

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Washington Road, Caversham, St Anne's School, Reading, Berkshire RG4 5AA

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 November 2024

Outcome

St Anne's Catholic Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this caring and nurturing school. Compassion and kindness are at the heart of the school community. Pupils are proud to attend the school and cherish the genuine care they receive from staff. They feel safe in school and know there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns or worries.

The school sets high expectations for pupils. Consequently, they work hard and achieve well. Pupils experience an engaging curriculum that extends beyond the classroom, ensuring that they develop valuable life skills. Pupils benefit from a range of well-considered trips, visits and residential. They raise money for charity and think about others' needs.

Routines for commendable behaviour are embedded in the early years, and these high expectations remain throughout the school. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They show care and consideration towards each other. They play together enthusiastically at breaktimes, sharing equipment, playing sports and chatting with friends. Older pupils are 'buddies' to younger ones to guide them and act as good role models.

Pupils are proud to take on leadership responsibilities, including their roles as representatives on the 'one world council' and librarians. The school's work supports pupils to grow into well-rounded individuals and responsible citizens.

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

The school provides an ambitious curriculum that is broad and balanced for pupils. Teachers present learning in engaging and interesting ways to motivate and develop

pupils' curiosity. From the early years, children flourish due to the high levels of support, clear boundaries and care they are shown.

Following a recent curriculum review, the school has made well-considered changes to how a few subjects are taught, with some refinements still under way. In these subjects, the school has yet to evaluate the full impact of the amended curriculum to check that pupils are acquiring a deep level of knowledge. In the past, pupils have not achieved as well in writing by the end of Year 6 as they have in reading and mathematics. As a result, the school has recently introduced a precise and rigorous approach to further strengthen the teaching of writing. While this work is still in the early stages, preliminary signs indicate that the new approach is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement in writing.

The school acts decisively to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff adapt the curriculum carefully for these pupils. This helps pupils with SEND to access the full curriculum successfully. Children get off to a brilliant start to their education when they join the Nursery. Throughout the early years, the school makes reading, writing and mathematics key priorities. Children access a wealth of well-chosen opportunities throughout the curriculum to deepen their knowledge. This prepares them well for key stage 1.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and keen to do their best. Teachers review learning from the past to help pupils make links to new concepts and knowledge. They skilfully explain concepts and essential vocabulary that pupils need to know. The well-sequenced curriculum supports pupils' learning through a range of well-chosen activities. In science, for example, pupils develop a strong understanding of the properties of solids, liquids and gases through well-chosen engaging tasks.

The school ensures that reading is a top priority so that pupils become confident and fluent readers. Those who need extra assistance with reading are identified swiftly and receive help straight away to help them catch up. Pupils benefit from effective phonics teaching. The school has a wide range of activities to promote the love of reading. Staff support pupils effectively in developing their oracy skills, improving their language and communication abilities. This helps pupils to speak confidently and with interest.

Pupils' behaviour is impressive. They are enthusiastic learners and are proud of their achievements. Classrooms are purposeful spaces where pupils concentrate and learn. Pupils listen to adults and contribute enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils' attendance was below the national average last year. The school has clear systems in place to improve this. It tracks and analyses pupils' attendance meticulously. Attendance has improved this year.

The school has developed a comprehensive approach to pupils' personal development provision. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong. Through the curriculum, pupils gain a sound understanding of diversity and equality. Pupils attend a broad range of clubs to develop their skills and talents. They develop an age-appropriate understanding of staying safe and of healthy relationships.

Governors are highly committed and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Staff appreciate the professional development opportunities to help them support pupils effectively. Parents and carers are highly supportive of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has rightly redeveloped the curriculum in some subjects. However, the strategies to support its effective implementation are not yet embedded enough to evaluate their impact on how well pupils are learning. The school should ensure that the changes to the curriculum are evaluated carefully and that staff continue to develop the knowledge that is needed to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in November 2015.

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

Unique reference number	110003
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10341258
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Yasmin Sanchez-Pearson
Headteacher	Bridget Tobin
Website	www.st-annes.reading.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In January 2024, the headteacher joined the school on an interim basis. In September 2024, the headteacher took up the permanent position.
- The school is federated with St Martin's Catholic Primary School in Caversham and shares the same governing body.
- The school is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. The school's last section 48 inspection was carried out in April 2024. The next section 48 inspection will take place within five years of the previous inspection.
- The school runs its own breakfast- and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the staff and the pupils.
- The inspector met with representatives from the local governing body. He also spoke to a representative from the diocese and met two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, including free-text comments, were considered. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. The pupil survey was available to the school, but there were no responses.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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