

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107324
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	287799
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Robert Robinson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Lynne Dennison
Headteacher	Mrs B Ford
Date of previous school inspection	15 October 2001
School address	Bradford Road Clayton Bradford West Yorkshire BD14 6HW
Telephone number	01274 414761
Fax number	01274 414762

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are from White British ethnic backgrounds. An increasing proportion of pupils are from other ethnic groups and a few of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are below average. The school is an Investor in People and has gained the Healthy School Award. It is a popular school which has many more applications for admission than places available. The school was presented with a School Achievement Award in 2002 and was included in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools List of Highly Successful Schools in 2003 and 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

St Anthony's Catholic Primary is an outstanding school. It has continued to improve well since its last inspection while maintaining over time significantly above average standards by the end of Year 6. That is why it has been recognised nationally by a School Achievement Award and two inclusions in Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools List of Highly Successful Schools. Parents applaud the education provided for their children. A parental comment summed up the feelings of the majority: 'a wonderful school meeting both the educational and pastoral needs of children growing up in today's society.'

The leadership and management are first rate. The headteacher drives the school forward with great enthusiasm and skill. She is assisted extremely well by other senior staff and governors. The strengths in the leadership of the school and the commitment of staff provide it with outstanding capacity to continue to improve. The school has an accurate view of its performance, provides outstanding value for money and knows what it must do to improve. Its view of its overall effectiveness is too self-critical as it is always seeking to improve the provision for pupils at the school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding and pupils achieve very well during their time at St Anthony's. Lessons are planned carefully and the pace of learning in lessons is brisk. Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support all pupils. Skilled teaching captures the interest of pupils and this helps them to make fast progress. Challenging targets are set for pupils and their progress towards them is checked rigorously. The curriculum is good with particular strengths in the development of literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, many pupils reach high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) children make good progress, but have too few opportunities to extend their learning outdoors.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. They enjoy coming to school and respond very well to the high quality of supportive care they receive. Attendance is well above average. Behaviour is exemplary both in lessons and around the school. Relationships are harmonious between pupils as well as between pupils and staff. Pupils enjoy all the school provides for them. They feel safe, and trust the adults they deal with. They have a keen interest in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Pupils help to ensure the smooth running of the school. They are extremely well prepared for future learning because of their very good acquisition of basic skills and their outstanding attitudes to learning. They are proud of their school: as a school councillor remarked, 'This is a fantastic school.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to learn well outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. Children start Nursery with a very wide range of attainments. Standards on entry to Nursery are generally about average, although in some years below average because of the proportion of children with speech and communication difficulties. The consistency of good and better teaching has sustained standards since the last inspection at

significantly above or well above average levels in the Year 6 national tests. An above average proportion of pupils reach the higher levels than expected nationally by the end of Year 6, particularly in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make fast progress because of the intensive help they receive from staff. Most of these pupils reach average standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds and gender make similar progress. Extremely challenging targets were almost met in the 2006 national tests in English and mathematics. Standards of the current group of pupils in Year 6 are well above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' understanding of their own faith and their awareness and respect of other beliefs are developed extremely well. They gain an increasing understanding of different cultures through, for example, a partnership with a school of pupils predominantly from the Islamic faith. The teaching engenders a great enthusiasm for learning, and consequently, pupils love coming to school and attendance is consistently well above the national average. The school council takes an active part in the running of the school. It knows that its voice is heard. For example, it has initiated improvements such as the provision of steps to help pupils to access the interactive whiteboards more easily. Even the youngest pupils know about and understand the need for a healthy lifestyle. This was seen in a delightful assembly when they explained to other pupils and parents what constituted a healthy lunch and ways to keep healthy. By the time pupils leave St Anthony's they are confident and articulate with very good skills in literacy and numeracy as well as wonderful attitudes to learning. This prepares them extremely well for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding; it results in pupils achieving extremely well during their time at the school. Classrooms are stimulating places in which to learn, and contain attractive displays of pupils' work. Teachers plan lessons very carefully to ensure that pupils at all levels of attainment make rapid progress in their learning. The teaching captures pupils' interest resulting in them being highly motivated and exceptionally well behaved. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and are used extremely well to push on the learning of all pupils, including those learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for example by leading structured learning programmes for pupils with language and communication difficulties. Literacy skills are consolidated and developed very well through challenging questioning and discussion.

The marking of work is consistent throughout the school and celebrates achievement as well as suggesting ways to improve. Pupils are encouraged to respond to the marking. For example, a teacher wrote 'Well done. Please try not to write the same adjective twice in one sentence'; to which the pupil replied in writing, 'OK. Will do.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum with several outstanding features. The pupils' outstanding personal development owes much to the excellent personal, social and health education and citizenship programme. Creative curricular planning ensures that lessons include a wide range of motivating learning activities. As a result, pupils reach high standards and develop very positive attitudes to school life, as confirmed by their very good attendance and exemplary behaviour. Literacy skills are developed extremely well in subjects across the curriculum. Extensive collaboration with other schools, plus the school's own programmes of clubs and visits, provide a rich range of popular opportunities in sport, arts, science and technology. In the Foundation Stage, the provision is good. However, although the curriculum generally helps children to make good progress, there are not enough planned opportunities for the children to develop their learning in the outdoor areas adjacent to the classrooms so they make even faster progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school is a very caring 'family' community where adults are committed to meeting the needs of all pupils. The school works very well with parents and external agencies. Very good links with parents, such as through homework and reading diaries, help parents to be kept well informed of their children's progress and of how to assist them. Very well established and thorough tracking systems aid pupils to achieve highly. Targets are set for individuals and their progress towards these is monitored closely. This information is shared with parents and pupils. Pupils understand their targets as a tool to help them improve. The governors take their responsibility for health and safety very seriously. They maintain the accommodation well and conscientiously oversee risk assessments and fire and accident procedures. Safeguarding procedures are robust.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is pivotal to the success of the school. She provides the community with a clear vision and set of values which are tangible throughout the school. She is very ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and other senior managers, who are dedicated to further school improvement. Staff development is a strong feature of the school and frequently teachers are promoted to senior posts in other schools. Self-evaluation is a strength. The school improvement plan is succinct and clearly identifies what needs to be improved and how it will be achieved. A good example of this is the success of the recent initiatives to raise boys' attainment in writing. The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors visit regularly and play an active part in school life. They have a range of expertise which they use extremely well for the benefit of the school and its pupils.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
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	1

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming Mr Griffin, Mrs Sadler and me to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit and we want to share with you what we thought about your school.

You stated that your school is fantastic. Well, we agree. Your school is an outstanding school because the leadership and management of the headteacher and other staff are first-rate. As a result, you make very good progress in your learning and reach above average academic standards. Your personal development is outstanding because you enjoy school and all get on so well together. Your behaviour is superb and this helps your learning, so keep it up. We are very pleased that your attendance is very good. We appreciated that you are cared for extremely well by staff and feel safe at the school as well as having many opportunities to take part in activities that will keep you healthy. Your very good attitudes to learning assist your progress. Teachers plan exciting lessons which capture your interest and enthusiasm for learning. However, we have asked teachers to arrange more opportunities for children in Nursery and Reception classes to work outdoors so they make even faster progress.

We appreciated talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.