

# St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101813
<b>Local Authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	355074
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Meena Wood HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	704
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Wheeler
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Warrington Road Croydon Surrey CR0 4BH
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<b>Email address</b>	office@st-andrews.croydon.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 38 lessons, observed 25 teachers, and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, leaders and managers, teaching staff and students. They carried out a number of short focused visits to classrooms and joint observations of lessons with the school's senior managers, and shadowed identified students for longer periods in lessons. They scrutinised the school development plan and departmental reviews, a range of school policies, local authority reviews, governing body minutes, internal teaching and learning observations, students' work, 150 questionnaires from parents and carers, and those from students and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether teaching and assessment practice are sufficiently tailored to the needs of all ability groups, especially higher attaining students, different minority ethnic groups and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- The behaviour of students in lessons and around the school.
- The capacity of senior and middle leaders to ensure evenness in the quality of teaching and assessment practice across all subjects and key stages. The effectiveness of communication with parents and students that takes account of their views.
- The effectiveness of communication with parents and students that takes account of their views.

## Information about the school

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School is an average-sized secondary school. It has specialist status in music and English. The proportion of students that have special educational needs and/or disabilities, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional or social difficulties is in line with national averages. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is low. A low number of students are gifted and talented. About half of the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. These are mainly Black African and Black Caribbean and a smaller number are from Eastern Europe, with Hungarian and Polish as their heritage languages. A moderate number of students are known to be eligible for free school meals.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School is a good school and has a good capacity to improve, as demonstrated by its determined leadership and very effective self-evaluation, which is improving outcomes for its students. Following the last inspection, despite significant changes in staffing and challenging financial constraints, the school has successfully maintained a strong learning ethos within its student community. This has resulted in good behaviour and outstanding attendance. The improved tracking of students' progress, with structured subject support, has resulted in a significant increase in predicted outcomes for all minority ethnic groups of Year 11 students in 2011. Taking into account the results of those who have already been successful in GCSE examinations ahead of schedule, these students are predicted to reach above average standards in gaining five or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics, despite arriving in Year 7 with attainment that was broadly average. The school is effectively addressing other key priorities arising from the last inspection, with the result that senior and subject leaders have a better understanding of the features of good teaching. However, their awareness of the use of assessment to support learning for individual students is more variable and less developed across the curriculum. There are great strengths in assessment across the majority of subjects, but also inconsistency in teachers' checking of students' learning and the marking of their work. Therefore, teachers and teaching assistants are not sufficiently well informed on how to improve their practice in these critical areas.

All teachers have accurate information on the students' attainment and ability profiles. In the majority of lessons where teachers use this information in planning their teaching, learning tasks and assessment activities are well structured and in line with students' abilities. The majority of students have positive attitudes to learning, and given the right opportunities, they develop independent learning skills, demonstrate detailed knowledge and the progress they make is good. Elsewhere, however, teachers take insufficient account of the needs of students of higher ability and those at risk of underachieving. In the main, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support in developing their skills and subject knowledge. In some cases, teaching assistants are not deployed sufficiently well in lessons to support students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Consequently, these students make satisfactory progress in their learning.

The curriculum provides students with appropriate academic and vocational courses. This, along with a wide spread and take-up of extra-curricular activities, has resulted in the majority of students becoming well-rounded individuals. In particular, the specialist curriculum for music has benefitted many students and added a highly creative dimension to their learning. Guidance and advice given to students in relation to curriculum choices

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are effective and the vast majority leave school at 16 and enter further education, training or employment, equipped with the sound skills they need.

