

# St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Fordbridge Road, Kingshurst, Birmingham, B37 6LW

**Inspection dates** 12–13 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher lead and manage the school well. Together with other senior leaders and governors, they have greatly improved achievement and teaching.
- The quality of governance is good. Governors challenge senior leaders and play an active part in helping the school to provide a good quality of education.
- Teaching is good, with some that is outstanding, across all age groups and subjects.
- Pupils' achievement is consistently good throughout the school.
- Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 make rapid progress through teaching of the highest quality.
- The quality of marking is particularly good in mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years and standards are rising because well-planned activities help children to develop a love of learning right from the start.
- The outdoor learning area in the early years is of high quality and makes a strong contribution to children's good learning.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. By the time they leave, most pupils have developed very mature attitudes to learning.
- Pupils feel very safe and know they are part of a caring community. They are proud of their school.
- The school's exciting curriculum captures pupils' interest and makes them eager to learn. It promotes British values, such as tolerance towards others, particularly well. It prepares pupils effectively for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils are helped to develop a mature approach towards spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teaching is outstanding because teachers sometimes do not demand enough of their most-able pupils.
- The quality of pupils' presentation of work varies too much and shows some careless mistakes.
- Too few pupils reach higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 because, until recently, they lacked the skills they needed to reach these levels.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons, seven of which were shared with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff, including senior and subject leaders. There was a telephone discussion with the school's local authority adviser.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, looked at their past and present work and talked to them about their learning.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also looked at the school's own parental questionnaires and spoke informally to parents and carers.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school development plan, policies, information about progress and attainment and how the school sets targets for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at child protection and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Kath Campbell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Ian Beardmore

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis in the morning and the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is almost twice the national average.
- In recent times, the school has been through a period of considerable changes of staffing, including at senior leadership level, and in governance.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing, and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

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

- Increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels in Key Stage 1 by making sure that:
  - all teachers have the highest expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve
  - pupils in Key Stage 1 build up secure basic literacy and numeracy skills so that they are not held back from gaining the more advanced skills they need to reach higher levels.
- Strengthen teaching by making sure that:
  - teachers throughout the school provide even greater challenge for the most-able pupils so that these pupils do not waste time doing work that is too easy for them
  - teachers insist that pupils' written work is consistently well presented, with no basic spelling mistakes.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have successfully steered the school through a period of considerable staffing changes. They have been particularly successful in raising pupils' and adults' performance in a short period of time and in establishing a school culture in which pupils behave well and teaching is good. Teachers are now far more accountable for the standards pupils achieve.
- The relatively new senior leadership team works very well together. Senior leaders have taken decisive action and effectively eliminated weak teaching. They provide good role models for others to follow. Underperformance is robustly tackled and challenging targets for improvement are set. Consequently, teaching is at least good.
- Subject leaders, many of whom are new to their areas of responsibility, have a clear view of whether pupils are achieving well enough. Good interim arrangements for the coordination of special educational needs have enabled this aspect of the school to move forward successfully during staffing changes. This improvement is reflected in the good progress these pupils make from their different starting points. The leadership of the early years is equally strong, as shown by the children's good achievement.
- The school very successfully ensures that everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve well. There is no discrimination and relationships are strong. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds benefit greatly from, for example, the range of cultural and sporting activities on offer.
- The school has prepared well for the changes to the National Curriculum. Pupils experience a wealth of rich and rewarding experiences, including visits by Olympic athletes and their own visits to Sikh temples. There are many good examples of pupils extending their literacy and numeracy skills in, for example, their history work on the Great Fire of London. The curriculum contributes considerably to pupils' good achievement.
- The school is in the process of developing new ways of checking pupils' progress in different subjects. However, arrangements are not yet fully developed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is promoted well. Special focus weeks, such as those linked to tolerance and anti-bullying, add to pupils' understanding. Assemblies play an important part in reinforcing the school's values and in celebrating pupils' successes. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and a strong awareness of British values. Consequently, they are well prepared for life in modern British society.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils by, for example, providing good quality one-to-one and small-group support. The impact of this work can be seen in the narrowing of the gaps in attainment between these pupils and others, both in school and nationally.
- Primary sports funding is put to good use. Parents and pupils appreciate the increase in the range of sporting clubs. Specialist coaches have improved teachers' expertise. Pupils have far more opportunities to participate in competitive sports. This increase in activities contributes well to pupils' healthier lifestyles.
- Links between home and school are on-going areas for development. Although further work remains to be done to increase involvement, parents are far more involved in their children's learning than in the past. Parents who spoke to inspectors are positive about the school. They say they are well informed about progress and know what the school expects from their children in terms of work and behaviour. Staff benefit from sharing expertise with other schools, most recently in developing a new approach towards assessing pupils' progress.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Staff are particularly well informed and keep fully up to date with new legislation. Governors are very clear about their responsibilities for safeguarding and keep a very rigorous check on procedures to ensure that the school is a safe place for its pupils.

