

St Andrew's Catholic School

Grange Road, Leatherhead, KT22 7JP

Inspection dates 13–14 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- This outstanding school enables almost all its pupils to make rapid progress in their learning and to achieve extremely well.
- The sixth form is outstanding. It offers an increasingly broad range of courses, and high quality teaching enables pupils to make excellent progress from their starting points.
- The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective, and pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and for work.
- The quality of teaching, especially teachers' use of assessment, has improved considerably since the last inspection, and is now outstanding.
- Teaching staff understand pupils' needs very well and provide activities that allow pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, to learn extremely well in lessons.
- Occasionally, pupils make good rather than outstanding progress in lessons because they are not given sufficiently stimulating activities.
- The behaviour of pupils in and outside classrooms is often exemplary. Pupils are routinely polite and courteous to one another, to staff, and to visitors to the school. They say they feel extremely safe in school.
- Leaders have very high expectations of teachers. Staff performance management arrangements are extremely robust.
- All members of staff share a very strong sense of purpose, and the pursuit of excellence is the norm.
- Leaders are passionately committed to providing the best for pupils and to ensuring that each individual realises his or her potential.
- The governors work extremely well with the headteacher in planning for the school's development. This has allowed the school to improve rapidly in all respects.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school, and of its mission to bring out the best in all.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 32 lessons. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and other senior leaders. In addition, inspectors visited lessons specifically to look at pupils' work and to hear some of them read.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and senior leaders, teaching staff, school governors and groups of pupils.
- They considered the views of 109 parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire, as well as a letter received from a parent, and 67 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own information on students' attainment and progress; behaviour and attendance records; safeguarding procedures; records of school leaders' lesson observations; and self-evaluation documents and improvement plans.

Inspection team

Nardeep Sharma, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Robin Gaff	Additional inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional inspector
Gillian Keevill	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a broadly average-size secondary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be entitled to free school meals is well below average.
- About 12% of students are supported through school action, which is in line with national averages. Approximately 13% are supported at school action plus or have a statement of special educational needs. This figure is above the national average.
- A very small number of pupils attend classes on one day a week at a local college.
- Approximately 11% of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government). This proportion is well below the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all lessons proceed at a sufficiently stimulating pace and include activities which enable all pupils to make very rapid progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding.

- Standards by the end of Year 11 have risen rapidly and are continuing to rise. Previous gaps in attainment between different groups of pupils have been almost eradicated.
- The percentage of pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades (including English and maths) has risen sharply in recent years. The proportion of pupils gaining higher grades has also risen both at GCSE and at A and AS level, and in other equivalent courses.
- Although some higher-attaining pupils are entered early for GCSE in a few subjects, including mathematics, this does not prevent them from gaining the highest grades.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in many subjects, including English and mathematics. In comparison to other schools, the proportion of pupils making more than the expected progress from their starting points is high and is growing. The school's own accurate assessment of current pupils' performance indicates that this proportion is set to increase still further.
- In the best lessons observed, pupils made rapid progress because teachers skilfully adapted activities according to individual pupils' needs and challenged them to produce their best. This resulted in pupils being completely engrossed in what they were doing.
- For example, in a highly effective business studies lesson, Year 12 students gained an excellent understanding of complex ideas and processes by undertaking a series of tasks which enabled them to build progressively on what they were learning. Each group worked on specially adapted tasks, for which the pupils were given additional help if they needed it.
- The attainment of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils. They make excellent progress because the school has used the extra money to provide them with high quality additional teaching and support. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also learn very quickly and make excellent progress from their starting points.
- The school develops pupils' reading, writing and verbal communication skills extremely effectively. This successfully underpins their learning and enables them to get to grips with increasingly complex topics and concepts.
- Pupils confirm that they thoroughly enjoy reading a wide variety of texts. They are keen to talk about what they are reading, and enjoy discussing books together and with their teachers during tutor periods.

The quality of teaching is outstanding.

- Much of the teaching in this school is outstanding and this has led to a fast rate of progress being made by most pupils across the age and ability range, including those who are in the sixth form. Teachers match lesson tasks extremely well to pupils' needs and interests. There are examples of inspirational teaching in a number of subjects. Many teachers succeed in sharing their passion for their subjects with their pupils and generate a real sense of excitement in their lessons.
- In an outstanding art lesson, pupils were given individual coaching by the teacher so that they could maximise their chances in their forthcoming examination. The teacher ensured that all the pupils understood the requirements for each grade and enabled them to discuss this in groups. This gave them an excellent understanding of what they needed to do to reach their target grades.
- Pupils are regularly expected to explore new topics themselves and to make sense of them with minimal teacher guidance. This helps them to develop excellent independent learning skills.
- Teachers know their subjects extremely well and are able to use this to good effect to ensure

pupils make substantial progress. Questioning is precise and carefully focused, and teachers test and extend pupils' knowledge in partnership with them.

