



# St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 105522  
**Local Authority** Manchester  
**Inspection number** 287248  
**Inspection dates** 1–2 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Judith Clarke

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Dunkery Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Woodhouse Park, Manchester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Lancashire M22 0NT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4373029
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	549	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4980839
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Fr M Murray
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J Gretton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much larger than the average sized primary school. It serves an area of considerable disadvantage where some regeneration is taking place. Most of the children are from a White British heritage. A small number of the pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. An above average number of pupils leave or join the school at times other than Reception or Year 6. The school has the Artsmark Gold award and the Leading Aspect Award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school with many outstanding features. Pupils, parents, community and parish are understandably very proud of its achievements. The parents say that the school greatly values their children and themselves. This is because the school's Catholic mission successfully includes all into its life and work. As one of the governors said, 'Every child is welcome, they are happy and because they are happy they want to learn.' The key to this is the very strong commitment and dedication of the headteacher, who cares deeply for the school and its community and translates this commitment into highly effective actions.

The pupils clearly enjoy their lessons: they work hard, behaviour is exemplary and they are enthusiastic about their learning. As a result pupils achieve well from their low starting points and make good progress throughout the school so that by the end of Year 6 standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. The children have a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where good teaching enables them to make good progress in their learning.

Throughout school pupils do well because they are taught well. They are happy in class, relationships are very strong and the pupils know that all staff care about them and want them to succeed. This is shown in the way the staff guide the pupils' learning, showing them how to improve their work. Consequently pupils try really hard and want to do well not only for themselves but also for their teachers. Particularly impressive are the pupils' work books where the high standards of presentation demonstrates pupils' pride in their work. In some lessons pupils are not always encouraged sufficiently to develop their independent learning skills or work collaboratively in groups and are too dependent on their teachers. Teachers do not always take full advantage of the benefits of information and communication technology (ICT) to aid teaching and enliven learning.

Outstanding leadership and management lead to pupils' outstanding personal development, good academic achievement and the fully inclusive nature of the school. The school welcomes all and has very effective strategies in place to help those who are troubled, new to the school or the country, have little or no English, or find their learning hard. The talented staff, who are entirely committed to continuing professional development, provide a wide range of support strategies to help these pupils and break down barriers to learning so all make good progress.

The way the school keeps track of pupils' progress is extremely thorough. Comprehensive and detailed analysis of assessment information enables the senior leadership team to take effective action to bring about improvements in performance. Recent initiatives have resulted in more pupils achieving at higher than expected levels at the end of Year 6, providing firm evidence of its commitment to continuous improvement. A key feature of the highly effective leadership team is the way it continually and rigorously evaluates the work of the school and strategically allocates resources to the best effect in order to enable further improvements to occur. The school self-evaluation is very accurate and perceptive, involving all staff and governors.

It promotes effective school improvement and demonstrates outstanding capacity to improve further.

The pupils say they feel safe in school. The inclusive, caring ethos and strong community approach includes reaching out very effectively to involve and support parents, one of whom commented, 'The school invests in families- not just children.' This is seen in action through the parent-toddler group, run by the school and managed by one of the Nursery staff, which ensures that when the children start in the Nursery class they have already had positive contacts with the school.

The pupils have many opportunities to be active and take part in lots of different sporting activities. Indeed, the curriculum has an outstanding range of enrichment activities involving visitors into school and visits to places of interest, including a number of residential experiences, one taking place abroad. Pupils recognise the vital importance of being fit, safe and eating healthily and try very hard to live up to their ideals.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to make better progress in developing their independent learning skills in all lessons.
- Make consistent use of information and communication technology in all classes to enhance teaching and learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. When children enter the Nursery class their attainment is low. They make good progress throughout school, building well on their previous learning to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Particularly pleasing for the school in 2006 was the significant increase in the number of pupils achieving at the higher than expected levels in English and mathematics. The science results were not as good and the school has quickly recognised the need to pick up the pace of learning in science. Reading standards are a significant strength throughout the school. Results overall in 2006 showed a good improvement from 2005 and demonstrate that pupils reach challenging targets. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language make good progress because of the effective support they have from skilled members of staff.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding. The pupils have a great respect for the beliefs and customs of others, shown in the extremely responsible way they all work and play together. The pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are very caring and considerate and extremely polite. Attendance is broadly average. The school has many

