



# St Antony's RC Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131926  
**Local Authority** Newham  
**Inspection number** 293888  
**Inspection dates** 27–28 February 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Martin Beale

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>	Upton Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Forest Gate
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		London E7 9PN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8552 3670
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	479	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8470 2580
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Sister Una McCreesh
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Sister Kathleen Colmer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 February 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Antony's is a large primary school with a part-time Nursery. It is situated in an area where many families experience considerable social and economic disadvantages. The school's intake has changed considerably in recent years. It has very many refugee children; a high proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over half are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to the national average. Attainment on entry is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Antony's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The headteacher and governors have created an ethos in which every pupil is valued. The school's values, based firmly on Catholic principles, are strongly evident in all that it does. It is a happy, calm and settled place for pupils. Parents strongly support all the school does for their children. The school takes its role in the community seriously and has recently opened a centre to support parents and young children from the local area.

Taking account of their below average starting points, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in the Foundation Stage and most reach the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. Progress in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory and standards, overall, are average. They have improved recently in literacy, particularly writing. Standards are improving at Year 2 but have fallen slightly at Year 6, particularly in mathematics and science. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but more effective in English than in mathematics. Teachers are not sufficiently confident about how to teach the steps pupils need to take to learn a new mathematical skill and lessons are too long to generate pace to their learning. Pupils have a secure level of scientific knowledge, but do not have consistent opportunities to undertake their own investigations. This has led to a fall in standards. Action is being taken, but not with sufficient urgency to bring about rapid improvement in both subjects.

The new Nursery brings the youngest children into the heart of the school. The Foundation Stage has a lively and well taught curriculum with a strong emphasis on personal development and a sharp focus on communication skills. This gives children a successful launch into learning. The needs of early learners of English are met very well here by developing communication skills through small steps. Children who enter the Nursery with little spoken English develop into fluent communicators by the time they enter Reception. Provision for these pupils is not as effective in the rest of the school but still enables them to make satisfactory progress.

The curriculum is satisfactory and promotes the pupils' personal development more effectively than their academic progress. This, coupled with effective care, support and guidance, results in good personal development and well-being. The school has met standards for 'Healthy Schools', encourages a high level of physical activity and strongly promotes other activities such as walking to school and healthy eating. The pupils thoroughly enjoy school and are proud of the contributions they make to its improvement. They enjoy responsibilities and helping others. They feel safe and secure and behave very sensibly. The pupils' satisfactory academic progress combined with their social skills provides a solid base for the next stage of their education.

There is a clear direction for the school and a strong commitment to providing support for pupils' personal development as a platform from which to improve their achievement. Leadership and management are satisfactory and give a sound base for further improvement. Senior staff and governors know where improvements are needed. Much monitoring takes place but this does not always focus closely on the impact of

the school's work on pupils. This results in the school having a slightly generous evaluation of its qualities. Considerable funding has been secured to extend the school's facilities and to maintain high staffing levels. The impact of this spending produces satisfactory value for money.

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

- Raise achievement in mathematics by developing the expertise and confidence of teachers and generating greater pace to pupils' learning.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn through scientific enquiry and investigation.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation focus more effectively on the impact of the school's work to improve pupils' learning and achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

From below average attainment on entry, children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and the majority meet expected standards by the end of Reception. Progress is satisfactory across the rest of the school, but is slower in mathematics and science than English. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Year 2 test results rose in 2006. They were close to the national average overall, above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. Test results at Year 6 have fallen slightly over recent years. They were average overall and in English in 2006, but below average in mathematics and science. Individual pupil targets are not always sufficiently challenging to act as a focus for raising achievement. School targets for English were exceeded in 2006, met in science but missed in mathematics. There are differences in the performance of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Black Caribbean pupils have consistently achieved less than other groups. Their learning improves considerably in English where teachers make a thoughtful choice of texts, target questions carefully and make clear their expectations of how the pupils should respond. Action such as this is inconsistent, however, and has led to only patchy improvements.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils very much enjoy their time at school because as one pupil said, 'school is safe and secure'. They are certain that they will be helped by teachers or other adults to sort out any problems. This allows them to be confident and to enjoy lessons. They work with much interest and enthusiasm and participate in large numbers in the clubs and other activities provided. Pupils' pride in their school is reflected in their good behaviour, punctuality and above average attendance. The school's commitment to the recognition of each person's special talent promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are polite, considerate of others and respectful of different cultures and customs. The good range of sporting activities, fitness sessions

