



**S48 Report
St Anthony's Girls' Catholic
Academy**

Thornhill Terrace
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR2 7JN

URN: 138054

**DENOMINATIONAL INSPECTION
REPORT (Section 48)**

on

**THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE
SCHOOL AND RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION**

School: St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy

Address: Thornhill Terrace
Sunderland
Tyne and Wear
SR2 7JN

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School URN: 138054

Headteacher: Monica Shepherd

Chair of Governors: Andrea Shanks

Lead Inspector: David Lewis

Team Inspector: Rachael Blackburn

Date of Inspection: 11-12 June 2013

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for pupil premium is lower than average. (This is funding available for students known to be eligible for free school meals, students in local authority care and those whose parents are in the armed forces). The pupil premium group in the academy is the group known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special needs is below average. About 90% of the students are White British, the proportion of those from minority ethnic groups and who are believed to speak English as an additional language is rising. The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics. A very few students are currently educated off-site at the YMCA and at Sunderland's Returners Unit which supports the reintegration and education of young people whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. The academy enters very few students early for GCSEs. The school has gained many awards, including the Leading Edge Partnership award for its successful promotion of a positive learning environment. The academy converted from St Anthony's Girls' Catholic School in April 2012. The trustees of the Academy are the Sisters of Mercy. The trustees' representative is the chair of the governing body.

Pupil Catchment

Number of pupils on roll:	1315
Planned Admission Number of Pupils:	210
Percentage of pupils baptised RC:	70
Percentage of pupils from other Christian denominations:	23
Percentage of pupils from other World Faiths:	5
Percentage of pupils with no religious affiliation:	2
Percentage of pupils from ethnic groups:	13
Percentage of pupils with special needs:	10

Staffing

Full time teachers:	93
Part time teachers:	8
Percentage of Catholic teachers:	60
Percentage of teachers with CCRS:	7

RE Department Staffing (For Secondary schools)

Number of full time RE teachers:	6
Number of part time RE teachers:	6

Percentage of learning time given to Religious Education

Year 7	10
Year 8	10
Year 9	8
Year 10	10
Year 11	10
6 th Form	5

Parishes served by the school

Holy Rosary, Sunderland
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Sunderland
St Anne, Sunderland
St Benet, Sunderland
St Cecilia and St Patrick, Sunderland
St Hilda, Sunderland
St Joseph, Sunderland
St Leonard, Silksworth
St Mary, Sunderland
St Patrick, Ryhope
The Holy Family, Sunderland
The Sacred Heart and St John Bosco, Sunderland

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

1

CATHOLIC LIFE

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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KEY FINDINGS

St Anthony's Girls' Catholic Academy is an outstanding Catholic school. It palpably lives out its mission as a Mercy School to be Christ centred, faith enlightened and showing concern for the poor, especially women and girls. The impact of the Sisters of Mercy is clearly evident in every aspect of school life from the central role of prayer and liturgy, to the care and concern for every member of the school community.

The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Pupils and staff speak of a profound sense of belonging to this Catholic community. The influence and presence of the Sisters of Mercy is an inspiration to every member of the school. A profound sense of spiritual stillness manifests itself in the excellent quality of all relationships; in the calm and orderly manner of pupils and staff; in the unwavering commitment to excellence; and in the evidence that pupils and students are confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth. Behaviour is never less than excellent. All leaders and managers including the governing body are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and lead by example. They are unequivocal in their drive to ensure that the Catholic Mission of the school is a priority along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

Collective Worship is outstanding because students, staff and governors are inspired to deep thought and heartfelt response. They prepare and take part in a wide variety of liturgies, assemblies, Masses and other Collective Worship events throughout the school year. Each day a staff briefing begins with a prayer and reflection led by the Sisters of Mercy which follows the liturgical calendar and focuses on the 'saint of the day' and the inspiration of her life story. For pupils and students, each day begins with an assembly for every year group with a voluntary Mass each Friday morning which is very well attended, led by a different member of the deanery clergy each week. Preparation and resources are of the highest quality. The influence of the Sisters of Mercy, the school's mission and remarkable commitment to the prayer life of the school has a profound and visible effect on the development of all pupils irrespective of ability or faith background.

The quality of Religious Education is outstanding. The highly effective head of department, supported by the leadership team and governing body, has ably led the significant improvement in outcomes since the last inspection to the current level of outstanding in all key stages. She has developed highly effective teaching and learning strategies, consistently high quality and innovative resources, and highly effective monitoring, tracking, data and intervention strategies. This is a lead department of the school.

