

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

St Anthony's Drive, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 3SQ

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They get along well with their classmates and their teachers. They give each other a smile and a wave as they pass in the corridors. Leaders take sufficient actions to resolve fallouts and bullying issues when they arise. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. Pupils in key stage 1 behave exceptionally well.

Leaders have high expectations for what most pupils can achieve in their learning. Many pupils achieve well across much of the curriculum. However, this is not always true for older pupils in mixed-age classes. In addition, leaders are not equally ambitious for some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have not made sure that staff are able to meet these pupils' needs effectively. As a result, some of these pupils do not achieve all that they should.

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities that develop their talents and interests. For example, there are plentiful sporting clubs and competitions on offer. Pupils also get to learn how to play different musical instruments during their time at school. Pupils undertake a variety of responsibilities and leadership roles such as school councillors.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum from the Reception Year to Year 6. They have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn over time. Teachers deliver the curriculum as leaders intend. However, leaders have not given enough thought to how some subject curriculums will be delivered to mixed-age classes. As a result, sometimes teachers do not design learning activities that account for the different levels of prior

knowledge that pupils have. In turn, older pupils in the mixed-age classes are sometimes unable to capitalise and build on what they already know. This hinders their achievement.

Leaders ensure that appropriate systems are in place for teachers to identify pupils that may have additional needs. That said, leaders do not have sufficient oversight of how well these pupils learn. Equally, leaders do not provide teachers with enough guidance on how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for some pupils with SEND. This sometimes results in some pupils with SEND learning less-ambitious curriculum content than their classmates. In turn, some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively in lessons and when reviewing pupils' work. This helps teachers to guide pupils in their learning and address the misconceptions that pupils have.

Leaders promote reading through initiatives that include visiting authors. Leaders have recently implemented a new phonics programme which teachers are well trained to deliver with fidelity. However, pupils do not begin this programme as soon as they join the school in the Reception Year. Therefore, time and opportunities are lost for children to learn to read as quickly as they should. Some pupils do not read books that are sufficiently well matched to the sounds that they are learning. In turn, these pupils struggle unduly when reading by themselves. Leaders arrange extra support for pupils who are still at the early stages of learning to read. However, staff delivering this support do not have the expertise that they need to help close the specific gaps that pupils have in their knowledge of sounds. As a result, some pupils do not become fluent, confident readers as quickly as they could.

Pupils, including children in the early years, have positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy their lessons and cooperate well with each other in class. Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day. They are courteous when they move around the school.

Leaders foster pupils' personal development well. They ensure that pupils take their learning beyond the classroom through trips that enhance the topics that pupils study. There are well-designed curriculums that help pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, including how to maintain their mental well-being. Pupils also develop a secure understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils learn about diversity and difference. This helps pupils to develop respect for others. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Governors know their roles and responsibilities. Leaders and governors engage well with staff. Leaders are considerate of staff well-being and workload. Staff feel supported by leaders and appreciate the support of their colleagues.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to identify and report any safeguarding concerns that they have. Leaders take appropriate steps to manage any concerns that may arise about pupils' welfare. Leaders engage with external agencies where appropriate to secure additional levels of support for pupils and families. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, for example when working and playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not adapt their delivery of the curriculum well enough for pupils with SEND. This sometimes means that some of these pupils learn less-ambitious subject content to that of their classmates. This leads to some pupils with SEND not achieving as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers are well equipped to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND so that they can achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Pupils do not read books that are appropriately matched to the sounds that they know. Furthermore, the additional support that leaders arrange for pupils is not effective at helping pupils to close the gaps that they have in their knowledge of sounds quickly enough. This means that pupils do not learn to read fluently as soon as they could. Leaders should ensure that the books pupils read are well suited to the sounds that they know. Leaders should also ensure that staff are well equipped to help pupils to close the gaps that they have in their phonics knowledge.
- In some subjects, leaders have not given enough consideration to how teachers should deliver important knowledge to mixed-age classes. This means that, in these subjects, some pupils miss opportunities to build on what they already know. This hinders their achievement. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is appropriately designed to account for pupils' different levels of prior knowledge so that pupils can capitalise on what they have previously learned.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	119698
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10240621
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	315
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Thompson
Headteacher	Rachel Ballard
Website	www.st-anthonys.lancs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Catholic school. The last section 48 inspection took place in June 2018.
- A new deputy headteacher has been appointed since the last inspection.
- Leaders make use of one unregistered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical education and mathematics. He met with subject leaders and teachers. He visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered the curriculum, spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.

- The inspector spoke with a group of governors. He also talked to staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school.
- The inspector looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. He observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspector reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. He discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. The inspector also checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with pupils.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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