

# St Andrew's CofE 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>	307820
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Butler 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 on roll</b>	
School	641
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Susan Wheeler
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2004
<b>School address</b>	Warrington Road Croydon CR0 4BH
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8686 8306
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8681 6320

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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. The following issues were inspected in detail: standards and achievement in Years 10 and 11, pupil behaviour, aspects of leadership and management and procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, curriculum and planning documents, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff and pupils, the parents' questionnaires and a recent Ofsted inspection of music and citizenship education. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St Andrew's is a smaller than average secondary school that draws its pupils from the London Borough of Croydon and adjoining authorities. The school is heavily oversubscribed and the number of pupils on roll has increased by about 12% since the last inspection. Almost half of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds but very few have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is in line with the national average. The school was designated as a specialist music (with English) school in September 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Andrew's provides a satisfactory standard of education and care for its pupils and is capable of making further improvement. The school has several strengths and no major area of its work is unsatisfactory. The great majority of pupils enjoy their education and feel safe and well supported. Pupils identify the friendly atmosphere in the school and strong sense of community as particular strengths. Mixed aged tutor groups do much to foster good relationships between pupils in different year groups and promote racial harmony.

Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 and in public examinations at the end of Year 11 are above national averages. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' prior attainment when they joined the school. Progress in the core subjects is more rapid in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11. GCSE results in 2007 were below expectations, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils. As a consequence, the school has put in place more rigorous procedures for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress and making earlier interventions when they appear to be under achieving. There are early indications that these measures are starting to raise the achievement of pupils in Year 11. Good support enables pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities to achieve well. The achievement of pupils from ethnic minority groups is generally in line with that of other pupils but there is some evidence of underachievement by pupils from African backgrounds. The school is close to meeting most of its targets for pupils at the end of Year 9 but is below those set for Year 11, including the specialist school targets.

The inspection confirms the school's own view that teaching is satisfactory but there is considerable variation between subjects and it is not consistently good enough to raise achievement beyond its current level. The tasks set in lessons do not always meet the needs of different groups of pupils and the assessment of learning in Years 10 and 11 is not always sufficiently accurate. Pupils feel that in some lessons teachers spend too much time talking and there are not enough practical activities to keep them engaged and motivated. There are also examples of excellent teaching that are worthy of sharing more widely in the school.

Pupils' personal development is good. This results from very effective care, guidance and support, strong curriculum provision and the general ethos of the school. Pupils develop a good awareness of other cultures and a strong sense of moral values. Pupils know how to lead healthy lives and many pupils benefit from the excellent range of lunchtime and after school sports clubs. Pupils are made aware of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse and other health risks through the citizenship curriculum and the programme of 'extended learning days' which often include inputs from external agencies with professional expertise in these areas. Pupils' enjoyment of education is reflected in their good attendance and the high proportion who stay on to further education and training. Incidents of bullying and other forms of harassment are rare and dealt with effectively when they do occur. Younger pupils speak very positively about the support they receive from older pupils through the 'buddy' system operated in the tutor groups. Many pupils have positions of responsibility as prefects or as representatives on the school council. Pupils also have a very substantial involvement in the wider community, for example through charity work. Pupils were involved in the recent selection process for new assistant headteachers but they feel that more account needs to be taken of their views to help improve the school. Year 11 pupils feel well supported in making choices about future education and employment through the programme of careers guidance but their enterprise skills and understanding of personal finance is less well developed.

Parents are generally very supportive of the work of the school but they would like more account taken of their views and feel that systems of communication are not always as effective as they might be. A substantial number of parents raised concerns about the behaviour of pupils in school. Behaviour observed during the inspection was generally good but pupils report that a few of their lessons are disrupted by a small minority of pupils. The school agrees this is the case. Permanent exclusions are rare and strategies recently introduced are helping to reduce the relatively high number of fixed term exclusions.

The curriculum has been improved through the addition of more vocational and applied subjects in Years 10 and 11 and a stronger provision for gifted and talented pupils, including the opportunity to take GCE advanced level courses at a college of further education. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Good progress has been made in developing the school's specialism in music by extending the opportunities available for pupils to study an instrument or take part in other musical activities. This has included the formation of a jazz band that performs regularly at a local restaurant and gives pupils the opportunity to be involved in the business side of music. Staffing difficulties in English, which have only recently been resolved, have resulted in very little progress being made on this strand of the school's specialism.

The current headteacher inherited a substantial budget deficit and has faced a number of staffing problems, including a lack of senior management capacity. These difficulties have resulted in slow progress being made in some areas identified for improvement in the last inspection. The budget is now in a much better position and the senior management team has been strengthened through the recent appointment of two assistant headteachers and a bursar. A professionally qualified, full-time special educational needs coordinator has also been appointed. These changes are starting to have an impact. More rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching has been introduced and better systems are in place for coping with and supporting pupils with severely challenging behaviour. The expectations of subject leaders have been clarified but their skills in improving the quality of teaching and raising achievement through lessons observations and using assessment information remain too variable.

The headteacher, senior managers and governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and know what needs to be done to bring about improvement. Governors provide good support and are developing a more effective role in challenging performance. Statutory requirements are in place but some policies still need to be ratified. The criteria for the Financial Management Standard in Schools have been met and the school makes efficient use of its resources.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise achievement in Years 10 and 11, particularly for potentially higher attaining pupils.
- Develop the skills of subject leaders in improving teaching and raising achievement in their subjects.
- Ensure behaviour is consistently good in all lessons.
- Ensure communication with parents is effective and take more account of their views and those of pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No



## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

7 December 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's CofE Voluntary Aided High School, Croydon, CR0 4BH

Thank you for your help and making me feel so welcome when I inspected your school recently. My overall finding is that your school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Your school has a number of strengths and no major part of its work is unsatisfactory. You make satisfactory progress in your work but I think achievement should be better, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The great majority of you enjoy your education, although some of you feel lessons could be more interesting and include more practical activities. You appreciate the friendly nature of the school and the good care, guidance and support you receive. I particularly liked the way that you mix and support each other across year groups. Your personal development is good. You know how to lead healthy and safe lives. Many of you have positions of responsibility in school and you do a great deal to support charities. You attend well. You are provided with a good curriculum. The school's specialism has enabled many of you to get involved in music. Many of you told me how you benefit from the excellent range of lunchtime and after school clubs. Your behaviour during my visit was good but some of you are concerned that a few of your lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. You feel that more account should be taken of your views. Your parents would also like more account taken of their views and feel that communication with the school does not always work as well as it should.

I have asked the school to make some improvements.

- Achievement needs to be better in Years 10 and 11 so that more of you get at least five GCSE passes at grades A\*-C.
- Some subject leaders need help to improve teaching in their subjects so that you achieve consistently well in all your work.
- Behaviour needs to be consistently good in all lessons so that your learning is not disrupted.
- The school needs to take more account of your views and those of your parents and make sure communication between the school and your parents works well.

I feel the headteacher, governors and staff are capable of making these improvements and I hope you will play your part in this. I wish you every success in the future.

David Butler

Her Majesty's Inspector