

Inspection of a good school: St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Underwood Road, Whitechapel, London, E1 5AW

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

St Anne's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this school. Parents and carers appreciate the way staff look after their children. The school's ethos is clear and seen in the mutual respect pupils and teachers have for one another. Pupils understand and value each other's differences.

Leaders and teachers aim high for all pupils. They expect pupils to succeed and try their best in all subjects. Pupils rise to this challenge. They present their work with care and take pride in their achievements.

Pupils enjoy their frequent trips to local landmarks. Year 6 pupils are looking forward to their school journey and learning to be more independent.

Leaders make pupils' emotional well-being a priority. Staff provide regular opportunities for pupils to recognise and talk about their feelings. Pupils are encouraged to speak up if they feel worried. Pupils told me that bullying rarely happens. Adults deal quickly with any concerns, including disagreements and friendship issues. Pupils feel safe here.

Pupils' behaviour is positive. In lessons, they concentrate on the activities that teachers provide. Pupils are keen to help each other learn. For instance, if a classmate does not understand something, pupils are quick to offer support and encouragement.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils achieve well here. Leaders plan pupils' learning effectively. In each subject, leaders' aims match the ambition of the national curriculum. Planning contains clearly defined goals for what pupils should study. This includes the knowledge pupils will need to be successful in their future learning.

Leaders have also given careful thought to pupils' wider development. They make sure that pupils access the rich range of cultural opportunities nearby. For example, pupils regularly visit London landmarks. Teachers make the most of these trips to enrich pupils'

learning, particularly in history and geography. Leaders also provide activities designed to develop pupils' independence and self-confidence. Pupils enjoy taking on positions of responsibility. Examples include librarians and house captains. Pupils take part in many activities outside of the academic curriculum. The choir and music clubs are well attended. All pupils learn a stringed instrument in Year 3. Many choose to continue this afterwards.

Leaders thoroughly check the quality of pupils' learning in each subject. Leaders act effectively when they identify concerns. For instance, they have strengthened the way mathematics and science are taught in the early years. Teaching focuses on ensuring that children understand important words and concepts. This means that children have the knowledge they need for their learning in Years 1 and 2.

Leaders reflect well on the strengths and areas for development in the curriculum, for example in writing, which is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy using their knowledge to write in different styles and for different purposes. Pupils enjoy learning Spanish. They learn to speak with confidence, using words and phrases with increasing accuracy. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to write in Spanish for different audiences and purposes. Leaders are strengthening subject plans and ensuring that this aspect of pupils' learning is not overlooked.

In all subjects, pupils study a broad range of topics. In history, for example, pupils learn about significant periods of British history and those of the wider world. Teachers set work that matches the aims set out in subject plans. However, some teachers lack the expertise to adapt subject planning effectively. Teaching does not focus enough on helping pupils to remember and apply important knowledge. Sometimes, pupils lack the background knowledge to complete tasks successfully. For instance, teachers want pupils to understand the historical context of each history topic. They expect pupils to use timelines and place events in chronological order. However, some pupils struggle to do this well. This is because they cannot recall enough information from previous history topics.

Pupils learn phonics well but could do better. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement in reading. The phonics programme contains ambitious goals. Nursery and Reception children begin learning phonics straight away. Pupils who fall behind receive help to catch up. Staff select pupils' reading books carefully. They make sure that books closely match pupils' abilities. However, some adults are not trained well enough in phonics. This prevents them from supporting pupils as effectively as they could.

Year 1 to 6 pupils study philosophy. They debate a wide range of topics and moral issues with maturity. Teachers encourage pupils to give reasons for their views. They expect pupils to use the knowledge they have studied in other subjects. This deepens pupils' understanding effectively.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Staff understand pupils' needs and their individual barriers to learning. They provide pupils with effective personalised support. This ensures that pupils with SEND learn successfully alongside their peers.

Pupils behave well. Their positive behaviour allows learning to take place without disruption. Pupils are respectful to each other and to adults.

Staff appreciate the way school leaders consider their well-being. They know that leaders consider their workload when making decisions about the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff keep up to date with the most recent statutory guidance. Staff are knowledgeable about different risks to pupils' welfare. They use this knowledge to keep pupils safe. Pupils learn about how to stay safe online and when they are outside of school.

Leaders understand pupils' needs and the risks in the local community. They keep accurate records of concerns that arise. Leaders are quick to notice any deterioration in the well-being of pupils and their families. They make sure that pupils receive additional support at an early stage.

Safeguarding is a high priority for the governing body. Governors review safeguarding arrangements regularly. They make sure, when necessary, that procedures are strengthened even further.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most subjects, teachers are skilled in planning series of lessons which develop pupils' knowledge progressively. In a few subjects, including history, teachers' expertise is not as strong. As a result, some teaching does not build and deepen pupils' knowledge as well as it could. Leaders should strengthen teachers' subject knowledge and ensure that they adapt subject planning effectively.
- Pupils learn to read well here. However, some staff who support the teaching of phonics lack enough expertise to do so. This reduces the effectiveness of additional help that these staff provide. Leaders should make sure that all staff have the necessary skills to help pupils learn to read.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date

of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	100950
Local authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	10121603
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	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Victoria Bradney-Spencer
Headteacher	Sheila Mouna
Website	www.stannesschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2016

Information about this school

- The school has a Catholic religious ethos.
- The governing body is in an advanced stage of preparation for an amalgamation with a neighbouring school. Governors plan for this amalgamation to come into effect from 1 September 2020.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of staff. I also spoke to members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each of these subjects, I held discussions with senior leaders, visited lessons, spoke with staff and pupils and looked at pupils' work.
- I also considered pupils' learning in other subjects and looked at how well leaders and staff support pupils' wider development.
- I spoke to pupils, parents and staff about the school's work to keep pupils safe and promote high standards of behaviour. I considered records and documentation, along with the school's single central record of checks on the suitability of staff.

Inspection team

Jason Hughes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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