- Much of the teaching is underpinned by a strong commitment to enabling pupils to gain an excellent command of English, for instance through learning to understand and to use subject-specific language, for example in science and technology.
- Teachers' use of written assessment is of a high order. Teachers give pupils detailed comments which enable them to know the next steps to take to improve their work. Marking is very regular and thorough, and the progress evident in pupils' written work shows the extent to which they benefit from it.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive well-targeted additional support from teachers and teaching assistants, including small-group and one-to-one teaching. Pupils speak highly of the extra help they receive.
- Occasionally pupils are not given sufficiently stimulating activities in lessons, or because lessons do not proceed at a fast enough pace, and this leads to them making good rather than outstanding progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding.

- Pupils feel very safe at school and are acutely aware of whom to approach if they have any concerns. They say that poor behaviour and bullying are extremely rare, and are dealt with very swiftly and effectively by the school. When, occasionally, pupils do have any disagreements, they are usually able to resolve them amicably themselves.
- Pupils have a thorough understanding of different types of bullying, including those based on prejudice, such as homophobic bullying. They know how to keep safe when using computer-based technology, including mobile phones.
- The overwhelming majority of parents agree that pupils behave very well at the school, and that it deals effectively with bullying. No members of staff reported any concerns about behaviour or bullying.
- Pupils are thoughtful and considerate towards one another and are highly respectful to visitors. Pupils are very supportive of one another in the classroom and relate well to teachers and other adults. They take responsibility for their own behaviour and support each other so that lessons can run smoothly. They like the fact that they are known as individuals by senior staff, including the headteacher.
- Arrangements to support those pupils that require help with their behaviour are highly effective. This has resulted in a large drop in the number of exclusions, which is well below the national average.
- The trend for attendance over time is highly positive, and pupils' attendance is very high in comparison to other schools.

The leadership and management are outstanding.

- Senior leaders show an uncompromising determination to pursue the highest possible outcomes for pupils. They thoroughly analyse assessment information about pupils' attainment and progress and set challenging targets for pupils.
 - Improvement planning is extremely well focused on building on the school's strengths and eliminating any weaknesses, and is underpinned by robust and realistic self-evaluation.
 - Senior leaders have a detailed understanding of the quality of teaching. In joint lesson observations with inspectors, senior staff were able to identify in detail the features of good and outstanding lessons.
 - These factors indicate the school's excellent capacity for further improvement.
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- Staff development arrangements for teachers, including training events and opportunities to share examples of outstanding practice, are of a high order and lead to high quality performance in the classroom. Performance management arrangements for teaching staff are equally sharp, and only those teachers that meet or exceed their targets gain salary increases.
 - The curriculum is very well suited to the needs and aspirations of the pupils at the school, who also benefit from a rich programme of very well-attended out-of-school activities, including sports, cultural and subject-related clubs, and special events.
 - Sixth form pupils benefit from an increasingly wide range of academic and vocational courses, as well as special programmes and individual guidance which prepare them extremely well for higher education and employment.
 - Those pupils who attend classes part-time at a local college achieve extremely well because their programmes are very well matched to their needs.
 - The school's strong promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares pupils very well for life beyond school. Pupils support one another, work extremely well together and are rightly proud of their school. They speak highly of the cultural experiences it has given them, particularly in music and drama.
 - The school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and in eliminating any form of discrimination is shown by the fact that pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable achieve just as well as their classmates.
 - Arrangements for safeguarding, including training for staff and governors, are thorough and meet current requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors show a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and what it needs to do to continue to improve. Regular training improves governors' understanding of data, enabling them to make accurate comparisons of how the school is performing compared to other similar schools. They have been decisive in successfully tackling previous weaknesses. Governors have an accurate knowledge of the quality of teaching in the school. They understand the school's arrangements for performance management, and how pay increases and promotion are linked specifically by senior leaders to good teaching. The governing body ensures that the school's finances are well managed, and checks on how the pupil premium funding is being used to improve the achievement of those pupils who are eligible for it.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125275
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	406310

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	871
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Kiero-Watson
Headteacher	Alan Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 November 2010
Telephone number	01372 277881
Fax number	01372 279135
Email address	administrator@st-andrews.surrey.sch.uk

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