

# St Ann's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	133284
<b>Local Authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	316062
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 December 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Ashton

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 category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Gregory
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr J O'Brien
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 May 2003
<b>School address</b>	Derbyshire Lane Stretford Manchester Lancashire M32 8SH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 8657705
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 8668328

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' progress across each of the key stages in the school, the relative strengths and weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning across the school and the school's capacity to improve as demonstrated, for example, by its improvement since the last inspection in 2004. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, national assessment data and the school's own assessment records. School policies and headteacher reports to governors were examined, along with a range of pupils' written work. There were interviews with senior members of staff, pupils, governors and an officer from the local authority. Almost every classroom was visited during lessons and the parents' questionnaire returns were studied. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school with a 52-place Nursery class. It was formed in 2001 from the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools. It serves a diverse social and economic area of Stretford and draws pupils from wider than its immediate surroundings because of its Roman Catholic intake. The school has a national Healthy School award. A below average proportion of its pupils is eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. The large majority of pupils are White British but there are increasing numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups entering the school. Around 30 of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The home language of the largest group is Polish.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

The smart, bright blue uniforms and friendly cheerful faces are the first impressions the visitor receives of this school, which provides an outstanding level of education for its pupils.

From a below average starting point on entry to the school, children receive an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes, making better than expected progress which continues through to Years 1 and 2. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 have improved steadily over the last three years and in 2007 they were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well and in the national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils' standards are consistently well above average in all three of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This represents outstanding progress across the school as a whole, which is the result of consistently high standards of teaching and excellent leadership and management.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. It is never less than good and much of it is exemplary. Most notable is the consistency of teachers' marking. It is positive and helpful, with clear reasons why pupils' work is good, and it contains tactful advice on how to improve work when necessary. The work is very well matched to pupils' individual needs and expectations of every child are high. The result is that pupils love their lessons and achieve exceptionally well. 'The lessons are fun,' they say, 'and there are lots of hands-on activities. We have a very good choice of other activities after school too.' Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the small but increasing numbers of pupils from minority ethnic groups are thoroughly supported and made very welcome. They make the same progress as their classmates.

Pupils say that they feel safe, that their school offers lots of sporting activities and that the food at lunchtime is healthier than it was. Their preparation for the next stage of their education is exceptionally good. Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes to learning are very positive. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is excellent. Attendance, while satisfactory, has improved since the previous inspection because the school is making every effort to encourage pupils to attend every day. Pupils' contribution to the school community is very impressive. 'They have monitors for everything,' say the parents, 'even for the slope between the infant and junior playgrounds.' On the frosty day of the inspection this slippery slope really did need monitoring to prevent accidents and the older pupils did the job very well.

The vast majority of parents are very happy indeed with the school. Typical comments were, 'This is a great school with great staff; the children are treated with respect and consideration; they are flourishing under the school's excellent leadership, and are nurtured both academically and spiritually.' A few parents are unhappy that the overall number of pupils in the juniors means that one group of children has to be taught in a mixed-age class, but there is no suggestion that the pupils are not well taught.

The school's curriculum has richness and breadth and the plans to improve further the two areas identified for development (music, and the control technology aspects of information and communication technology) are well in hand. Pupils are very well cared for. Safeguarding checks fulfil government guidelines. Academic monitoring is well established and is working very well.

The leadership and management of the school are major strengths and the key reasons for the school's excellence. The involvement and inclusion of other leaders and coordinators in the

school is well endorsed by the leaders themselves. They are enthused, allowed to grow and develop, dealt with patiently when they make mistakes due to inexperience, and trusted to exercise their initiative, as individuals and in teams. The result is consistently high standards across the school. School self-evaluation is accurate. The school's excellent capacity to improve further is very well illustrated by the marked improvements since the last inspection, particularly in the Foundation Stage. Governors are heavily involved in the work of the school. They challenge as well as support the school's leadership. Finances are healthy and surpluses have been spent wisely on improving the toilet provision, the school's external environment and the provision for external play for the early years. School development planning, though comprehensive and all embracing, stops short of being as good as it could be because of the wooliness of some of its criteria for success.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

The Foundation Stage has been completely transformed since the previous inspection and is now a considerable strength. Criticised in the previous inspection for the unsatisfactory nature of its leadership, standards and curriculum, as well as for the quality of its teaching and learning, the Nursery is now a very different place. It was accurately described in a fairly recent monitoring visit by the local authority as, 'Well organised and well resourced, with children making very good progress in their learning.'

Children enter the Foundation Stage with below expected skill levels for their age, especially in their personal, social and emotional development and in their communication skills. The provision they receive is excellent. There is a very well planned curriculum, outstanding teaching, secure routines, a tremendous choice of activities and splendidly appropriate resources. This provision is very thoroughly built on in the two Reception classes, with lots of practical activities using both outdoor and indoor spaces creatively to develop children's skills. The result is that the children achieve all of their early learning goals by the time they move to Year 1.

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

- Sharpen the school's development planning, especially the criteria it uses to judge its own success.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
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



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

Inspection of St Ann's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stretford, Trafford. M32 8SH

Thank you for making me so welcome on my recent visit to your school. I was pleased that so very many of you took the trouble to talk to me in class, around the school and in the playground.

A very special thank you should go to the interesting and lively group of children who gave up part of their lunchtime to tell me so many good things about the school and to ask me such interesting questions. They told me, for instance, about how much they enjoyed their lessons and about the very good range of clubs and activities the school makes available for you.

I can see why you are so proud of your school. I think it is an excellent place and it gives you an outstanding education. It is very well equipped and cared for and you are all very well looked after. The staff in the school work very well together. They teach you in such interesting and challenging ways and they are exceptionally well led and managed. Above all, you all work very hard and are making remarkably good progress.

There are no major areas for improvement that your school is not already working on, but I have asked your headteacher to develop some clearer and more useful ways of working out exactly when the school has achieved its major aims.

You can play your part by continuing to work very hard and making sure that you attend school every single day.

I wish you all continued success in the future.