

St Anselm's College

Manor Hill, Prenton, Merseyside CH43 1UQ

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have overcome the shortcomings identified at the previous inspection. They provide a good quality of education.
- Senior leadership, including that of the deputy headteachers, is a strength of the school.
- Leaders know the school well. This helps them to plan and refine their actions, which improve the curriculum, teaching and pupils' progress.
- Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They challenge and support senior leaders very effectively, to improve the school.
- Leaders' appointment of a school improvement partner and use of local authority expertise have helped secure the improvements made since the previous inspection.
- Leaders promote positive values clearly and consistently. They set and support a culture where pupils feel valued and are aspirational.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is highly effective. The weaknesses in teaching seen at the previous inspection have been rectified. Teaching is now good.
- Teachers usually expect high standards of pupils' work, so pupils try hard. They take pride in their work. In a few cases, where teachers' expectations do not fully match the typically high standard set elsewhere, pupils' work is less well presented and precise.
- Teaching is especially strong in English, art and physical education. Pupils think deeply and apply learning creatively in these subjects. These strengths are less evident elsewhere, notably in technology.
- Pupils' outcomes are good. They make good progress during their time at the school and successfully move on to next steps.
- Leaders plan an effective curriculum for pupils. Pupils study courses which meet their needs.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively.
- The management of the additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils is good.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Pupils' conduct around school is positive and they are punctual to lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils understand and value differences.
- Sixth-form leaders have overcome the weaknesses seen at the previous inspection. Teaching is effective across the academic and vocational courses which students follow.
- Sixth-form students benefit from the wide-ranging enrichment activities provided. They are prepared well to succeed, academically and socially, in their next steps.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to strengthen teaching and pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teaching in technology is consistently good
 - pupils are consistently provided with opportunities to think deeply and apply their learning in creative and complex ways
 - all teachers apply the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and other leaders have taken the action required to overcome the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. The improvement is clear to see. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is now good in almost all subjects, helping pupils make good progress.
- Senior leadership has improved since the last inspection. It is now fully effective. The two deputy headteachers appointed to their roles since the previous inspection have important strengths. They lead by example and inspire staff. These leaders have secured an expectation of high teaching standards, which has underpinned the school's improvement. They and other senior leaders say that they are not satisfied with the improvements made to date, but are ambitious to strengthen pupils' education and opportunities further.
- The support of the local authority and a school improvement partner, who has been appointed since the previous inspection, has helped secure a good quality of education at the school. They provide a high quality of challenge, guidance and training for school leaders and teachers. This has strengthened the capacity of leaders to make and sustain the improvements required.
- Leaders' overgenerous view of the school's effectiveness, noted at the previous inspection, has been overcome. Current leaders know the school well. They are clear about what works well and where any areas require further attention.
- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is very strong. Leaders have secured effective teaching across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Leaders accurately understand the strengths of teaching across the school and any aspects which require further development.
- The training programme is well planned and implemented. It supports the newly and recently qualified staff effectively, and has also resulted in stronger teaching from established staff.
- Subject leadership is effective. These leaders have benefited from training provided since the previous inspection, enabling them to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in their subject. Leaders understand their responsibility for identifying and remedying any weaknesses in teaching or pupils' learning.
- Senior leaders' use of the pupil premium funding is fully effective. Leaders undertook an external review to improve this aspect of leadership after the previous inspection, and have acted upon the recommendations which were made. Leaders routinely monitor, review and refine the impact of the action which they put in place to secure a good quality of education for disadvantaged pupils.
- The use of the funding provided for pupils with SEND has improved since the previous inspection and is now effective. Leaders ensure that teachers know, support and challenge pupils with SEND well, including those who require an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

- The actions taken to support the small numbers of pupils with below-average attainment in literacy and numeracy to catch up by the end of Year 7 are effective.
- Leaders are well informed about the curriculum and have taken action since the previous inspection to better match it to pupils' needs and interests in both key stages. Leaders have broadened the option choices available to pupils at key stage 4 since the previous inspection, to more fully meet pupils' academic, artistic, sporting and technological interests. Far more pupils follow the English Baccalaureate suite of academic qualifications at key stage 4 than is the case nationally. This range of academic courses often meets these pupils' needs.
- Leaders plan and provide a wide range of high quality extra-curricular activities for pupils. These activities match pupils' wider academic, cultural, artistic and sporting interests. Pupils benefit from the high standard of leadership and instruction in these activities, such as in music and physical education. This leads to local, regional and national success in competition and performance. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND participate equally in the activities provided.
- The school library is well led. It is popular with pupils because staff take the time to listen and respond to pupils' interests, for example when reviewing the texts which they stock. Pupils from all year groups make good use of the library and its resources.
- The careers guidance programme is effective. Pupils say that they receive useful information, including independent advice, throughout key stages 3 and 4. In 2018, almost all pupils moved on to appropriate next steps in education, training or employment.