effective strategies for improving attendance but the taking of holidays in school times by a small minority of families is a significant cause of absence. The pupils enjoy school enormously. They are very enthusiastic learners who are keen to do well in lessons. They understand the importance of working very hard in enabling them to succeed in the future. The school council, which is in its early stages of development, is starting to give the pupils influence in the school's formal decision making processes. The pupils speak knowledgeably about healthy school meals, the need to have a healthy and active lifestyle and the need to stay safe and fit. Pupils play an active part in fund raising for charitable causes and are keen to help those who are less fortunate than themselves at home and abroad, raising considerable amounts of money. Their commitment is outstanding.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The high quality of relationships between staff and pupils ensures that the pupils want to work hard and no time is lost in lessons. High expectations of behaviour and presentation of work ensures that the pupils make good progress in their learning. In the best lessons learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they are clear about their learning, how it has evolved from previous lessons and what will come next. In this way the pupils understand the relevance of their lessons. Collaborative work and independence are promoted well in some classes but are not yet consistent throughout the school. ICT is used very effectively in some classes to enhance and promote learning but it is not yet embedded fully across the school.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The good curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of enrichment activities that enables the pupils to make good progress and promotes outstanding personal development. The curriculum caters for the needs and interests of all. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school, alongside residential experiences and many opportunities to develop a huge range of sporting skills allow the pupils to develop their talents and interests. Strengths in the arts are well reflected in the school's Artsmark Gold award. All the pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to learn Italian, which is funded by the Italian Consulate and leads to an opportunity for a residential experience for Year 6 pupils in Italy. The Nursery accommodation is a new and excitingly designed environment, whereas the Reception classes have yet to be refurbished to the same high standard.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support offered to all the pupils are outstanding. An inclusive, caring ethos with its strong community and parish base is integral to the life and work of the school. The care for the pupils' personal welfare, particularly in respect of vulnerable pupils, is a major strength and reflects the high quality of its leadership and management. There are regular site and safety inspections and clear procedures are in place for safe staff recruitment and child protection. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons, through a comprehensive range of strategies. The school has very good links with the local high school and those children who start school in the Nursery class are extremely well supported. The pupils are given good guidance on how to improve their work. Teachers ensure this through careful help given in lessons based upon a detailed and thorough understanding of each pupil's progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher and senior leadership team are extremely experienced and articulate clearly their determination for school improvement through accurate self-evaluation. The school checks its performance very thoroughly and takes appropriate action. The outcome of this can be seen in rising standards and in exceptional equality of opportunity in a school where all are valued and celebrated. The staff team are a cohesive group who show great commitment to the pupils' academic success and their personal development and welfare. The headteacher demonstrates a commitment to the continuing professional development of all staff and this is a clear priority in the school. The governing body gives good support to the school and is clear about the strengths and areas for development. Resources are used well to support learning. Consequently the school gives good value for money.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly and polite when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you about your work. We think that St Anthony's is a good school - and a lot of its work is even better than that!

What we thought was really good about your school:

- The way you are all happy, work hard and do your best. The work in your books is really neat and well presented.
- The way your headteacher and all the staff take outstanding care of you and make sure that you are happy and get on well together.
- Your parents think that your school is good and they think the teachers take good care of you.
- Your headteacher works very hard to do the best for you he can. He makes sure that all the staff have lots of training so they can help you all.
- You have lots of exciting visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. Some of you have a wonderful chance to go to Italy to practise your Italian.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school even better and we are sure you will want to help too.

- To give you more chances to work on your own or with a partner or group of pupils so that you become more independent in your work.
- To make sure that you all have more chances to use ICT to help your learning.

You can help by continuing to work hard in school.