

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

Farnham Road, Farnham Royal, Slough, Berkshire SL2 3AA

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 2025

Outcome

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

The headteacher of this school is Siobhan Oppe. This school is part of the St Thomas' Catholic Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joe Richardson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Catherine Davies.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are valued and cared for at this nurturing school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and welcoming. Pupils are proud of who they are and where they are from. Events like 'Culture Day' encourage pupils to celebrate differences and learn more about their peers. Pupils learn to consider the world around them, the needs of others and how they can make a difference. The school is committed to preparing pupils for success now and in the future. Pupils develop responsibility and organisation skills in leadership roles such as 'Prime Minister', 'prefect' or 'mission leader'. They lead fundraising and events to improve the school for all pupils.

The school is ambitious for every pupil to achieve highly. Pupils understand these high expectations. They are enthusiastic to learn more, and they try hard in lessons. As such, pupils tend to achieve well while also developing a love of learning. Pupils are focused and calm in lessons and around the school. They treat each other with respect and kindness, habitually communicating politely with each other. Older pupils, and those with responsibilities, support pupils who need some extra help, such as at playtimes where pupils lead group games successfully.

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

The school has made significant improvements to the curriculum. They have ensured that an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum is in place. The knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn have been set out from the early years to Year 6. The curriculum now builds carefully on what pupils have been taught before. In most subjects, the curriculum design is precise and clear so that staff know exactly what to teach and when.

Children have a joyful start to school in the early years. They learn to cooperate with each other and concentrate on challenging activities. Children use the book corners independently to explore new stories, which they then enjoy sharing with others. Staff lead small groups of children in activities that build a strong understanding of the world, number and early sounds.

The trust and the school have worked together closely to respond rapidly to a dip in pupils' achievement in phonics and writing. Phonics is taught with precision so that pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. The school has also revised the teaching of writing. Pupils now have more opportunities to develop independent and creative writing. The changes that have been made are already having an impact, as pupils write with increasing skill and flair.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately and swiftly identified. The school then puts in place effective strategies to ensure that these pupils learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Staff have strong subject knowledge. They teach new knowledge and vocabulary clearly. Often, staff check pupils' understanding effectively. They then correct misconceptions, re-explain or adapt tasks. However, sometimes staff do not check systematically what pupils have understood. This means that, occasionally, pupils have gaps in knowledge that prevent them from learning as much as they could from the activities set for them. The school is already improving this, so that staff check knowledge and adapt learning more consistently.

Pupils behave well in school. The school has successfully implemented a new approach to promote positive behaviour. Pupils understand the high expectations and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. The school has also improved attendance in the last few years with tenacious and effective strategies to address frequent absence. However, some pupils still miss too much school. This means that these pupils do not benefit from the well-designed curriculum that builds knowledge lesson-by-lesson. The school is rightly continuing to prioritise attendance through engagement and support for parents and carers.

The school has a rich wider curriculum. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are known well. They, and their peers, are supported to flourish as they pursue their talents. Annual year group productions, such as operas or 'A Christmas Carol', include every pupil. These develop pupils' skills in oracy and the performance arts. Pupils learn to care for the wider community, and become global citizens, such as raising money for less privileged pupils in different parts of the world. They gain a valuable understanding of democracy

and respect through school elections and discussions. These lessons are reinforced through experiences such as trips to the 'Houses of Parliament', tree planting, and making cards for the local community. Pupils learn to be ambitious for themselves while caring for others and the wider world.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes teachers' checks on pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be. Occasionally, they do not identify errors and misunderstandings so that they can then adapt the learning for pupils. This affects how well pupils develop knowledge in these instances. The school should ensure that it supports teachers, where needed, to check pupils' learning systematically and to adapt their teaching or activities appropriately so that pupils learn as well as the school intends them to.

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 St Anthony's Catholic Primary School the school to be good for overall effectiveness in February 2012.

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	143804
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10341832
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	485
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Catherine Davies
CEO of the trust	Joe Richardson
Headteacher	Siobhan Oppe
Website	www.stanthonys.slough.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- St Anthony's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy school in February 2020, joining St Thomas' Catholic Academies Trust. When its predecessor school, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good for overall effectiveness.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- This school is a Catholic school in the Diocese of Northampton. The school last received a section 48 inspection in March 2018, and is due to be inspected again in 2025.

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 and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body, a representative of the diocese, the chief executive officer and the chair of the trust.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspector reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. The inspector also took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- 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

Alexandra Aldridge-Gibbons, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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