Governance of the school

- Governance has overcome the weaknesses noted at the previous inspection and is now a strength of the school. Governors have an accurate picture of the school's current strengths and priorities for further development. They have made a telling contribution to the improved quality of education provided.
- Governors take their responsibilities seriously and are equipped to fulfil them effectively. They bring a balance of relevant educational, financial, personnel and business skills. This enables governors to provide challenge and support to senior and subject leaders.
- Governors effectively promote the school's key values. These are based in the school's Christian ethos. Governors check these values are understood and upheld by leaders and staff at the school. Governors' determination that disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND benefit from a good education has helped to improve these pupils' life chances since the previous inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders maintain effective safeguarding records. They have systematic procedures for checking the backgrounds of staff when they are appointed.
- Leaders are aware of the risk pupils face, including outside school. Staff are suitably

trained in identifying potential risks to pupils. This includes risks of gang-related crime and radicalisation.

- Staff recognise their responsibility to support an effective culture of safeguarding. They take the time to know pupils well, to provide effectively for their safety and well-being.
- School leaders' work with external agencies and parents and carers is effective. Leaders act swiftly, when required, to contact external agencies to secure pupils' safety and well-being.
- Pupils understand the risks which might affect them and how to keep safe, including when online and using mobile devices.
- Pupils know to whom they should report concerns and how to do this.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' actions since the previous inspection have improved the quality of teaching. Teaching is now effective, including in English and mathematics, which has resulted in pupils' good progress.
- Teachers use the assessment information available to plan sequences of lessons to match pupils' ability. This includes in Year 7, where teachers make effective use of pupils' key stage 2 test results. This means that pupils do not needlessly repeat work which they have covered and understood at primary school.
- Teaching is especially strong in those subjects where teachers capture pupils' interest, by providing them with challenging and thought-provoking activities. These include art, music, physical education and English. In these subjects, pupils are excited by the numerous opportunities to think and learn creatively. They have become confident to grapple with and adapt their learning, which deepens pupils' understanding and enables them to grasp complex ideas.
- Despite the overall effective quality of teaching, there are occasions when pupils are set tasks which do not inspire them to think as creatively and deeply as elsewhere. In these cases, pupils somewhat miss out on opportunities to be excited by and excel in their learning.
- Teaching in technology does not currently match the higher standard seen elsewhere. Too often pupils are not expected to work at the standard of which they are capable.
- Most teachers support pupils' positive attitudes to learning, leading to a high standard of work produced. Pupils usually complete the activities set with care, including homework. In a minority of cases, pupils' work lacks the same care and precision. In these cases, teachers have not been fully effective in insisting upon the higher standards seen elsewhere.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are now regularly provided with the opportunity to consider and act upon teachers' assessment and feedback of their work. Pupils make best use of this feedback where the time is provided in class or in homework to overcome misconceptions in spelling, punctuation and grammar, or to strengthen any weaknesses in their subject knowledge.

- Teachers and other staff take the time to develop pupils' literacy skills. Pupils read and learn from the challenging texts provided across a range of subjects, including English. Pupils enjoy reading the books they bring from home and borrow from the school library. Pupils speak confidently, and with accuracy and imagination, when provided with the time to think deeply about and respond to questions which teacher's ask.
- Pupils with SEND are taught well. Teachers take account of the information they receive to plan activities which support and challenge these pupils.
- Parents say they are provided with timely and useful information about how well their child is progressing and how they can support their further learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare. Inspectors checked records of bullying, which show that any incidents of bullying are followed up and resolved effectively. This includes racist and homophobic bullying, which leaders insist will not be tolerated. They work hard to ensure that pupils and staff value people's differences, other faiths and cultures.
- Pupils are confident and courteous. They have high expectations of their futures.
- Pupils respect their teachers and one another. In the few instances where pupils' good habits slip, staff support pupils effectively to restore their typically higher standards.
- Pupils say that staff are considerate of their emotional and physical well-being. The support services provided by leaders meet pupils' requirements.
- Leaders take their responsibility to secure pupils' understanding of their responsibilities and role in modern Britain seriously. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is embedded in the school's curriculum. They regularly explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects during assembly time and in lessons. Pupils work with and support charitable organisations locally and abroad, including at the school's link school in Sierra Leone.
- Leaders manage effectively the attendance, behaviour and safeguarding of pupils who attend alternative provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils typically behave well in lessons. They listen to teachers and one another. Pupils generally take pride in their work. However, where teachers' expectations are lower, pupils sometimes fail to produce their best work.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is good. They move around the school with care and consideration for others at breaktime, lunchtime and at the change of lessons. Pupils are punctual to lessons.
- Pupils treat the school environment with respect. Most pupils do not leave litter lying

around.