- The local authority knows the school very well. The school adviser provides a good level of support and challenge that helps the school to move forward at a brisk pace.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- The quality of governance has improved since the previous inspection. The recently appointed Chair of the Governing Body is experienced, knowledgeable and has a secure grasp of what is working well and what needs improvement. At his request, an external review of governance was undertaken.
- As a result of the review, the governing body has been completely restructured and is now far more effective. Governors have clearly defined roles and a robust action plan. Through a helpful training programme, they have developed the confidence to support and challenge leaders. Governors have a high level of expertise and a secure knowledge of data on pupils' progress and attainment. They set clear performance targets for teachers to improve their work and know what the quality of teaching and learning is. They are not afraid to support the headteacher in making sure that only teaching that enables pupils to make good progress is rewarded and underperformance is tackled robustly.
- Governors know how well the pupil premium and primary sports funding are used. For example, they know that working alongside specialist coaches has increased teachers' expertise in physical education.
- The governing body makes sure that all statutory requirements are met and that safeguarding arrangements are secure.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is managed consistently well by all adults. Pupils' very positive attitudes make a strong contribution towards their good personal development. They enjoy occasions such as celebration assemblies where they can share the success of others.
- Very occasionally, in lessons where activities are not demanding enough, some of the most-able pupils, particularly younger boys, temporarily lose enthusiasm for their work.
- Children in the early years gain good social skills because staff focus very successfully on developing these skills right from the start.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn and they work and play together well. They particularly enjoy working with partners or in small groups.
- The school offers opportunities for pupils to act democratically through, for example, its sports council. This helps to promote pupils' sense of British values.
- Attendance is currently average and the number of pupils the school excludes is reducing. A range of rigorous procedures for monitoring attendance, combined with the transfer of a few pupils to specialist units, has seen a rise in attendance and a reduction in exclusions this year. The support worker for children and families is also helping to reduce the number of families taking holidays in term time.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents are totally confident that the school keeps their children safe. The school site is very secure. Staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment.
- School records show that incidents of racism or bullying are extremely rare. Pupils are well informed about different kinds of bullying and insist that bullying is not a concern in the school. Pupils know who to go to if they have concerns and are confident that they will be taken seriously. They know how to stay safe, including when using the internet.
- The care given to individual pupils and families when they need support is firmly rooted in the school's values. Pupils know they are part of a community where they are valued as individuals. Those in most

need receive good-quality care and support that help them to participate fully in school life. These pupils grow in confidence because they feel safe and secure at school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Better teaching is at the heart of this school's rapid improvement. The quality of teaching is now consistently good in all year groups and all subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they provide interesting opportunities that develop pupils' literacy, reading and mathematical skills well from a low base for some pupils.
- Reading is promoted strongly and the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has been strengthened. The impact can be seen, for example, in the Year 1 phonics screening check, the results of which were at the nationally expected levels in 2014. Other initiatives to develop reading skills have not been applied long enough to have a full impact on pupils' attainment, particularly in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils learn well because activities capture their interest. Work is usually demanding and the most-able pupils respond very positively when they are well challenged.
- In lessons where expectations are high, pupils produce their best. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils enthusiastically acted out part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Boys, in particular, expressed their love of Shakespeare. All pupils made excellent progress because staff skilfully guided them to the next level of challenge at every stage of the lesson. Pupils showed detailed knowledge of the play.
- Not all teaching presents a good level of challenge. Sometimes work is too easy or the most-able pupils waste time on work they already know how to do. This happens more often in Key Stage 1 and slows the progress of some pupils who are capable of reaching higher levels. Occasionally, the progress of some pupils in classes most disrupted by staffing changes slows because they are still catching up lost ground and lack the basic skills in literacy and numeracy that they need to make more rapid progress.
- Teachers question pupils very well to check what they know and understand so that they can sort out any misunderstandings. Pupils gain much from talking with other pupils about their learning and this has a positive impact on their progress.
- Throughout the early years, adults seize on every opportunity to develop children's early language skills. For example, they encourage children to use the correct vocabulary, particularly in their number work.
- The quality of marking has improved greatly since the previous inspection. It is now consistently good, particularly in mathematics. Pupils respond to teachers' comments because they know these will be followed up. Marking shows pupils clearly what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, a legacy of past underachievement means that not all pupils present their work well or spell simple words correctly. Some teachers do not always insist on accurate spellings or good presentation.
- Pupils who need extra guidance, especially disabled pupils and those who have special needs, are helped to make good progress through well-targeted support. Programmes are specifically designed to meet individual needs and this approach helps these pupils to make as much progress as others.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The achievement of pupils is good because senior leaders have focused successfully on accelerating pupils' progress. As a result, all groups of pupils currently make good progress in all subjects, albeit from a low base in classes where there has been past underachievement. The progress of some individual pupils in the current Year 6 is outstanding because of high-quality teaching.
- Children enter the Nursery with levels of skill that are below those typical for their age. Early language, literacy, numeracy and social skills are particularly weak. They make good progress throughout the early years but these weaknesses mean that not all children achieve a good level of development by the time

they move into Year 1.

