

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105522
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	336507
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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 of pupils on the school roll	610
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr M Murray
Headteacher	Mr J Gretton
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 25 lessons, and held meetings with a governor, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies, pupils' books, assessment information, questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 277 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement and progress of pupils, especially in Key Stages 1 and 2
- the quality of teaching and assessment.

Information about the school

This is a very large urban primary school in which the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups has grown in recent years and now broadly reflects the national average. Most of these pupils are of Indian and Eastern European origin. Many of them speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. The Early Years Foundation Stage provision consists of Nursery and Reception classes. The school has gained the Artsmark Gold Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. The Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children outstandingly well as learners and as committed members of the school community. The school does many things outstandingly well. At the core of its success are the outstanding levels of care, guidance and support it provides for its pupils. As a result, and because of outstanding procedures for safeguarding, pupils of all ages feel exceptionally safe. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary because relationships are very strong throughout the school. The school is at the heart of the community it serves. It is highly regarded and is heavily oversubscribed. The school engenders a very strong family-like atmosphere. Pupils are proud of their school. Their contributions to making it such a harmonious community and their involvement in the local community are excellent. They also have excellent understanding and appreciation of other cultures and religions both nationally and internationally. Outstanding commitment to promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination means that the increasing numbers of pupils from abroad and those who speak English as an additional language have been integrated seamlessly and harmoniously into the school community. Strong links with the local church and a deep commitment to Christian values ensure that pupils' social, moral spiritual and cultural development is of the highest order. The school has forged excellent links with parents and carers. Almost all of them are fully supportive of all aspects of the school's work. 'I am very pleased I chose this school for my children. They love going to school. Everyone is so helpful and kind,' is a typical comment.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well as they move up through the school. From below expected starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, standards by the end of Year 6 are average and rising, especially in writing. Standards in reading are consistently very high. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who join the school from abroad make outstanding progress because the school goes to great lengths to meet their particular needs and support their learning. The quality of teaching, overall, is good. However, there are variations in its quality and in its impact on pupils' learning. Teaching does not use information and communication technology (ICT) routinely to support pupils' learning. As a result, opportunities for pupils to develop their skills as independent learners are sometimes too limited. While procedures for tracking pupils' progress are firmly in place and provide a wealth of data, on some occasions teaching does not use the information effectively enough to match tasks closely to the abilities and needs of different groups of pupils. As a result, some pupils find lessons too easy and others struggle. The curriculum is good. It is especially successful in providing enrichment activities in sports, the arts and educational visits that broaden pupils' horizons and add to their enjoyment of school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Leaders and managers at all levels, including an outstanding governing body, ensure that there is a sharp focus on raising standards. For example, attainment in writing is improving significantly because leaders and managers have identified weaknesses and have tackled them rigorously. The school assesses its own effectiveness well and knows what it needs to do to tackle identified weaknesses. Rising standards, especially in writing, and the maintenance of outstanding features identified at the time of the previous inspection demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that teachers use assessment information more effectively to match tasks more closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils.
- Promote pupils' skills as independent learners by making more effective use of ICT in teaching.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

In lessons pupils behave exceptionally well. They are attentive and keen to learn. They are eager to answer questions. They respond enthusiastically to teaching which is delivered with pace and challenges their thinking. However, where teaching is not so effective, pupils react passively and tackle tasks diligently but with little apparent enthusiasm, especially when tasks are not suited to their ability levels. From starting points which are below those expected on joining the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress to attain standards that are average and rising by the end of Key Stage 2. In English standards are improving significantly because of the school's rigour in tackling pupils' writing skills. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' writing skills are now above average.

Pupils' personal development is the jewel in the school's crown. They are confident, mature and welcoming. They have good manners and treat adults and each other with deep respect. They enjoy taking on responsibilities such as by becoming classroom monitors. The school council is an active body and respected by pupils. Pupils are very active with their local church in supporting the local community and enjoy fundraising for a wide range of charities. Pupils know the importance of healthy lifestyles. Nearly all of them have a nutritious school dinner which they find 'tasty and good for us.' Even the youngest children can say what foods are good for them and what foods to eat in moderation only. Participation rates in the wide range of sporting activities on offer are high. The school prepares its pupils well to take advantage of the next step in their education when they move on to secondary school. However, pupils' skills in using and applying ICT are not well enough developed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good subject knowledge. Very strong relationships in classrooms ensure that pupils feel encouraged and that their contributions are valued. Teaching is at its most effective when it challenges pupils to think through questions for themselves or by working collaboratively with others. Pupils respond eagerly to teaching which is delivered at a fast pace and when there is a good variety of activities to keep them interested and motivated. However, some teaching is too teacher-led. Pupils are expected to sit and listen for too long. Marking of pupils' work is good. It is regular and most gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do to improve their work.

