

St Antony's RC Primary School

Shadsworth Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 2HP

Inspection dates

28–29 September 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Although improving, the quality of teaching is too variable across a range of subjects and classes. Consequently, outcomes for pupils across year groups and in a wide range of subjects are not consistently good.
- Over time, too few pupils make the progress that is expected of them and not enough make rapid progress.
- Not all teachers assess work consistently or frequently enough to improve pupils' learning quickly, including for the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Around school the pupils are usually polite and well-mannered. However, during lessons too much low-level disruption has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
- Attendance is improving, although disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are still absent from school more than others nationally. The number of pupils who are persistently absent is higher than the national average.
- The role of middle leaders of the subjects other than English and mathematics is not developed well enough, especially with regard to monitoring, assessing and evaluating pupils' standards and progress.
- The school's website does not contain all the required information.

The school has the following strengths

- The new senior leadership team and governors are highly ambitious, with high expectations, and demonstrate capacity for further improvements. For example, the achievement of Year 6 pupils has improved since the previous inspection.
- Under the steer of the new leadership team, the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils in early years and in upper key stage 2 have improved.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils are very well cared for in a friendly environment
- Work in early years is good. The phase is well led and managed, with children making good progress relative to their low starting points.
- The curriculum is now more broad and balanced and is beginning to support pupils' progress.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of mathematics and writing by:
 - ensuring that groups of pupils in key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 are challenged appropriately in lessons, in order to improve progress
 - continuing to diminish the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and others nationally.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - enabling leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics to have a greater impact on improving teaching, learning and the effectiveness of assessment
 - ensuring that the website complies with national regulations and that regular checks are made to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Improve the overall attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.
- Improve the provision of physical education by:
 - using the physical education and sports grant to improve teachers' subject knowledge and delivery of physical education lessons
 - improving provision for sport-related enrichment activities, to enhance the curriculum and develop a wider range of sporting activities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The new headteacher and senior leadership team faced the significant challenge of dealing with a legacy of pupils' underachievement. Leaders, including governors, are determined that St Antony's pupils should have the best teaching and provision. In a relatively short period of time, they have made improvements, which are most notable by the end of Year 6, where outcomes for pupils in 2016 were good. There is also evidence of improvement in pupils' achievement in key stage 1. However, pupils' outcomes are not yet consistently good across all classes and in a wide range of subjects.
- The local authority, diocese and a separate core group of governors have brought about improvements in governance and in the effectiveness of middle and senior leaders. The focus has rightly been on pupils' performance in mathematics and English and there have been some positive improvements in these subjects.
- The majority of staff believe that the school has improved since the previous inspection. They feel that the school is well led, the pupils are safe and they say that they enjoy working in the school.
- Senior leaders are now keeping a closer eye on the quality of teaching. Professional development for teachers has been successful because subject knowledge has improved and subject leaders are now confident enough to deliver in-house training. Senior leaders check the quality of teaching by observing lessons, looking at pupils' work regularly and by tracking pupils' progress. This has had a positive impact. Teaching has started to improve. However, the checks on pupils' work are not sharp or diagnostic enough about the quality of the subject, the progress that the pupils make or the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Subject leaders do not have enough time to carry out this leadership role effectively.
- The school's priorities are clearly set out in the school development plan. Teachers' targets are linked to these priorities and consequently teachers know and understand the ambitious targets set for each year group.
- The pupil premium funding is used to support pupils academically and socially, and to break down barriers to learning. Overall, the use of the funding has been effective for some of the pupils but not for all because, even though progress is improving by Year 6, across other year groups progress is not so strong.
- Leaders of English and mathematics are passionate about their subjects and there have been improvements in teaching, moderation and outcomes in these areas. The leadership of other subjects is not as well developed because assessment and tracking are not embedded.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that the sports premium is used to good effect. The quality of the teaching and resources for sport and physical education are weak. Pupils are not offered many sports as extra-curricular activities.
- Aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well in the curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their learning and develop their knowledge and understanding of music and art with visits and visitors enriching the curriculum, for example 'Young Voices'.
- British values are promoted in pupils' religious education lessons and as part of their

assemblies, and in philosophy for children lessons. The 'prayers for life' and the 'good to be green' behaviour system are practical ways of living these values. The pupils enjoyed taking part in a vote during the European referendum, and they say they have learned about the fact that all people have 'human rights'. Some pupils of other faiths and from other countries said that they felt welcomed and included when they first arrived at the school.

- The website is bright and relatively easy to access and follow. However, there is insufficient detail relating to the curriculum and it does not contain all the required information on statutory policies. For example, curriculum plans are not dated, and the pupil premium report is not in line with current requirements and does not evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. The report on the use of the physical education and sport premium is inadequate.

