

Inspection of St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Sydenham Drive, St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Leamington Spa,
Warwickshire CV31 1NJ

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Education Act since July 2009.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff say that St Anthony's is 'like a caring and welcoming family'. Pupils love coming to school. They are excited about learning and they flourish here. There are warm, respectful relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils trust adults to sort out any worries. This makes pupils feel safe in school. Pupils, and their parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, and rightly so.

The school has exceptionally high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve very well. Pupils agree that they work hard and say that 'in return the teachers make learning fun'.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Pupils are highly respectful of others and listen carefully to their teachers. At the same time, they are encouraged to share their own ideas and be independent and confident learners.

This is an inclusive school and pupils are clear that everyone is welcome. Pupils celebrate difference and enjoy learning about other faiths and cultures. They know that this helps them to become good citizens. They benefit from a range of leadership opportunities including being faith leaders, librarians and play leaders.

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

The curriculum is highly ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. Leaders have thought about the important information and skills that pupils need. They have ordered this knowledge from Nursery to Year 6 so that pupils build successfully on previous learning in a carefully planned way. Skilled staff plan engaging activities to deliver the curriculum. They give pupils opportunities to revisit and practise learning so that it really sticks in their memory. As a result, pupils are proud of what they know. They produce well-presented work of a high standard in their books. The inspiring leaders are relentless in their drive to improve the already strong curriculum further. They assess how well it is working, and regularly refine it so that it meets the needs of all pupils.

The school recognises the importance of communication and language. Teachers refer to subject-specific words in lessons and pupils learn how to use them. This focus on language starts in early years, where staff take every opportunity to enrich children's vocabulary. This helps pupils to learn and use sophisticated language. For example, in Reception children can describe why ice melts when it is held in warm hands and Year 6 pupils can explain what perfect and imperfect cadence means in music lessons. Teachers deliver new information with clarity and enthusiasm. Pupils respond by contributing confidently and being motivated to learn more. They apply their learning in current and meaningful ways such as podcasts, art exhibitions and performances.

The school aspires for the best possible individual outcomes for all pupils, including those with SEND. There are robust systems in place that lead to timely and accurate identification of pupils' needs. The curriculum is effectively adapted so that pupils with SEND achieve well.

Reading is prioritised. Books are everywhere and pupils enjoy regularly listening to their teachers reading. In the early years children are encouraged to value books. They complete simple reviews of the books they have enjoyed in their cosy reading area. The well-stocked libraries are managed and operated by older pupils. Staff are well-trained in teaching reading. Pupils who have fallen behind are supported to catch up quickly. Pupils read fluently by the time they leave the school.

The school has high expectations for behaviour. Learning is not disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils are kind and well-mannered to all those around them. Even the youngest children in Nursery and Reception play and learn calmly and cooperatively. Attendance is high for almost all pupils. They want to come to school because it is a happy place to be where the learning engages them.

Leaders have constructed an exceptional curriculum for pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy a wide and effective range of experiences and opportunities. These develop characteristics such as curiosity and resilience. Trips and visits are considered and planned to enhance the curriculum. For example, older pupils spent the day as evacuees from the Second World War and experienced a virtual bombing raid. This developed pupils' history knowledge but also enabled them to have a deeper understanding of what life is like for children in war zones in other parts of the world today. The pupil parliament enables pupils to understand how democracy works. The 'ministers' ensure that their classmates' voice is heard. This means pupils can make a real difference with projects such as rewilding parts of the grounds.

Governors have high expectations for the school. They have a clear focus on the quality of education provided but also ensure that all aspects of school life are important. The school aims to develop the whole child so that all pupils can reach their full potential. They are successful in achieving this. Staff feel valued as professionals and know leaders care about their well-being. They are exceptionally proud to work here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 125716 |
| Local authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 10256880 |
| 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 | 237 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jamie Staddon |
| Headteacher | Hannah Edwards |
| Website | www.stanthonyscatholic.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 July 2009, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. |

Information about this school

- The school is a Catholic Primary school and is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The school's last section 48 inspection was in March 2020.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed in September 2023.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and

considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors had meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, and representatives of the governing body and spoke to representatives of the local authority and the archdiocese.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the staff survey. An inspector spoke informally with parents.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with groups of pupils both formally and during less structured parts of the day. The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Corinne Biddell, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Roulla Gabriel

Ofsted Inspector

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