

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

Mornington Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 0TX

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

St Antony's is a friendly and happy school, and pupils are proud to be members of this community.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils said that teachers make learning fun and help them if they find their work difficult. In most subjects, pupils benefit from a curriculum from which they are taught the important knowledge they need to learn. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are polite, friendly and well mannered. They move around the school sensibly and are caring towards each other. There are occasions when some pupils briefly interrupt learning in some lessons. However, teachers deal with this quickly and calmly so that everyone can get back to their learning.

Pupils are confident that they can talk to an adult if anything is worrying them. One pupil, echoing the views of many, commented that 'the adults are kind; they support us, and they keep us safe.' Leaders take any concerns about bullying seriously. They act quickly to resolve any issues.

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

Leaders have designed a balanced curriculum. They have ensured that it matches the breadth and challenge expected nationally. Overall, they have set out the important knowledge for pupils to learn and remember in each subject and ensured that subject content is thoughtfully sequenced. Pupils have enough time to practise what they are learning and then gradually apply their knowledge to carry out more complicated work. For example, children in Reception work out the answers to simple number problems. They confidently explain their reasoning. Pupils work with larger numbers and more complex calculations as they move through the curriculum. They have a regular time

every day to practise their arithmetic, developing their accuracy and speed. As a result, older pupils have the knowledge needed to solve complex mathematical problems. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education. Similarly, in geography, pupils learn key vocabulary to describe different places. They learn how to use maps so that they can identify cities and important natural features like rivers. As a result, they have the background knowledge they need to work independently, exploring themes like tourism in Italy. This enables them to understand human and geographical features with increasing depth.

There are a few subjects where leaders' thinking about the curriculum is not so well developed. On occasion, teachers are expected to teach too much new information in a single lesson. Pupils find it hard to understand so many new ideas at once. Teachers then have to spend time going over again what pupils should have securely learned at an earlier stage.

Typically, the curriculum is carefully structured so that pupils can build on prior learning. This is less consistent in areas of the curriculum that are still in development. For example, there are occasions when the delivery of the curriculum in early years does not prepare children fully for the next steps in their learning.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They ensure that pupils learn to read well. In Nursery, there is a clear focus on helping children to develop their vocabulary and concentration. Children repeat catchphrases and squeal with laughter as they wait for their turn to join in. This focus on language development prepares them well for their later learning. In Reception, children rapidly learn letters and all the sounds that they make. This work continues through Year 1 and beyond, which ensures that pupils have enough time to practise and become fluent. Pupils love reading. They are spellbound during class story times. All teaching staff are experts in teaching reading. They spot any pupil who might be falling behind and quickly give them the extra help they need. Older pupils relish the responsibility of being a reading ambassador. They encourage younger pupils in their love of books.

Pupils work hard in lessons. There are a few occasions when some pupils do not follow routines quickly or listen to each other during discussion. Staff deal with this promptly.

Pupils with SEND are identified and well supported. Staff carefully provide extra help to any pupil who might have a barrier to learning. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the wider life of the school. However, some parents would like more information about how well their children are learning.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils' wider development. These include participation in the 'Commonwealth Choir' and a wide range of sporting and cultural activities. Pupils spoke with a high level of enthusiasm about their school production and sports day. Leaders take effective steps to ensure that opportunities for broader development are open to all pupils.

Staff, including those at the early stages of their careers, appreciate the ways that leaders manage their workload and consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are clear and effective arrangements for staff training, including regular quizzes and updates. Staff know how to identify pupils who might be at risk. As a result, safeguarding is at the forefront of everyone's thinking.

Leaders act promptly on any concerns that staff might have. They make referrals to external agencies as appropriate. They work well with those agencies to help families and pupils get the support they need.

The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to stay safe, including when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, and in early years, curriculum thinking does not show sufficient rigour in planning for the cumulative acquisition of knowledge. As a result, pupils do not consistently learn the knowledge they need to make progress through the curriculum. Leaders should continue to develop and refine the design of the curriculum, ensuring that pupils can build on what they have learned before.
- In some subjects, pupils do not have sufficient time to gain a secure understanding of what they are learning before teachers introduce new knowledge. This means that teachers then spend time in subsequent lessons revising knowledge which they intended to ensure that pupils grasped earlier. Leaders should continue to refine the design and delivery of the curriculum so that teachers check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching when necessary.

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 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	102844
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10211498
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	445
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Damian Atkinson
Headteacher	Chantal Pampellonne
Website	http://www.stantonyscatholicps.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a Catholic school within the Diocese of Brentwood. A section 48 inspection was carried out by the Diocese of Brentwood in October 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He listened to pupils read. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection, including art and science.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. He also met with members of the governing body. He held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in the playground.
- The inspector spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about safeguarding. He also scrutinised safeguarding records and the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Julian Grenier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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