-pupil relationship helped relax the pupils to get the best from them. It was clear that the teacher valued the opinions of the pupils and cleverly maintained every pupils' dignity whilst covering the topic. In a GCSE media studies lesson opportunities were taken to use moral and religious issues as part of assignment work. Scripture is not yet embedded in department areas; however, the school has a clear plan in a very short timeframe to remedy this through carefully considered Scripture linked to subject areas. Positive steps have been made over a long period of time to engage parents in the school's mission and vision for the future; regular newsletters share St Anne's mission with parents and parish.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELCOME IS GOOD**

The inspection team was made very welcome by all members of the school community. This is also the case when new parents and pupils join the school, and through the Year 6 to Year 7 transfer arrangements that the school puts in place. Pupils expressed their confidence in teachers dealing with any questions they may have so children settle quickly into their new school. They are friendly and engaging to each other and visitors and recognise the lengths adults in the school go to in order to keep them safe. Regular newsletters and updates on the website quickly showcase the good work the school is undertaking, particularly in fundraising activities for a whole range of community and parish causes. There are a large number of pupil leadership roles; these pupils readily convey the pride they have in their school and the faith they have in the adults who work with them every day. This pride is also shared by adults in the school who see their work as a form of service to the school and its community. For example the school prayer and mission statement of 'valuing the individual, nurturing achievement' are both derived from within the school and are shared and explained in some of the public areas. Visitors here are in no doubt that they have been welcomed to a Catholic school.

### **THE QUALITY OF WELFARE IS GOOD**

Pupils are well supported and cared for by the school and pastoral resources are effectively used. The part time chaplain described that because the school is smaller in size, staff and pupils do not appear to be treated in isolation but are individually known, which fosters a strong sense of belonging. Their safety and the conditions for learning are well publicised throughout the school's learning environment and the good order and respect shown to others is clearly evident. The NUHOPE system and the 6Rs are strategies that help to nurture the safety and well-being of the school community. The NUHOPE policy has made a difference to the quality of school experience for all pupils and staff since its introduction. Pupils told the inspectors that their teachers are 'always there for us', regardless of the situation and the time of the school day. Many were able to capture the spirit of the school's pastoral system in that it works to support their academic progress but also that it supports

and trusts them to be reflective and critical of themselves in order to become better people for the benefit of everyone. The SRE programme is comprehensive and holistic and the priority is to develop the emotional intelligence of the pupils. When things go wrong, the system of restorative justice works to repair relationships for both pupils and staff. The SRE policy is implemented in part through PSHE days. Pupils felt these are really good days where issues such as safeguarding and relationships have recently been covered. Pupils can express their opinions in a controlled way through the pupil voice exercises and the pupil council which meets regularly and is valued. Inspectors met a group of pupils who told us that their views are respected, listened to with empathy and responded to in a sensitive and supportive way by adults.

### **THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Less than twelve months ago, a part time school lay chaplain was appointed by the governors to enhance the religious life of the school. Some of her work is beginning to have an impact on the wider school community, but the limited hours she is employed by the school does not allow her to sufficiently develop her role. The chaplain's work so far is not yet embedded in school life and it is difficult to measure the impact on the limited worship opportunities that exist. Not all staff and pupils can yet see how a vibrant and planned liturgical programme can enhance prayer, spiritual development and chaplaincy because school leaders and governors have not yet evaluated the impact of the current provision and so personal formation and training opportunities for adults are limited. Liturgies around Advent have taken place. Pupils described how important it was for them to take part, although involvement in the liturgies themselves was rather limited. Physically, the school has invested in converting a classroom into a prayer space. This space is open for pupils to drop in and be supported in their formation or to simply 'reflect'. Origami and friendship groups have been set up though at present they are not widely advertised for older pupils. Many ideas for the future have been planned including regular school Masses that currently are not regularly available. Year 7 told the inspectors how they enjoyed celebrating their transition to St Anne's in a Mass held at the start of the term with the active support and involvement of a local parish priest who has recently joined the governing body. Links between home, parish and the school are planned, but again, are just emerging. Form time enables pupils to experience prayer and come together as a class through planned themes. Pupils are encouraged to reflect together and develop a sense of personal growth when provided with the opportunity. In the observed assembly, the theme of the Holocaust was explored and was a timely reminder of the importance of peace in our world. Pupils were exemplary in their attentiveness.

### **THE QUALITY OF WITNESS REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT**

Whilst witness to Christ and His teachings is known and understood by many members of the school's community, there is only initial indications that the quality of evaluation is framed by the Church's teachings and mission. The opportunities to celebrate Catholic beliefs and culture require more overt commitment and direction from governors – although some whole school policies are framed in this way. Many pupils are confident talking about their faith, supported by the religious education teachers, but there is yet to emerge a vibrancy and authenticity to witness throughout the school. Senior prefects were able to describe key religious events throughout their time at St Anne's that helped shaped the people they have become. However, there is much positive work around provision for actively living out Gospel Values through citizenship at a local and community level to offer some definitive service. Many thousands of pounds have been raised through fundraising and charitable works over recent years. Caritas Salford, CAFOD and the Lalley Centre in Collyhurst, Manchester, have benefited. Some pupils spent the day helping and supporting at the Lalley Centre and the experience has been life-long. Furthermore, fundraising has supported a number of pupils who have accompanied the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. All the school is proud to be associated with such corporal works of mercy. In the pastoral system, pupils are familiar with restorative justice and it is used very effectively to mend relationships broken or at risk, and reconciliation, justice and peace is at the heart of the school. Stewardship in the future is best witnessed in how the school embraces 'faith projects' that make a difference to those involved, but senior leaders and governors are not as visible as they could be in their stewardship of the school.

**AGREED AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT:**

- Develop the chaplaincy model further by increasing the visibility of the school chaplain by establishing chaplaincy group throughout the school involving both pupils and adults.
- Provide for opportunities for all staff to undertake a planned programme of professional development and formation around the religious life of the school.
- Governors and school leaders should continue to reflect more clearly the Gospel Values that impact on the school's climate for learning and environment.

February 2017

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the really excellent welcome you gave my colleagues and me when we visited St Anne's in January. It was very easy to feel the warmth of your welcome and share in the pride that you have for your school and its staff.

There are many things in St Anne's that we are able to celebrate. In particular, we must say that the religious education department, its classrooms and newly refurbished chapel are an asset. Strong visionary leadership, good teaching and excellent relationships between pupils, other pupils and staff, have helped make RE a very strong subject in your school. In observing lessons and speaking to your chaplain, it was easy to see these strong relationships in action, based on respect, tolerance and trust in each other.

The Student Council is a strong voice in your school, but it is measured in expectation but not in ambition! You have raised many thousands of pounds for many charities over the last couple of years. This has made a difference to the quality of many lives and touched many hearts. You should be commended for such generosity. The senior prefects are active role models and the younger ones look up to you and respect you for what you do.

We have asked the governors and senior leadership team to work on a number of things in the coming few years. They are essentially about school systems to further demonstrate – mainly around the school – that St Anne's is a Catholic school and Gospel Values drive strong relationships and school standards. I hope you will notice this in the coming months and it will make a difference to the quality of your religious environment. Your lay chaplain, Sister Silvie is working tirelessly to engage with you and provide time for quiet reflection and liturgies to support special occasions in school.

Thank you for the time that all of you put in to making your school become even better. We all wish you well as you progress through St Anne's to college or employment in the future.

We hope you continue 'to know, love and serve God'.

Yours sincerely

Mr S A Smith, Mr L Conley and Mr M Neill  
*Section 48 Inspectors*

## Summary Report to Parents

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