WHAT THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

To improve further the school needs to:

- Share the outstanding practice of the Catholic Life of the school by:
 - Leading and supporting schools in the Catholic Partnership
 - Leading and supporting other Diocesan schools
 - Engaging with other Mercy Schools around the world
- Share the outstanding Collective Worship practice by:
 - Leading and supporting schools in the Catholic Partnership
 - Leading and supporting other Diocesan schools
 - Engaging with other Mercy Schools around the world
- Share the outstanding practice in Religious Education by:
 - The Religious Education department staff leading the development of teaching and learning throughout the school
 - Leading and supporting schools in the Catholic Partnership
 - Leading and supporting other Diocesan Schools

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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Pupils and students are effusive in their deep commitment to the Catholic faith, and its traditions, and to St Anthony's as a Catholic school. They speak of their involvement in shaping the school's mission and ethos including working closely with the Sisters of Mercy who are 'brilliant' and 'so supportive'. inM Pupils and students are enthusiastic about involvement in retreats at the Youth Village, the numerous school trips, and raise substantial funds for the less fortunate. Pupils and students take part and play a leading role in diocesan and other events such as the Flame Congress, Lourdes Pilgrimage and the Diocesan Youth Council. They speak of their commitment to raising funds for charities including cake sales and Lenten alms for CAFOD, St Vincent de Paul activities including the Little Sisters Care Home, fundraising for a Swaziland orphanage, Shoe Box appeal, St Cuthbert's Care and involvement in social justice issues including women trafficking. They are confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth and speak articulately of the nurturing of and commitment to every member of the school community. They are extremely proud to belong to St Anthony's, with its strong religious identity, where there is a deep commitment to the development of their religious beliefs, and have a strong sense of personal worth.

The provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. Students and staff speak movingly about the positive impact of the Sisters of Mercy, their vision in establishing St Anthony's, their continued support for the development of the school, the outstanding chaplaincy work and their inspiration to them as young women. The school has continued to develop the mission and ethos of the school so that it is a forward-looking school confident of its place in the city and diocese, building on the long established traditions of St Anthony's, yet constantly striving to be at the cutting edge of educational and Religious Education developments. Pupils and staff speak of a profound sense of belonging to this Catholic community. The influence and presence of the Sisters of Mercy is an inspiration to every member of the school. A profound sense of spiritual stillness manifests itself in the excellent quality of all relationships, the calm and orderly manner of pupils and staff, the unwavering commitment to excellence and the evidence that pupils and students are confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth. Behaviour is never less than excellent. All leaders and managers including the governing body are highly ambitious for the Catholic Life of the school and lead by example. They are unequivocal in their drive to ensure that the Catholic Mission of the school is a priority along with the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

The school is fortunate in the commitment and leadership of the headteacher and governing body. Together with the Sisters of Mercy, the whole team are highly ambitious for the development of the Catholic Life of the school. The school has highly developed systems for rigorous monitoring and challenging self-evaluation is meticulous in scrutinising detailed analysis of strengths and areas for development. The governors, including Sisters of Mercy, are highly committed and passionate about the school's mission. The governing body is highly ambitious for the school, acting as a challenging 'critical friend' in their desire to ensure the

school is at the forefront of Catholic education and achieving the best possible outcomes in Religious Education.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

HOW EFFECTIVE LEADERS AND MANAGERS ARE IN DEVELOPING THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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Collective Worship is outstanding because students, staff and governors are inspired to deep thought and heartfelt response. Pupils and students are fully involved in the planning of liturgies and Masses, including the Our Lady of Mercy Mass in September where the whole school celebrates. They play a central role in the prayer life of the school, leading and organising assemblies, and Masses both in school and in the wider community at parish, deanery and diocesan levels. Each day begins with a year assembly for all year groups which are vibrant and pensive acts of worship. Pupils, staff and students are actively engaged in reflection, deep thought, prayer and stimulating resources including lives of saints as inspirational role models. Every Friday, a voluntary Mass is held before school which is extremely well attended and led by a different priest from the deanery. Prayers, readings and intercessions are led by students and staff, using resources of high quality. For those who choose not to attend Mass, Collective Worship takes place in form rooms, ensuring a spiritual and thoughtful start to the day. In addition, each day a staff briefing begins with a prayer and reflection led by the Sisters of Mercy which follows the liturgical calendar and focuses on the 'saint of the day' and the inspiration of their life story. Collective Worship follows celebrations of the liturgical calendar including the annual Our Lady of Mercy Mass in September, celebrations of Holy days and annual leavers' masses for Y11 and Y13 students. Prayers are said before examinations and the remarkably cohesive sense of a worshipping community is evident and appreciated by both students and staff. The impact of the Sisters of Mercy is clearly evident in every aspect of school life from the central role of prayer and liturgy, to the care and concern for every member of the school community. Pupils, students and staff prepare and take part in a wide variety of liturgies, assemblies, masses and other Collective Worship events throughout the school year. Preparation and resources are of the highest quality. The influence of the Sisters of Mercy, the school's mission and remarkable commitment to the prayer life of the school has a profound and visible effect on the development of all pupils irrespective of ability or faith background.

