

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES**



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 118918

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

Chair of Governors
Headteacher
Inspectors

Rev Dr Gehad Homsey
Mr Michael Walters
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Mrs M Todd

Inspection dates 24 & 25 November 2011

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK
COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS & COLLEGES**
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Introduction

Description of the school

St Anselm's is a mixed voluntary aided school situated in the Canterbury Deanery of the Archdiocese of Southwark. It is maintained by Kent LA which operates an academic selective system. The principal parishes which the school serves are Our Lady Immaculate, Whitstable, St Teresa's and St Simon's in Ashford; St Thomas, Canterbury, and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Herne Bay. The proportion of pupils who are baptised Catholics is 55%. The average weekly proportion of curriculum time given to religious education is 10% in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and 5% in sixth form.

The school takes pupils from 11 to 18 years. The number of pupils currently on roll is 1044 with 164 students in the sixth form. The attainment of pupils on entering the school is below average due to the selective system whereby some 30% of the pupils are top-sliced by the grammar schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals (5%) is well below average. An above average number of the pupils (33%) receive extra support in class. The proportion of pupils from homes where English is an additional language (42%) is above average. The school has Specialist Science Status, a PD unit, Healthy Schools status, and Artsmark and Sportsmark awards. The school initiated a change to a house structure and vertical tutoring from September 2011.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding	Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 2	Good	Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness as a Catholic school

St Anselm's, as a Catholic learning community, is a good school. Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has a very clear vision for St Anselm's and in this he has the strong support of committed governors and a hard-working and dedicated staff. The distinctive Catholic nature of the school is emphasised by the many, and often traditional, religious icons and artefacts around the building. Pastoral care is extremely good and pupils feel safe and emotionally well supported in the school. The part-time lay chaplain successfully organises and co-ordinates the many liturgies and retreats available to the pupils. The local priests are very supportive of the school and many visit regularly to celebrate Mass. Pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves and they raise much money for many charities. Attainment and standards in religious education are good and most pupils make good progress, while the achievement of the less academically able pupils is very good. Teaching and learning in religious education is, overall, good. The religious education curriculum is good, as is the leadership of the department. The school has successfully addressed most of the issues raised in the last inspection (March 2009). There has been some improvement in matching activities to the needs of the more able pupils but this is still variable across the lessons. The governors actively support and positively challenge the school leaders to continue to improve the Catholic life of the school. The religious education curriculum time now meets the requirements of the Diocese. Given the enthusiasm of the relatively new headteacher, the support of committed governors and staff and the co-operation of pupils and parents the inspectors believe the school has a very good capacity to improve further.

Grade 2

What steps need to be taken to improve further?

In order to improve even further the governors and senior leaders should:-

- Ensure there is an effective system for monitoring the daily acts of worship.
- Consider how the governing body might more effectively monitor the Catholic life of the school.
- Appoint a full-time religious education specialist teacher as soon as possible.
- Ensure assessment for learning becomes fully embedded in all religious education lessons.

The Catholic life of the school

Leadership and management

Grade 2

Leadership and management of St Anselm's are very good. The many Catholic images, statues, artefacts and icons in the entrance area and around the school emphasise the distinctive Catholic character of this popular school. The headteacher has a clear concept of Catholic education and a vision for the future of St Anselm's which he shares with and is supported by, governors, staff and pupils. He is a powerful presence in and around the school and is a very strong role model for pupils. The mission statement, which would benefit from being both more succinct and more prominently displayed around the school, underpins most of the school's policies while the current school improvement plan has as its first strand the maintenance and promotion of the Catholic life of the school. The governors effectively monitor standards in religious education through the curriculum committee and visits by the link governor. Monitoring of the liturgical and Catholic life of the school is mainly carried out through the very many regular visits by the chair of governors. He visits the school weekly, talking to the chaplain, staff and pupils and attending liturgies. The governors should consider how they might involve more governors in this important role. The lay chaplain plays an important and significant role in supporting the school's liturgical life by organising the Mass programme, liaising with the parishes, co-ordinating the retreats and supporting the form tutors. She has produced an excellent handbook for information, guidance and support for staff. Many pupils benefit from the chaplain being there as "somebody who listens", as one pupil put it. However, partly because the chaplain works part time, chaplaincy in the wider sense is underdeveloped and there needs to be greater cohesion between chaplaincy, form tutor prayers and assemblies. Very good links with the deanery parishes have been forged, with many priests visiting regularly to celebrate Masses and administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the school's carol service is held in the local parish church. A whole-school Mission for January 2012 is in the final stages of planning. Pastoral care is another strength of the school. Pupils feel safe in the school and most are happy to be there. They feel that the staff want what is best for them and that many of the staff "go that extra mile" to support their academic and emotional development. Pupils have a keen awareness of the vulnerable and less fortunate and work hard and successfully to raise funds to support many national and international charities including CAFOD, Save the Children, World Homeless, Help for Heroes. Pupils' views are taken into account through the School Council whose recommendations and ideas can be seen in action. Pupils are very loyal, supportive and complimentary about the school although many did complain, with some justification, about the amount of litter around the site. In lessons and around the school pupil behaviour is very good, as are relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school (See Appendix 1) and some comments like "An excellent school with a Christian spiritual ethos" and "The pastoral care is 100%" sum up general parental opinion.