- School data show that attainment in 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 was close to national standards. Current data show a rise in 2015 overall, though not enough pupils reach higher levels in this key stage. This is because some pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1, are still making up lost ground caused by previously weak teaching. Literacy and numeracy skills have not previously always been taught in a systematic way and this has held pupils back from reaching the levels of which they are capable.
- In 2014, overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was average, although pupils' performance in English grammar, punctuation and spelling was below average and fewer pupils reached higher levels in reading than in 2013. This resulted from past underachievement. Senior leaders set about remedying areas of weakness with a sense of urgency and with a high degree of success. For example, they improved the ways in which older pupils develop the more advanced skills they need to reach higher levels. They focused tenaciously and successfully on improving the grammar and spelling of current pupils.
- As a result of leaders' effective action to improve achievement in Key Stage 2, over half of the pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach higher levels in both reading and English grammar national tests. School data and pupils' current work show that, for the first time, overall attainment is set to be above average by the end of Year 6.
- Attainment in reading is rising because the time allocated to reading has increased and become a very important part of daily work. The introduction of high-quality reading books has also helped older boys and girls to develop a real enjoyment for reading. Pupils in Year 6 are well informed and talk with maturity about favourite books and authors they particularly like.
- Initiatives to encourage pupils, particularly boys, to become confident writers are proving effective, although some initiatives for younger pupils are new and have not yet had a full impact. Some of the work seen, particularly pupils' poems about the First World War, are of a high standard. Their maturity of writing is impressive.
- Mathematics has been a whole-school priority for development. The improved quality of marking has had a major, positive impact on pupils' achievement. However, some Key Stage 1 pupils still struggle with simple calculations because they lack basic skills. Similarly, in literacy, although pupils in Key Stage 1 now make good progress, some have not yet acquired the skills they need to write confidently without adult support.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in their learning. Well-targeted individual and small-group support effectively helps these pupils to make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils are achieving well. In 2014, test results show that disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were a term behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and reading and two terms behind in writing. When compared with other pupils nationally, they were two terms behind in mathematics and reading and one term behind in writing. Current data show that the gaps in attainment in all subjects are narrowing, not just in Year 6, but across the school.
- The most-able pupils currently achieve well overall, although not all teachers provide a high level of challenge to raise their achievement further. These pupils are getting more opportunities to extend their skills, such as through greater mathematical challenges. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 2, where the progress of the most able is a priority for improvement. Initiatives introduced in Key Stage 1 to increase the proportion of pupils reaching higher levels are starting to show positive results, but have not been applied long enough to have had a full impact.

### The early years provision

is good

- All groups of children, including disabled children and those with special educational needs, make good progress in all areas of learning.

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders manage resources well and ensure good teaching and achievement. Adults work together effectively as a team and every aspect of work is tightly monitored so that improvement can be made where necessary.
- Staff have high expectations of how the children should behave and learn. In return, children behave well and develop positive attitudes towards learning that carry through to the rest of the school.
- Children learn to share, wait their turn, explore and investigate within stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. The restructured outdoor space is of high quality and adds much to children's enjoyment of learning. Children from the Nursery and Reception classes particularly like the opportunities they have to share activities, to work and play together outdoors.
- Teaching is consistently good because learning is focused very much on the needs of individual children. Teachers and support staff are quick to identify and support any who may have special educational needs. The most-able are similarly identified so that all ability groups make equally rapid progress.
- Routines are well established and all safeguarding requirements are met. Consequently, children feel safe and secure. Adults present good role models and relationships are strong. Parents value the level of care shown to their children.
- Progress is checked very carefully and the records that staff keep of children's work, such as the books summarising the children's 'learning journeys', are of high quality. Records provide valuable information about each child's progress and how it can be sustained.



## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104103
<b>Local authority</b>	Solihull
<b>Inspection number</b>	453521

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	225
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marcus Brain
<b>Headteacher</b>	Cieran Flaherty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 7703168
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 7880911
<b>Email address</b>	office@st-anthonys.solihull.sch.uk

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