Governance of the school

- Governors work well with the new headteacher and senior leadership team, holding them to account with a firm friendliness. They jointly share their ambitions for the school and know that progress has been made in reading, writing and mathematics since the previous inspection, as a result of the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment. However, they are less knowledgeable about the need to promote leadership of the foundation subjects with the same rigour as reading, writing and mathematics, and this is an area for improvement.
- The governors 'dig deep' when they are evaluating overall performance and reward teachers accordingly, if evidence is strong enough, through the performance management system.
- Finances are tightly managed and regularly reviewed. The impact of the pupil premium can be seen in the learning and the outcomes of pupils by Year 6, but the impact is less well known by governors in other year groups across the school. The impact of the primary PE and sport premium has not been evaluated and this is a weakness that the governors recognise.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record meets requirements and the system to let visitors into school is secure. Pupils are well supervised at breaktimes, both indoors and outdoors. However, attention to detail is needed to ensure that the safeguarding policy and related policies are up to date with the latest requirements and published on the school's website.
- Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and of the procedures to follow should they be concerned about a pupil's welfare and know whom to inform and how. All staff have completed training in the 'Prevent' duty and have signed to say they have read and understood the new updates from the 'Keeping children safe in education' document.
- The school site is secure and the identity of visitors is closely checked. The headteacher ensures that all staff are now aware of the importance of timeliness when following up incidents and that processes for raising concerns are carried out quickly and thoroughly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching over time is too variable. There are strengths in early years and upper key stage 2 but weaknesses elsewhere. In the weaker areas, lessons lack focus and some pupils do not stay on task, engaging instead in low-level chatter which is often not dealt with effectively. There are occasions when some pupils are inactive and waste learning time. This is often because their work is either too hard or too easy and lacking appropriate challenge. Some teachers have low expectations and use teaching strategies that hinder, rather than accelerate, learning. Teaching assistants' time for supporting pupils is not always used efficiently, so their work lacks impact. Assessment strategies are often underdeveloped.
- Some teachers set challenging work to which pupils respond enthusiastically. Some teaching assistants effectively develop pupils' language and questioning and generate ideas, which enables pupils to make progress. Where adults have high expectations, pupils respond positively and make strong progress.
- Warm and respectful relationships are shared among staff and most pupils. Overall, pupils work well collaboratively. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, high levels of concentration were evident as pupils worked together to generate vocabulary for writing a description for a setting. They went on to use this co-constructed vocabulary to produce effective descriptions.
- Teachers do not always use questioning effectively to assess pupils' learning and deepen their learning. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
- Overall, teaching assistants are usually well deployed. However, in some lessons their contribution to learning is not maximised and their time is not used in a purposeful way.
- Reading is promoted and taught well throughout the school. Pupils make good use of their phonics knowledge to sound out unfamiliar words. The majority of pupils read regularly at home as well as with adults in school. Where this is not the case, staff spend time reading with pupils on a daily basis. The new library is inspiring and used by most pupils.
- Although most teachers follow the school's marking policy, the quality of marking across the school is inconsistent. Achievements are celebrated and the next steps in pupils' learning identified. However, at times, these next steps are not precise enough to deepen and challenge pupils' learning. Pupils are given 'fix time' to correct their mistakes. However, these are not always followed up by teachers and checked for understanding.
- Homework is appropriate to the age and development of pupils. Most pupils enjoy homework and the challenges it brings.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Overall, pupils say that they enjoy school, have lots of friends and feel safe. They commented that teachers are nice, activities are fun and everyone is welcoming and

friendly. However, promotion of equality requires improvement because some pupils say that they are called names, like 'gay' and 'lesbian' if they are holding hands.

- The positive effects of the school's caring ethos can be seen in the pupils' enthusiasm to raise funds for charities, such as the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD).
- Clear procedures are in place to raise pupils' awareness of personal safety. For example, working with outside agencies, the school provides workshops on inappropriate adult behaviour, fire and water safety. Good levels of support are also offered to families who are facing times of difficulty or who are new to the country.
- The school has made a concerted effort to improve attendance. For example, first-response phone calls, personal visits, letters home, fixed penalty notices and greater involvement of the education welfare officer are beginning to have an impact. As a result, overall rates of attendance are rising. The rates of absence of persistent absentees have reduced by nearly half as a result of these strategies. However, the rate of absence among disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is still higher than it is for these pupils nationally.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Children's behaviour in Nursery and Reception is mostly good. Children work well collaboratively, cooperate and share, most of the time, and are immersed in their learning. When they are not, the adults in the classroom notice and intervene with positive impact.
- Overall, in and around the school, pupils are polite and well-mannered and give a warm welcome to visitors. Standards of behaviour in class are generally good. However, at times, pupils lose focus when activities do not interest or challenge them. As a result, they become disengaged and low-level disruption occurs. Often, this disruptive behaviour, if not dealt with effectively by adults, hampers pupils' learning and prevents them from making positive gains in their learning.
- Outside lessons, including transitions to and from lessons, behaviour can be boisterous in this more unstructured time. For example, when they enter school after break, pupils are sometimes noisy and can become unruly if sufficient staff are not present.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying, including online safety. They are adamant that bullying is rare but, if it does happen, they trust adults to sort it out. Behaviour logs confirm that this is the case. However, some pupils do not have a secure understanding of the different types of bullying. In addition, examples of name-calling show that tolerance of other peoples' characteristics is not embedded.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age. During their time in Reception, children make good progress, with more than half of them achieving a good level of development. Results have risen since the last inspection. Consequently, greater numbers of children are ready for their transition into Year 1.
- In previous years, the number of pupils who achieved the expected score in the phonics screening check was well below the national average. This trend has now

been reversed and the most recent test results show that the proportion achieving the expected score is now above the national average.