Quality of provision for personal and collective worship

Grade 2

The quality of provision for private and collective worship is overall, good. There is a full and well-developed programme of whole-school, House and Year Masses as well as a Friday voluntary Mass, which is well attended, and a Mass in Canterbury cathedral to celebrate the school's patron saint. Pupil participation in the Masses is very good. They take part as readers, servers, lead bidding prayers, play musical instruments or as members of the choir or through drama or dance. Some sixth form students and staff are commissioned Eucharistic Ministers. Penitential services are organised for all years during Advent and Lent and these are followed by opportunities for the pupils to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, with a number of priests from the deanery parishes hearing confessions. Every pupil has an opportunity to go on a retreat each year to Aylesford Priory, St Cassians, Kintbury or Minister Abbey, where the school has an on-going project with the Benedictine sisters. The school is anxious to develop these retreats. There are good opportunities for private prayer for pupils and staff. All staff briefings begin with a prayer and the beautiful chapel, with its easy access, is open all day for private prayer or reflection. Whilst the school meets the statutory requirements relating to daily acts of worship, the quality of the assemblies is variable. They are well organised, with clear themes and messages and pupils are very orderly and well behaved, however there is too little pupil involvement, little or no time for the pupils to pray, meditate or reflect and insufficient opportunity for pupils' spiritual development. The daily act of worship in form tutor time is often perfunctory, despite good guidance offered by the chaplain. Those who lead assemblies and prayers should make more use of the resources suggested by the chaplain while senior leaders could monitor more closely the quality of the daily acts of worship.

Community Cohesion

Grade 2

St Anselm's school is good at promoting and achieving community cohesion within and beyond the school. The liturgies and retreats are inclusive whilst the religious education curriculum promotes and supports understanding of and tolerance towards other faiths and cultures. Relationships between pupils of different cultural backgrounds and faiths are very good. Bullying and racism are rare and these rare incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils support a range of local, national and international charities, such as the East Kent hospice, the Stella Rogers Appeal and Save the Children, while the school has forged links with a school in Africa. There is a good network with local Catholic primary schools and the school premises is used by a range of local organisations like the Gymnastics club, the Badminton group and a railway model club, among others.

Religious education

Achievement and standards

Grade 2

Attainment and achievement in religious education are good. At Key Stage 3 the proportion of pupils gaining level 5 and above was 81% in 2011 which is in line with other Catholic schools. At key stage 4 the results show a slight upward trend over the last few years and in 2011 64% of the year group gained A*-C grades including 20% being awarded A*/A grades. The AS and A2 results are also good with 95% passing at AS level in 2011 and 100% at A level including 50% getting A-B grades. Standards in the classroom in both key stages is generally high, although in some groups higher expectations would, inspectors believe, raise standards further. Pupils make good progress within lessons and over time and pupils in the AEN groups achieve particularly well. All pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they liked the subject and their behaviour in lessons was very good.