The prayer life of the school is very well developed with resources of an extremely high quality. The school hosts the deanery Confirmation Preparation Programme working closely with St Aidan's (boys) school nearby. The headteacher is very supportive of the provision for and development of chaplaincy. The chaplains are very visible, highly regarded and contribute hugely to the Catholic Life of the school. There are very good links with the parishes including the St Bede's Deanery Partnership where headteachers and clergy discuss how to further develop parish links and further promote spirituality and faith. There is a great sense of partnership. The Dean spoke of the outstanding quality of the Catholic Life of the school and the provision for Collective Worship including Friday morning Mass, prayers, and monthly meetings at the Youth Village. The Sisters of Mercy see St Anthony's as their school and the school is very much part of the diocese. Pupils and students talked excitedly about the numerous liturgical and other events and their impact both in the school, in the local community and throughout the diocese.

Leaders and managers have expert knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality experiences of Collective Worship. Pupils and students speak enthusiastically of their personal involvement in the great variety of liturgical events both in the school and across the diocese and pilgrimages. Collective Worship is planned well across the school by leaders and managers, and pupil response is outstanding. Collective Worship is reviewed and evaluated regularly through the meticulous monitoring by the school's senior leadership team who regularly report to the full governing body. The governing body aims to ensure that pupils and students respect and value themselves and others, that they are aware of other faith traditions, and that the whole child is educated. As a consequence, pupil response to this provision is outstanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education
- How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

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Pupils and students are excited by Religious Education, are keen to achieve their very best and openly express their enthusiasm for the subject both in class and in other discussions. All lessons observed were stimulating and thought provoking. Expectations are very high and not a second was lost in every lesson observed. Misunderstandings were corrected in a supportive manner and all pupils make at least good progress at all key stages. Key stage three and GCSE results are above diocesan and national averages and there is firm evidence that GCSE outcomes will rise significantly this summer and in future years. Religious Education is a popular choice at A level with 21 students taking the subject last year. AS and A2 level results were above national Average Points Score (APS) per entry in 2012, and students make better progress at A level Religious Studies than other students in the country.

Every lesson observed during the inspection was outstanding. The consistency of approach was remarkable. All lessons were characterised by excellent use of questioning, challenge, and innovative approaches to planning which led to rapid and sustained progress for all students. Resources were of the highest quality with information and communications technology and other materials readily available which stimulated discussion and promoted excellent understanding. In lessons observed, a wide range of activities took place including discussion, group work, and peer assessment. Every book was thoroughly marked with key pieces fully assessed at regular intervals in line with the department policy. Work in exercise books and files was of a very high quality, and the pupils and students produce a great deal of work – an indication of their enjoyment and interest in Religious Education. Tracking is highly developed, in line with the whole school policy. Key assessments are undertaken three times a year and intervention programmes ensure at least good and often outstanding progress for all pupils and students. Teachers know their pupils and students well, their strengths and areas for support. They are acutely aware of the performance of each pupil and student and are fully involved in evaluating how well they are achieving through peer and other assessments. Feedback is constructive and supportive and praise was a constant feature in all lessons observed.

Leadership and management of the provision of Religious Education is outstanding. The highly effective head of department, supported by the leadership team and governing body, has ably led the significant improvement in outcomes since the last inspection to the current level of outstanding in all key stages. She has developed highly effective teaching and learning strategies, consistently high quality and innovative resources, and highly effective monitoring, tracking, data and intervention strategies. This is a lead department of the school. The school has undertaken a real focus on teaching and learning since the last inspection to ensure that the quality of teaching is the highest possible in Religious Education and throughout the school. The support for Religious Education by the governing body and senior leaders is unequivocal. Monitoring and evaluation of every aspect of the Religious Life is meticulous and has been a real focus of the school since the last inspection. Reports are regularly reviewed at governing body meetings so that Governors are fully informed and aware of progress within Religious Education lessons as well as the Catholic Life of the school. The influence and involvement of

the Sisters of Mercy continues as the central mission of the school with outstanding support for pupils, students and staff from the chaplains as well as sisters who are key members of the governing body. The Catholic Partnership works to recognise the potential within the young women of the school and support them in living a full spiritual, moral and cultural life, and also works with schools across the diocese in supporting subject teachers and sharing examples of outstanding practice.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

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CATHOLIC LIFE

1

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

1

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

1

The quality of provision for Collective Worship

1

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

1

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education

1

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education

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	Pupil Outcomes	Provision	Leadership and Management	
Catholic Life	1	1	1	1
Collective Worship	1	1	1	1
Religious Education	1	1	1	1
	1	1	1	1