The range of enrichment activities is very wide. Participation rates are high. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught Italian. There is an annual residential trip to Italy for older pupils. The annual drama production is of high quality and much enjoyed by all the pupils, who are eager to take part. The taught curriculum is good, overall. However, the low levels of use of ICT across different subjects limit pupils' development of appropriate skills. In addition, the materials and activities presented in lessons sometimes do not match closely enough pupils' needs or abilities.

Induction arrangements for the Early Years Foundation Stage are well thought out and enable children to settle in quickly to school routines. The school has also forged strong links with local secondary schools so that pupils are able to settle in without difficulty to secondary education. Despite the school's size, every pupil is known as an individual. Pupils say how well the adults working with them care for them and support them. Very strong links with outside agencies have been forged to provide specialist support for individual children and their families whenever a need is identified.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership promotes very high levels of teamwork across the school in the pursuit of improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels pull together to make sure that pupils' personal development is at the forefront of their work. Leaders and managers have an accurate view of what the school does well and where it could do even better, such as in the development of pupils' writing skills. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is regular but is occasionally too generous in judging how effective teaching is. Outstanding effectiveness in tackling equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination ensure that the school is a harmonious place in which to work and play. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school from abroad are welcomed into its nurturing environment and respond to the high levels of support they receive by making excellent progress. Attention to safeguarding is meticulous. Necessary policies and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly. Staff training is regular for all adults working with children, resulting in adults being exceptionally knowledgeable about steps that need to be taken should the need arise. The school's promotion of community cohesion is of the highest order. The school itself is a very harmonious community of which the pupils are proud. It is at the heart of its local community where it is highly regarded. Strong links with other countries such as Italy, India, Africa and Australia ensure that pupils not only have high levels of understanding and appreciation of other cultures, but also develop respect for other religions and ways of life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The outstanding quality of the Early Years Foundation Stages ensures that children get off to a flying start, especially in the development of their personal, social and emotional skills and their creative development. The Early Years Foundation Stage is highly effective in promoting children's positive attitudes towards school and learning. Children work and play in a stimulating environment which is warm and welcoming. Resources are used very effectively to push children on and instil positive attitudes to school. Teaching is good; some is outstanding. It is sensitive to children's individual needs. Children's progress is tracked meticulously and reported regularly to parents and carers. There is a very good balance between activities initiated by children and those instigated by adults, especially indoors. The outdoor facilities are not always exploited to the full, however, to promote children's physical development and exploration of the world around them. Outstanding leadership and management ensure the success of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults working with the children are exceptionally secure in their roles and responsibilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage is characterised by happy, smiling children who obviously love being there. They behave impeccably and develop exceptionally positive attitudes towards school and learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A large number of questionnaires were returned by parents and carers. The overwhelming majority were positive about all aspects of the school supporting inspectors' views that this is a good school which does many things outstandingly well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anthony's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 277 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 610 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	195	69	85	30	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	206	73	73	26	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	141	50	133	47	5	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	175	62	98	35	4	1	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	198	70	78	28	2	1	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	163	58	108	38	8	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	161	57	110	39	7	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	133	47	130	46	4	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	158	56	115	41	4	1	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	139	49	130	46	5	2	3	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	132	47	136	48	5	2	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	198	70	78	28	4	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	205	73	74	26	2	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



09 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Manchester, M22 0NT

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came with my colleagues to inspect your school recently. It was good to meet you and talk to many of you. What you told us was of great help in enabling us to reach our judgements.

You will be pleased to know that you go to a good school. You will also be pleased to know that it does many things outstandingly well. Chief among these is how well the school cares for and supports you. It was a pleasure to see how well you behave and how well you all get on together. I was especially pleased to see how welcome you have made the pupils who have joined your school from foreign countries – well done! You are fortunate to go to a school which is so well respected in the local community. You told us you feel exceptionally safe in school and I agree. The adults working with you do everything they can to make sure of this. I was struck by how much you know about other countries and foreign cultures. This is very important for your future outlook on life. The adults working with you know each of you as an individual and want you to do as well as you can. They work very hard to that end.

In order to make your school even better I am asking it to do two things.

- Make sure that all of you use ICT more regularly so that you can develop your skills to learn independently of your teachers.
- Make sure that what teachers ask you to do in lessons is always challenging and matched closely to how easy or how hard you find learning.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard to make sure your school goes from strength to strength in the coming years.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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