Senior and middle managers have successfully built on the strong religious ethos of the school and students' spiritual, cultural, moral and social development is outstanding. Students are respectful and polite and many display excellent leadership qualities. This, in turn, has had a positive impact in fostering a cohesive learning community.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Strengthen the quality of assessment to support learning across all stages by December 2011, through:
  - greater checking of learning, deploying sharper questioning and other assessment techniques, including more rigorous marking of students' work
  - ensuring that learning activities are consistently well suited to students of all abilities, especially those who are higher attaining and those at risk of underachievement.
- Improve the quality of support and training for teachers and teaching assistants by October 2011, through:
  - more rigorous scrutiny by senior and middle managers of the learning and progress of individual students during lessons
  - identification of precise actions relating to assessment techniques and lesson planning to guide teachers and teaching assistants and address these areas effectively.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

The school responded effectively to the dip in attainment in the last year and to the variations in attainment across subjects, in particularly in relation to students' underachievement in English. In the last year, managers raised standards significantly for the majority of students in Year 11 through individualised tracking of students' progress against their targets and the provision of targeted out-of-class additional support and revision sessions. Owing to the strength of these initiatives for Year 11 students, those in Years 7 to 10 now benefit from a closer focus on their attainment and skills. The standards of oral responses observed by inspectors in lessons confirmed good levels of understanding and knowledge. However, there is greater variation in students' literacy and presentation skills in their written work. This variation is more evident in English. In a number of lessons across the curriculum, and especially in history and drama, students were highly responsive to well-structured paired or group tasks, actively contributed to discussions and visibly enjoyed their work. This is the result of clear assessment procedures.

Students report that the school is a safe environment. Although aware of healthy eating and healthy lifestyles, including sporting activities, a number of students observed and interviewed by inspectors are not actively adopting these. Through daily assemblies and form tutor sessions, students understand the importance of supporting one another; consequently, the majority of students have a good sense of how to behave and what is morally acceptable. Their contribution to school life and to the local community is

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outstanding, including helping various charities such as support for a church community in Oxfordshire and sustaining international links with schools in Paris and Kenya. Students mix very well socially across cultural groups. This is seen through the imaginative displays of their artwork around the school and in their enthusiastic involvement in musical activities. Students are involved in shaping school activities through, for instance, mentoring of younger students. Student leaders proudly champion good behaviour and attendance. Although attendance to school is high, punctuality of students to lessons during the day is variable, with some displaying a lack of urgency in reaching lessons on time. Nevertheless, the majority of students show the responsible attitudes and aptitudes they need for further education and the world of work.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

In the best lessons observed by inspectors, teachers planned activities and tasks in line with students' previous attainment and abilities, encouraging them to work purposefully through peer-assessment and frequent checks of their learning, and these led to good outcomes. Relationships between teachers and students are strong and help to build a mutually trusting learning environment. In a good Year 10 history lesson, students using assessment criteria developed sound analytical skills and higher-order thinking skills through having to justify why an essay was graded in a particular way. A well-structured Year 7 science lesson on a 'fire triangle' used imaginative 'You tube' clips to demonstrate

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the real dangers of home fires. This resulted in high levels of engagement and well-reasoned contributions from students on how to stay safe.

However, across the curriculum, there is inconsistency in informing individual students of precisely what they need to do to improve. Helpful marking, teachers' feedback in lessons and targeted questioning that enables all students to contribute to their learning are not in evidence across all subjects. In a number of lessons, but especially in English, insufficient attention is paid to the needs of the more-able students and those in danger of underachieving. Although teaching assistants work productively with individual students, their skills and expertise are not used consistently in the lesson planning process.

The tracking of students' progress directly supports improvements in attainment and achievement through timely interventions. Strong multi-agency support is effective in engaging vulnerable students with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and those students with challenging behaviour. There has been a marked reduction in the exclusion of students overall. However, the school is aware through its own monitoring that the detention and exclusion of students with behavioural, emotional and social learning difficulties is disproportionately high and is reviewing this as a priority, relating this to its equalities policy.

The curriculum is responsive to the majority of students' needs through a range of academic and vocational qualifications that cater for students of all abilities. All students follow a GCSE examination course in religious education with highly positive outcomes. Vocational courses in the neighbouring college for students in Year 11 result in good outcomes. However, these will no longer be continued from Year 9 because of the school's financial constraints. Students receive effective advice and guidance on their curriculum choices.

