

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104103
Local Authority	Solihull
Inspection number	355521
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Anne Pitt HMI

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Moseley
Headteacher	Eileen Carey
Date of previous school inspection	17 July 2008
School address	Fordbridge Road Kingshurst, Birmingham B37 6LW
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Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	28–29 September 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group 3–11

Inspection dates 28–29 September 2010

Inspection number 355521

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed eight teachers. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documents, pupils' work, and questionnaires from pupils, staff and 45 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How high are the standards in English and mathematics and the progress made by different groups of pupils?
- What is the quality of teaching across the school especially at Key Stage1?
- How well are pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities supported?

Information about the school

The school is average in size. Most pupils, but not all, are from White British backgrounds. The proportion identified by the school as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free schools meals is high.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a school that provides good personal care and support to its pupils. It is one of the reasons why parents and carers choose the school. Parents and carers spoken to during the inspection sung its praises because of its family atmosphere, the approachability of staff and its Christian ethos.

Current academic performance across the school is satisfactory and improving.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. The practical, hands on approach and focused teaching means that children learn quickly so that by the time they move into Year 1 they have achieved the goals expected of them. Pupils in the rest of the school make steady progress and when they leave in Year 6 they reach average standards. Since the last inspection the school has gone through a difficult period relating to staff changes which caused standards to slip to below average in Key Stage 1. It has taken effective and decisive action to address this weakness so that the latest test results for seven-year olds show that standards have risen considerably in writing.

Competent and encouraging teaching underpins the school's warm and caring atmosphere. The lessons seen were mainly satisfactory with some that were good and outstanding. The staff have high expectations that pupils will behave well, and they do. Typically lessons are well-planned and structured. Lessons proceed at a reasonable pace but occasionally they are impeded by weaknesses in ensuring tasks fully interest the boys.

The school's safe and supportive environment enables pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to build self-esteem and make similar progress to the other pupils in the school. Key factors in this success are the school's dedication and success in working in close partnership with parents, carers and outside agencies, and providing sensitive and targeted support when it is needed.

Relationships throughout the school are good with real respect shown for one another. Teachers talk enthusiastically about individual pupils and know them well. Pupils' progress is noted and checked regularly using good assessment and tracking systems. However this information is not yet used sufficiently well to set the pupils realistic and challenging targets.

The capable and experienced leadership of the headteacher enables the school to run smoothly. School self-evaluation is well-embedded into the school culture. There is a team approach and senior staff and members of the governing body are involved. The school improvement plan identifies the right areas for development but the success criteria are not always measurable. The staff are fully committed to changes for the better as seen in the introduction of effective initiatives to improve standards at Key Stage 1 and raise attendance. This demonstrates the school's good capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and improve the rate of pupils' progress, by:
 - improving the quality of teaching
 - continuing with the initiatives to improve standards in writing
 - sharing the already good and outstanding practice throughout the school
 - ensuring that work is well matched to the interest of pupils, especially boys
 - improving the pace of lessons
 - ensuring pupils are set and know their targets
 - making better use of the school's assessment data to set precise measurable success criteria for the school, the teachers and its pupils.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

An assembly during the inspection revealed many aspects of the pupils' excellent spiritual and good moral, social and cultural development. Pupils demonstrated a very well developed sense of occasion as they reflected on the Pope's visit and walked over a piece of the red carpet that he had walked on. Their tuneful singing reflected their self-confidence and ability to work in collaboration with others.

The quality of pupils' learning and performance seen in lessons was satisfactory. Pupils generally work at a steady pace. The girls engage well and show good interest. Boys demonstrate high motivation when engaged in short, quick-changing tasks but this is not always the case when they are required to sit for too long or where the tasks do not interest them.

Children's skills on entry to the Nursery class are below expected levels in language and physical development. Standards in the end-of-key-stage tests for pupils in Year 6, over the last three years, have been average but in Year 2 they have fallen to below average. Due to the sustained efforts of the staff, the 2010 results show that there is now a rising trend in Key Stage 1 so that standards in reading and writing have improved.

Nevertheless, the boys' attainment lags behind that of girls. The school's tracking data and the national progress measures show that, in Key Stage 2 the majority of the pupils make the expected progress in mathematics and English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers.

Pupils say they feel safe and are taught well about risks especially relating to internet safety. Their behaviour is good and they are polite. Pupils state that bullying is rare and that it is dealt with quickly. The pupils make a positive contribution to the school and local community. The school council has ensured that playtime activities are more pleasurable and that school lunches are healthier. During the inspection pupils planted bulbs in the local park and they have contributed to concerts at the Symphony Hall and fund raising activities for national and local charities. Their knowledge of the national and international context in which they live is growing. They talk maturely about international events such

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as the war in Afghanistan and the floods in Haiti. Pupils realise the importance of the need to stay fit and healthy. They participate well in physical activities. After-school clubs are much enjoyed, particularly the skittles and netball opportunities. Attendance figures have improved and are average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

¹ 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?

