



# St Antony's RC Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119516  
**Local Authority** Blackburn with Darwen  
**Inspection number** 291445  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Delia Hiscock

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Shadsworth Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Blackburn, Lancashire
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		BB1 2HP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 54686
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	226	<b>Fax number</b>	01254 673250
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Julie Georgy
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Margaret Crompton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 July 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 17–18 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 291445
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This average sized school serves an urban population with significant disadvantage. An above average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than average. Nearly all the pupils are of White British heritage. In the small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic families, none speaks English as an additional language. The attainment of children when they start school is below that which is typical for children of their age.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory and it provides satisfactory value for money. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in mathematics is inadequate. Before the next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

The quality of education is good in the Foundation Stage. The new purpose-built accommodation has sparked a new impetus to develop the provision further. The children make good progress and reach the standards expected for their age when they start in Year 1. In recent years, pupils' progress has slowed significantly in Key Stage 1 and, at the end of Year 2 they attained overall standards that were significantly below average in the 2005 national assessments. However, currently, pupils make good progress in lessons.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. The 2005 results of the national tests for 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science show that standards were broadly average overall but significantly below average in mathematics. The school has not been able to sustain these standards in 2006. Despite this decline, Year 6 pupils achieved well and made good progress in Key Stage 2 especially in English and science, having started in Year 3 with very low standards. Standards in mathematics remain particularly low and it is in this subject where pupils' progress and their achievement are weakest. Pupils' current work in Years 3 to 5 shows that they make satisfactory progress, but in Year 6 the pupils are doing very well and meeting their challenging targets because the teaching is outstanding.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has improved during the school's involvement in a programme of intensive support provided by the local authority. Lessons are planned well and a good atmosphere for learning is firmly established, but information from assessment is not always used effectively enough to plan work to accelerate progress. Additionally, insufficient levels of classroom support impede the capacity of lower attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities and this slows the progress they make.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders at all levels are strongly motivated and have sharpened their skills to improve standards and achievement. They demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to move the school forward. The school's detailed self-evaluation is accurate in judging features of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning, but over-generous when judging the impact of actions taken in raising standards and achievement. The headteacher has focused wholeheartedly on improving standards but has been impeded in part by disruptions in staffing that have interrupted pupils' progress. During this unsettled period, the school has made many improvements in the school environment and accommodation and developed aspects of pupils' personal development. The positive ethos and good level of care and guidance provided for pupils mean that they are loyal to their school and behave well. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and the jobs that they undertake around

school. However, they do not have enough opportunities to make decisions about things which matter to them. Parents think positively of the school and value the improvements they can see.

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

- Raise standards overall and particularly in Key Stage 1 and mathematics.
- Extend teachers' use of assessment information to match work more accurately to pupils' abilities.
- Provide increased support in classrooms to help learners of different abilities, particularly lower attainers and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Provide more opportunities for the pupils to have a say in what happens in their school

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory by the time pupils leave the school. Throughout the school, standards are very low and pupils' progress is too slow in mathematics.

The standards achieved by pupils at Key Stage 1 have been too low because some pupils did not make the progress of which they are capable. This was the result of some reported ineffective teaching, which the school's leadership has now resolved. At Key Stage 2, standards improved in 2005 in English and science to broadly average levels, but pupils' performance in mathematics remained particularly low. Preliminary results for 2006 show that pupils made good progress from a low starting point in all three subjects but standards overall are still not high enough. Most pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Targets set for pupils are challenging given the pupils' levels of prior attainment. They are starting to be met at the end of Key Stage 2 because outstanding teaching in Year 6 accelerates pupils' progress.

The school has robust and effective plans to bring about improvements and increase progress across the year groups, but the considerable lack of progress in the past at Key Stage 1 has left pupils with significant gaps in their knowledge and skills.