The music specialism has especially benefitted students. During 2009/10, approximately one third of the school population was involved in at least one musical activity, with an increase in boys' participation through 'Man Choir' and 'Repercussions'. The school is especially proud of its regular outreach of music into the community through a group of students playing jazz at a local pizza restaurant.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and one of the deputy headteacher's good leadership have successfully transformed the school's learning and behaviour culture. Managers are committed to driving up students' achievements. They work well as a team and the sharing of good

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practice across departments is beginning to be effective. The governing body is proactive and provides significant insight, support and challenge to school staff through probing questions of senior and middle leaders and through individual governors' links with departments.

The school's development plan and self-evaluation contain an effective account of the school's strengths, and the areas where it needs to improve. The school's self-evaluation process includes input from middle leaders. Although there is a strong focus on raising achievement and standards, departmental reviews do not as yet fully reflect this analytical whole-school approach, as there is some inconsistency across a few subject areas. While there have been improvements in the management of teaching, with considerable input from external advisers, there is insufficient scrutiny by senior and middle managers of assessment practice and students' work and whether teaching meets the needs of all groups of students. For instance, managers do not evaluate the impact of independent learning/homework sessions on students' progress, and monitoring of students' outcomes by group is not yet implemented or evaluated for its impact on teaching and assessment practice.

Safeguarding procedures are robust across all aspects of the provision. In line with its equalities policy, senior managers monitor students' progress and outcomes at individual level and ensure that all students remain safe from bullying and harassment. Furthermore, the school has successfully developed good communication with its parents and carers through a website, questionnaires, termly parents' and carers' forums and a Black and minority ethnic parents' and carers' group. The school is aware that links with its parents and carers for whom English is an additional language are insufficiently developed. The school works productively with a range of partners and this has contributed to the highly cohesive community within the school. An excellent example of this is the school's commitment to good behaviour that includes reconciliation time at the end of the school day to address matters of conflict between staff and students. This has also conferred responsibility to students for their part in maintaining a cohesive community.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents and carers returned their questionnaires, the majority of whom are happy with the education received by their children. Inspectors found school/home communication to be mainly good, as the majority of parents and carers believed they were well informed about their children's progress. Inspectors found evidence that supported the concerns of a very small minority of parents and carers relating to the quality and cost of the catering facilities, the quality of marking of students' work and the impact of independent learning/homework sessions for their children. A few parents and carers voiced their concerns about the school's strategies in dealing effectively with unacceptable students' behaviour, but inspectors did not find any evidence of these issues during this inspection.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 74 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 704 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	49	32	43	5	7	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	35	47	37	50	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	24	32	44	59	5	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	26	43	58	10	14	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	12	16	54	73	6	8	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	24	44	59	8	11	4	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	22	45	61	11	15	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	26	46	62	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	34	40	54	8	11	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	30	40	54	9	12	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	27	39	53	8	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	21	28	45	61	6	8	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	46	33	45	5	7	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



11 June 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School, Croydon CRO 4BH**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and talking to you and were impressed by how courteous you were. We judged that St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided High School is a good school.

- Between Years 7 and 11, most of you make good progress in your learning and achieve well. If you are not making the progress you should, the school provides you with good additional subject support. We were impressed by your high levels of participation in the musical opportunities offered.
- The care, guidance and support you receive are good. The range of courses you follow helps you to be successful in your studies. The school places a strong emphasis on regular attendance and good levels of behaviour, and this helps you develop into responsible and caring citizens. The punctuality of some of you to lessons can be improved.
- You make a highly positive contribution to your school life and to the outside community and are well prepared for the next stages in your learning and life.

To help the school improve further, we have asked the school's leaders to ensure that:

- teachers consistently mark your work more effectively through giving you precise feedback on how to improve it and checking your learning in lessons more rigorously through sharper questioning, to help you do even better in your studies
- all staff look more closely at the progress you make and identify precise actions relating to assessment techniques and lesson planning that guide your teachers to improve your learning and progress.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood

Her Majesty's Inspector

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