- By the end of Year 2, outcomes for pupils are on an upward trajectory, which is reflected in published data for 2015 and the most recent test scores for 2016.
- Published data in 2015 showed that the percentage of pupils making the progress expected of them by the time they reached Year 6 was broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Provisional 2016 information on national tests and assessments shows that, in the most recent tests at key stage 2, progress in writing and mathematics was significantly above national measures, with reading in line with national measures. The proportion achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, and as individual subjects, was above the national average. Attainment in English grammar punctuation and spelling was below the national average. In writing, the proportion exceeding the expected standard was above the national average, in line with the national average for mathematics and below in reading and English grammar punctuation and spelling.
- From observing teaching and learning and looking at examples of pupils' work, inspectors agree that some pockets of good progress and achievement exist in a range of other subjects. For example, in a French lesson, pupils made progress in their acquisition of new vocabulary. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes within key stages 1 and 2.
- Current progress and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are too variable because, at times, work has not been planned to meet the needs of individual pupils across a range of abilities, including pupils who are low-attaining, the most able and the most able disadvantaged. Scrutiny of work reveals that in upper key stage 2 standards are high because teachers' expectations are high and pupils say the teachers challenge them and give 'fix it' time feedback which helps them. In the early years, children are writing sentences by the end of Reception Year and show good progress relative to their starting points. In key stage 1 and lower key stage 2 the standards are not as strong and there are inconsistencies in how pupils' errors and misconceptions are addressed.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attending the school is high. Published data in 2015 shows that disadvantaged pupils did not perform as well others nationally, especially boys. Results for 2016 show an improving picture, with differences between these two groups of pupils diminishing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not perform as well as others nationally, especially in writing, mathematics and spelling, punctuation and grammar. Achievement in reading for these pupils is stronger. The school provides a wealth of support for pupils with additional needs, and the termly pupil progress reviews have a positive impact on some of the pupils' learning. Although improvements have been made, the school recognises that targets for these pupils need to be more precise and measurable to have greater impact.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of early years are good.
- The new leader has an accurate overview of the strengths and areas that need to be developed within the provision. She is passionate and knowledgeable about the early

years and has a strong vision of what good provision looks like. Effective action has been taken to address areas of concern highlighted by published data, such as children's progress and attainment in reading, writing and number, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

- Good relationships between children and staff are forged which enable the children to settle into the provision quickly. Good behaviour and language are modelled by the adults and, as a result, children make progress in their speech and language acquisition.
- Children are safe, well supervised and cared for in a secure and stimulating environment. There are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements. Children are increasing in confidence and mostly behave well. Standards of behaviour are good and squabbles are rare because children are busy.
- Most of the children are attentive, listen well, concentrate, stay on task and persevere. A few 'flit' from one activity to the next and are supported well and brought back into the learning by one of the adults.
- A multisensory approach to learning characterises this setting, in order to attempt to meet all children's learning needs. This was exemplified in the phonics teaching of the sound and letter 'I'. Whiteboards, pens, a video clip, a giraffe puppet, sand trays and teaching assistants were all deployed to support children in recognising, sounding, forming and writing the sound and letter. Some children demonstrated this learning to the whole class.
- Activities provided are fun and cover all areas of learning. For example, children identify numbers using computers and snakes and ladders, others work very well together as they build models and use a variety of tools to manipulate clay and use threading for fine motor skill development. Adults in the setting are very supportive and intervene appropriately to guide the learning and also know when to stand back and let children's learning develop.
- Most children, including the disadvantaged and the most able, make good progress in their learning, relative to their starting points.
- Parents take an active part in their children's learning. They contribute to children's learning through the use of technology that allows the early years teacher to send parents information about their child and for parents to respond. This is new to the school and having a tremendous impact on parental engagement in the children's learning.

School details

Unique reference number	119516
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10012193

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Gerard Barry
Headteacher	Mrs Heather McGowan
Telephone number	01254 54686
Website	www.stantonysrc.co.uk
Email address	admin@stantonysrc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	29–30 April 2014

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum on its website for: the pupil premium; the physical education and sports premium; the governors' information and duties; safeguarding and child protection; and Equalities Act 2010 and related policies and objectives.
- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment. A warning letter was issued in September 2014 by the local authority to the school, stating that standards of performance at the school were low at that time.

- Children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis and the Reception class on a full-time basis.
- There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher, an assistant headteacher (who is now the acting deputy headteacher) and a new chair of governors.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegations(s) were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Senior leaders were invited to take part in joint observations with inspectors but did not join the inspectors in any observations.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, at lunchtimes and breaktimes, and when pupils were moving in and around the school.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, governors, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and looked at work in their books and on display.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of 11 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and nine-free text responses from parents.
- Inspectors took account of 14 staff responses to the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Daley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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