Children start school with below average levels of attainment compared with other children their age and particularly in their communication skills. The school's information shows that they start Year 1 having reached the expected attainment for their age in all the areas of learning. The children make good progress in their skills for communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical development. Although their social skills blossom when they work with their classmates, they are not as independent as most children their age because their progress in this area of their development is satisfactory rather than good. Some good features of teaching are beginning to accelerate the pupils' progress in Years 1 to 5, because staffing is stable and teachers are benefiting from a programme of intensive support for the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and their attendance is average. They treasure their 'Golden Time' where they can make choices about what they would like to do. In the Foundation Stage, and throughout the school, relationships are nurtured well and pupils generally work amicably together. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and so pupils behave well and are polite and friendly to visitors. The responsibilities they undertake and opportunities to raise money for charity encourage them to think of others. Pupils say that adults listen to their views and that 'teachers look after you and are friendly' but their views are not sought in a democratic way. Pupils know they need to eat well and exercise to stay healthy and how to keep safe.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but there is some outstanding teaching in Year 6 and this helps most of the older pupils to make good progress. The overall quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is inadequate. Too many of the pupils are unable to develop their mathematical thinking well enough because they have not been taught the strategies they need. Improved planning has led to more appropriate challenge for pupils in lessons. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to make lessons interesting. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is now satisfactory and shows some good features. A more stable staffing situation has enabled teachers to adopt shared approaches to planning. These include planned links to other subjects and opportunities for pupils to consider what teachers have told them they need to learn next. This is beginning to pay dividends by helping to deepen pupils' understanding of ideas and by generating a good pace to learning. The pupils listen well and older ones respond very well to the very high expectations and challenging work of the outstanding teaching. Here, learning is powerful and exciting.

Where inadequacies remain in the teaching of mathematics in particular, it is because the work set for them does not match their needs as learners and they have too few chances to work independently. Furthermore, the limited amount of additional help available is insufficient to support lower attaining pupils and those who have learning difficulties and disabilities. This is because there are many pupils, particularly in Key Stage 1 who require additional opportunities to explore important ideas by talking them through with an adult. Consequently, the progress made by these pupils in some lessons is too slow.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It provides well for pupils' personal development in the areas of healthy living, keeping safe and in providing opportunities for pupils to support their community. Strong links with the high school extend the range of activities provided and there is an appropriate range of enrichment activities, good provision for art and the opportunity to learn French. There is a good emphasis on basic skills in the Foundation Stage but too few opportunities are provided for children to benefit from the independent activities that they enjoy. Inadequate provision for mathematics has resulted in significant gaps in pupils' learning that undermines their confidence and ability to do their best. The headteacher has tackled this effectively and improving provision in each year group means that pupils are beginning to build on their skills in mental calculation.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The school takes good care of its pupils and all the arrangements are in place for their protection and safety. Pupils say they feel safe in school, that they trust the adults around them and that they feel that it is important to anyone in need. This is because the school works hard to promote features of their personal development. The school is now tracking pupils' learning and pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to learn next. This is beginning to improve the progress they make. In a small proportion of lessons, the pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities, do not receive enough support to help them become effective learners.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future and has transformed the professional climate, motivated staff and begun to equip leaders with the skills they need to raise standards. The school now has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and where it must improve. The headteacher has battled strongly during a difficult period in the school's life to build whole school systems for planning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation. These are established and are showing promising signs of having a positive effect on quickening pupils' progress. This is partly because senior staff, the headteacher and governors have responded well to the support and advice from the Local Authority. With improved stability in staffing and effective teamwork, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve and fulfil its plans.

Training and shared work with competent governance has equipped leaders with the tools and knowledge that they need to raise standards and achievement. Leaders now better understand how to use assessment information to improve features of provision.

Their work has improved pupils' skills in mental mathematics and some aspects of reading and writing that are seen in some good progress in Key Stage 2.



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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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

St Antony's RC Primary School

Shadsworth Road

Blackburn

Lancashire

BB1 2HP

17 October 2006

Dear Pupils,

Thank you for being so polite and helpful when we visited your school. This letter is to tell you what we found out.

We can see that you get on well together and that you do your best to behave well. We found that the teachers work hard to make lessons right for you and we know that many of you have had quite a few different teachers. We know that this has made learning a bit hard for many of you. Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to help you to do better. We think it would be great if you could get better at your work.

We have asked teachers to set work for you that will help you to learn faster. We have also asked the school to make teaching better in mathematics and to provide you with some more support when you are learning. This is so that you can catch up in some of the things you need to learn (such as 'tables' and some of the words you need to understand – just like you older pupils are doing!). This is to help you to make the progress you should, so that you have the same skills as other pupils your age.

Perhaps you might also think about electing classmates to represent you in a School Council? We have asked the school to give you the chance to learn how to make decisions so that you too can improve the things in school that matter to you.

Keep up your good efforts! We wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Delia Hiscock and Mrs Carole Cressey School Inspectors