- Pupils' attendance is good, including that of disadvantaged pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make significantly better progress across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics, than at the time of the previous inspection. This improvement includes disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Pupils make strong progress in art, English, mathematics, music, physical education and science. Overall, pupils make good progress in both key stages.
- Evidence from pupils' work shows that the improvements in teaching since the previous inspection have secured pupils' effective progress overall and continue to gather momentum. In some subjects, for example modern foreign languages, religious education and technology, pupils' progress has not fully matched the higher standards seen elsewhere. Nonetheless, most pupils now achieve standards in these subjects in line with their capabilities.
- Pupils currently in Year 11 have similar prior attainment to that of last year's Year 11. A recent series of moderated, full mock examinations indicated that results matched or were better than for those who took GCSEs in the summer of 2018.
- The most able pupils make stronger progress than at the time of the previous inspection. Overall, their progress is good. These pupils make strongest progress in those subjects where they are given opportunities to think deeply about their learning and apply it creatively.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Currently, the work of disadvantaged pupils shows that their progress is good across subjects and year groups.
- Pupils with SEND make better progress from their varying starting points than in previous years. Leaders and teachers now support and challenge these pupils more effectively. The current work of pupils with SEND shows that they make good progress.
- Leaders check effectively on the quality of education for pupils who attend alternative provision. Leaders ensure that these pupils benefit from an appropriate curriculum which prepares them effectively for the next stage of their education.
- A high proportion of pupils move on to and stay in the courses of their choice after Year 11, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. Most pupils move on to A-level courses.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Sixth-form leaders have taken effective action to make the improvements required since the previous inspection. Students now receive a good standard of education across the academic and vocational courses they follow. Most students follow academic courses. Overall, they have attained the examination grades of which they are capable over recent years. The smaller proportion of students who follow vocational courses typically attain grades that match those of students with similar starting points

nationally.

- Sixth-form leadership is good. Leaders have secured consistently effective teaching across the academic and vocational courses they provide. Leaders assess, monitor and evaluate students' learning effectively, and spot any cases where students make slower progress than they should. Leaders act effectively in these cases, to improve teaching or overcome students' barriers to learning.
- Students' outcomes are good. Most current students follow A-level courses and make effective progress. Any students who made weaker progress than expected in their GCSE courses catch up with others in the sixth form. The smaller number of students who follow vocational subjects typically make progress in line with or better than others with similar starting points nationally. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress.
- Sixth-form leaders, including governors, accurately judge the quality of education provided by the sixth form as good. They are clear on those aspects which are especially strong, such as the students' wider curriculum and destinations. However, they are not complacent. They take effective action to support those few teachers and subjects whose outcomes do not match the higher standard seen elsewhere, such as geography, psychology and BTEC science.
- Currently, there are no students in the sixth form who need to resit GCSE examinations in English and/or mathematics. In those cases where pupils have required resits in these subjects since the previous inspection, they have made better progress than others nationally in improving their grades and in gaining the required GCSE.
- Students' personal development and work-experience curriculum is a strength of the sixth-form curriculum. Students enjoy and benefit from a series of activities. These include charity events and fundraising, support of diocesan link schools overseas and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- Leaders provide students very effectively with information and guidance regarding their next steps in education or training. Students typically complete the courses which they start and move on to suitable and ambitious next steps when they leave. Many students move on to university courses, including at Cambridge and Oxford Universities.
- Safeguarding is effective. Students are well prepared for adulthood. Students' behaviour and attendance are good. They are confident and capable in looking after their own welfare.

School details

Unique reference number	136780
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10087861

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

Type of school	Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	914
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Greaves
Headteacher	Simon Duggan
Telephone number	0151 652 1408
Website	www.st-anselms.com
Email address	headmaster@st-anselms.com
Date of previous inspection	29–30 November 2016

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic grammar school for boys. It is part of the Diocese of Shrewsbury.
- The school joined the Edmund Rice Academies Trust as a stand-alone academy in 2011. As such, the school is part of a global network of schools in 25 countries. This includes 12 schools in England.
- The school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2019.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The school uses alternative providers for a small number of pupils. These are Utopia Project, Wirral Hospitals' School and Wirral WRAP.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings took place with school leaders, teachers, governors and representatives of the local authority. Telephone conversations took place with the school improvement partner and a representative of the Edmund Rice Academies Trust.
- Discussions were held with pupils to gather their views on a variety of issues, including safeguarding, bullying, behaviour, teaching and the curriculum.
- Inspectors examined a range of the school's documentation, such as the self-evaluation and improvement plan, assessment information, the pupil premium plan, attendance, bullying and behaviour records and safeguarding information.
- Inspectors took account of 44 staff survey responses, 101 responses to the pupils' survey, 198 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 128 written responses from parents to Ofsted's free-text facility.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school and scrutinised pupils' work in a range of subjects and year groups. They were accompanied by school leaders on some of these observations.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Bell	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Arrowsmith	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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