The lessons seen were mainly satisfactory but a few of them were good and outstanding. Typically, teaching is well planned and structured with good use of electronic whiteboards to provide visual examples that stimulate interest and help pupils learn. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and behaviour management is positive and encouraging. Teachers have good subject knowledge and classroom assistants support them effectively.

The very best teaching involves practical activities that engage boys and girls effectively and skilful questioning to reinforce teaching points and to extend pupils' learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson about area and perimeter, pupils made good progress because the teacher had planned a meaningful practical activity in the hall that focused pupils' attention on walking around the edge of shapes, and encouraged them to question each others' ideas. This good practice is not always evident when pupils have to sit for too long and there is too much reliance on adult direction so that boys in particular become restless and inattentive.

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There are good assessment systems in place to check the pupils' attainment and the progress they make. However this assessment information is not yet used consistently to set precise targets for the pupils. As a result, pupils are not always sure how they can improve.

The school offers a broad and worthwhile curriculum, enhanced by an impressive range of extra-curricular activities. There are high levels of participation in the many after school events and parents and carers appreciate the quality and variety of clubs on offer. The school has achieved some notable successes in sport and has been awarded Silver Arts Mark in recognition of its good provision. A number of trips and visitors to the school help to enrich learning. The school began the new term with a memorable African drumming workshop for all classes which improved pupils' cultural understanding.

The afternoon, breakfast and before- and after-school clubs are calm and safe environments. Adults plan and supervise the activities well. The pupils enjoy the wide range of activities on offer such as reading, brain teasers and football. Pupils develop cooperative social skills well.

Pastoral care is good. The school provides a caring learning environment. The school's targeted support for pupils who find learning difficult is effective. Staff and pupils get on well together and there is a positive ethos, underpinned by clear Christian values.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Parent, carer and staff questionnaire responses show good support for the school's leadership. There is a determination to improve and self-evaluation procedures are secure. School leaders know that there are variations in pupil outcomes between the key stages and they are taking robust action to remedy this. There are good systems for regularly checking pupils' work and teachers' planning, and identifying weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher tracks individual pupils' progress well and arranges support for pupils who are falling behind. The school is aware of the need to make more effective use of the assessment data it holds to set targets to measure whether initiatives have a positive impact.

The governing body provides good challenge and support for the school's leadership. It is involved in the school's development planning and is well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

The school satisfactorily promotes equality and tackles discrimination. All pupils are treated fairly and with respect. Safeguarding procedures are sound and, at the time of the

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inspection, all the regulations and standards were met. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. Since the last inspection, opportunities for greater access to cultural opportunities have been strengthened. Pupils have a good understanding of their local context and the next step is to broaden the school's national and international links.

Partnerships with parents and carers are productive. The school consults with them regularly through contact on the playground, through questionnaires and inviting them in at lunchtime to eat with the children. Other partnerships, particularly with local schools, ensure that pupils transfer smoothly between different phases of education.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good induction procedures and links with parents and carers ensure that children settle quickly in the Nursery and Reception classes. Purposeful practical activities engage and interest the children enabling them to make good progress. There is a good balance between the activities children get on with unaided and those where adults teach specific skills. Personal, social and emotional development is taught particularly well and children learn to behave and cooperate together ably. The indoor and outdoor environment caters well for children's development in all areas of learning. The staff are skilled at making on-going observations of children in order to track their progress. Activities seen during the inspection indicate that there is an increasing focus on writing and teaching sounds but that there are missed opportunities to develop these skills fully with boys.

Leadership and management have successfully developed rigorous methods of assessing and tracking children's progress.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Responses to the questionnaire show that there is a high level of satisfaction with the school, especially the teaching. Many parents and carers wrote comments about the good care and support children receive and the inspection findings match their view. All acknowledged that their children are happy at school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anthony's Catholic Primary 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 225 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	56	20	44	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	28	62	16	36	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	51	16	36	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	49	19	42	3	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	25	56	18	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	51	18	40	3	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	24	53	19	42	0	0	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)	22	49	17	38	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	58	18	40	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	49	20	44	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	47	20	44	3	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	64	15	33	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	69	13	29	1	2	0	0

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B37 6LW

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and being so friendly and helpful. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up some of their time to talk to me.

These are the good things about your school:

- you enjoy school
- you get on well with each other and your behaviour is good
- adults take good care of you so that you feel happy and safe in school
- there are a good range of activities that you can attend before and after school
- the headteacher, staff and the governing body are keen to help your school get even better.

What I have asked your school to do now:

- make sure that lessons are even more interesting so that you learn as much as you can
- look at your assessment results in more detail to see if anything needs to change to help you do even better.

You are fortunate that you go to a caring school where everyone gets on so well. I hope that you will do your best to make it even better.

Yours sincerely

Anne Pitt

Her Majesty's Inspector

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