Teaching and learning in Religious Education

Grade 2

Teaching and learning are, overall, good and sometimes outstanding. During the inspection in the lessons seen where teaching was good or better, lessons were well organised and well planned with a variety of age- appropriate and relevant activities. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on the parish, pupils were challenged to extend their thinking through good questioning techniques. The pace of the lessons was good, with most of the pupils keen to learn and on task most of the time. Teachers acknowledged progress and achievement and gave encouragement and praise. Where lessons were less than good, often they were too teacher led with insufficient pupil participation or they lacked pace and suitable learning activities. Sometimes teacher expectations led to insufficient challenge, especially to the more able pupils. Although the inspectors did see some evidence of assessment for learning during the inspection, for example in a Year 7 lesson on the liturgical year and also in a Year 9 lesson on St Thomas More, this is not yet fully embedded across the department. ICT, as a teaching aid, was used well in the lessons seen, as for example in a Year 9 lesson on sainthood and with a Year 9 AEN group. ICT could be developed further as a learning aid. Written work is regularly marked with the teachers making encouraging comments and, sometimes, comments showing the pupils what they needed to do to improve their work. There is a robust assessment, recording and reporting system whereby pupils are assessed every ten weeks as part of the whole-school assessment cycle and reports sent to parents, with the data also used to inform teaching and learning. Differentiation is mainly by resources, as in the Year 9 lesson on St Thomas More, or by outcome. However this is an area that can be developed further by planning activities to challenge all pupils, especially the more able. Learning assistants are, generally, made aware of the learning objectives prior to the lesson which helps them more effectively support the pupils. Provision for the AEN pupils is outstanding. All pupils respond well to religious education and the subject makes a very positive contribution to their spiritual and moral growth.

The religious education curriculum

Grade 2

The quality of the religious education curriculum is good. For Year 7 and Year 8 it is “home grown” using as a base the national programmes ‘The Way, The Truth and The Life’ and ‘ICONS’. It is based on the Curriculum Directory and meets the requirements of the Diocese. However the inspectors have reservations whether the requirements of the Curriculum Directory can be fully met in just two years. Years 9 and 10 follow the Edexcel GCSE syllabus studying Roman Catholic Christianity (Unit 2) and moral and social issues from a Christian and Islamic perspective (Unit 8). At both key stages the time allocation is 10% which meets the requirements of the Bishops’ Conference. As and A level students study OCR Philosophy and Ethics while all sixth form students complete the NOCN programme Faith and Religion, which is very relevant to post 16 students, to levels 1 and 2. Educational visits to places of religious interest and significance, such as Canterbury, Aylesford and Minster Abbey enhance the pupils’ religious experience. The religious education curriculum makes a very significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils but there is an uneven distribution of religious education lessons across the two weeks for some key stage 3 classes.

Leadership and management

Grade 2

Leadership and management of religious education are good. The curriculum manager has a good vision for the subject and its place within the school and in this she is very well supported by senior leaders. The core team of RE staff are experienced and well qualified teachers who work well as a team. The quality of the department’s self-evaluation is good where there is an acknowledgment of strengths and an awareness of the areas in need of development. RE staff are well led and supported. However, the relatively large number of non-specialists teaching the subject makes co-ordinating and supporting more difficult and the school should endeavour to appoint a specialist as soon as resources allow. Monitoring of teaching and learning is regular and issues identified are addressed. There is a robust system for assessing, recording and reporting pupils’ progress as part of the whole-school assessment programme. Communication and co-operation with learning assistants is generally good; they are informed about the learning objectives before the lesson, thus enabling them to fully support the individual pupil. Examination results are thoroughly analysed by teaching group and gender. There is a good pool of resources, including ICT, assessment for learning materials and artefacts for teaching world faiths. The accommodation, consisting of four teaching rooms, is good. The rooms are spacious and equipped with ICT facilities but some would benefit from more displays of pupils’ work. The budget for religious education is adequate and is comparable with other core subjects.

Appendix 1

Parental questionnaire					
School: St Anselm's, Canterbury			Number of responses: 64		
WHAT THE SCHOOL OFFERS					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The school offers a distinctly Catholic education	52%	48%			
The staff care effectively for the children	56%	41%	3%		
Parents are kept informed about RE & worship	30%	61%	6%	3%	
Parents are welcomed to events in the school's 'Catholic life'	56%	41%	3%	2%	
There are good opportunities for children to serve others	41%	50%	6%		
There are good links between school and local parishes	31%	44%	20%		
HOW THE SCHOOL HELPS CHILDREN TO PROGRESS					
The children get a clear sense of right & wrong	56%	38%	3%		
The children build up good personal relationships	58%	36%	5%		
The children show responsible attitudes towards society	50%	45%	3%		
The children develop well in their spiritual life	47%	47%	5%		
The children make good progress in RE	42%	50%	5%		