and the focus on healthy eating promote a good understanding of the need to make healthy lifestyle choices. Pupils appreciate the responsibility of becoming peer mediators, members of the 'ECO committee' or the school council where they have opportunities to suggest ideas and make their own decisions. They like being able to make a difference and are confident their views are valued.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

There are good features to many lessons but these are not consistent enough to generate better than satisfactory progress across the school. Pupils become absorbed in their learning where teachers adopt interesting methods and activities that generate a brisk pace and are demanding and challenging. They also work hard and with direction when they are clear about the purpose of each lesson, what is expected of them and how to know if they have been successful. The potential to make learning interesting through the use of technology, such as interactive whiteboards, is not fully exploited in many areas. Education assistants are generally deployed well and use their skills to make a significant contribution to the learning of individuals and groups, although this is not the case in all classrooms. Mathematics teaching does not consistently have these good qualities. The teachers' lack of confidence and expertise shows where lessons do not focus sharply on the best way for pupils to learn new ideas and consolidate others. Learning in mathematics too often lacks challenge and interest.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum supports the pupils' personal development well but does not lead to good progress and improving standards in key subject areas. Significant improvements have been secured in the curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes in recent years, so that they now make good progress. The successful focus in Years 1 to 6 on developing literacy has resulted in much improvement in pupils' writing. Less emphasis has been given to developing numeracy, teaching science through enquiry and investigation and integrating the use of new technology fully into learning. Visits to places of interest, visitors to school and 'theme days' enhance and develop the pupils' understanding and bring historical events to life. The school's programme for personal and social development successfully teaches pupils how they can be safe and take care of themselves. The pupils' experiences are considerably enhanced by additional sports provision amongst the many well attended extra-curricular activities.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Parents are very happy with the high priority given to the pupils' health and safety. All required checks and risk assessments are carried out conscientiously and the school

is a safe and welcoming place in which pupils can learn and thrive. Child protection arrangements are rigorous and understood by all. Good guidance is given to enable pupils' to behave well and the ones that have difficulties in this respect are given good support. Rigorous procedures for promoting better academic progress are newly in place but it is too early to judge their full impact on pupils' progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and those with limited English make satisfactory progress through the targeted support provided both in school and from outside agencies.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher and her senior staff form a committed and determined team. They have overseen recent improvements in the Foundation Stage and Year 2 test results, particularly in writing. Much attention has been focused on building works, creating a well-used community resource and extending information and communication technology (ICT) resources. Senior staff and governors have recognised that achievement is not good enough in some areas and for some particular ethnic groups. They have introduced more robust procedures for analysing performance data, setting targets and tracking progress towards them. The performance of teachers is regularly monitored but the impact on learning and the pupils' progress is not sufficiently well evaluated. This is particularly so in mathematics where teaching is not is still not sharp enough to secure the improvements needed.

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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?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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>	2

<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**

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. You were all very kind, helpful and showed how proud you are of your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers and watching you learn. There are many aspects of your school that we liked.

You make satisfactory progress during your time at St Antony's. You thoroughly enjoy school, attend regularly, work hard and behave sensibly. You show great consideration for others and respect different customs and cultures. The youngest of you settle in well. The care and support you receive is good, particularly when children in the Nursery are new to learning English. You make sensible choices to show that you very clearly understand the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. You take your responsibilities seriously and make a considerable contribution to the life of the school.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. There are some areas where we judge that improvements could be made. We feel that many of you should be achieving higher standards in mathematics and in science. We are also suggesting your teachers check more closely that what they are doing is helping you to learn as rapidly as possible. I feel sure you and your teachers will work hard to make this all happen.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin BealeLead inspector