

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Dunkery Road, Manchester, M22 0NT

Inspection dates 3–4 February 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has a resolute and determined focus on improving the outcomes of all pupils and is ably supported by a strong and developing team of senior and middle leaders.
- The hard work and commitment of all staff have led to improvements in the quality of teaching, pupils' attendance and achievement.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start because the environments are well organised and promote a love of learning.
- In 2014, the standards pupils reached in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 improved on the previous year and were above the national average.
- Across the school, pupils make good progress from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching is typically good and teachers and teaching assistants work well together to provide pupils with activities which interest them.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they are well mannered, polite and show respect for adults and each other. Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet.
- Effective support for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs helps them achieve as well as other pupils.
- The primary school sport funding is used very well to provide pupils with high-quality lessons and a wide range of opportunities to experience and participate in different sports.
- The governors are well informed and, through their involvement in school, are able to both support and challenge leaders about school performance.
- The wide range of clubs, trips and links with the local church and other countries effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking does not always provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve in all subjects.
- Work is not always set at a level which challenges all pupils, especially the most able, for them to reach their potential.
- The best teaching practices evident in the school are not always shared widely among staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and a deputy headteacher. They also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from three different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and the school improvement consultant.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents and took account of the 59 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of the 31 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Vanessa MacDonald, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Shutt	Additional Inspector
Simon Dyson	Additional Inspector
Philip Choi	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Anthony's Catholic Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language are similar to national averages.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- St Anthony's Catholic Primary School converted to become an academy on 4 April 2013. When its predecessor school, St Anthony's RC Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- There have been significant changes to senior leadership since 2011, including the appointment of a headteacher in 2011 and a deputy headteacher in 2012. The deputy headteacher left for a promoted post in April 2014. A new structure of leadership has been implemented, with two new deputy headteachers appointed in the last 12 months. Other senior and middle leaders were appointed in September 2014.
- There have also been significant changes to teaching staff over the past three years. The school currently has six newly qualified teachers and a further eight teachers who are in the early stages of their career.
- The early years comprises a full-time Nursery and full-time Reception classes.
- The school is a member of the Wythenshawe Catholic Academy Trust.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was undergoing major building work to provide three new classrooms.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
 - ensuring that marking consistently gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve in all subjects
 - making sure that work set always provides a suitable level of challenge, especially for the most able, so that more pupils attain the higher standards
 - continuing to develop opportunities to share more widely the strongest teaching practices with staff across the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a firm and determined focus on improving the outcomes for pupils. He has managed the significant amount of staff changes well and is supported by a committed and strongly developing leadership team of senior and middle leaders. As a result, there have been improvements in attendance, including a reduction in the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school, improvements in the proportion of pupils achieving the phonics check in Year 1 and in the standards reached by pupils by the end of Year 2.
- New members of staff, including those who are newly qualified, are well supported and, as a result, the quality of teaching is continuing to improve. Although there are some opportunities for staff to share good teaching practice, the school recognises that these could be extended more widely to further improve the quality of teaching.
- The procedures for checking on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are regular and thorough, identifying accurately the key priority areas for the school. The information gathered on how well pupils are doing is used to identify which pupils are in danger of falling behind and additional support is then put into place to support them. The funding for pupils who are disadvantaged is used well to provide additional staff to support pupils in class and in groups so they achieve as well as others. This shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities for all pupils and to tackling any discrimination.
- Middle leaders, many of whom are new to role, have developed their skills well and have clear priorities for action based on a good understanding of strengths and priorities in their areas of responsibility. This is as a result of the regular opportunities they have to check on the quality of teaching in their areas.
- The procedures for managing the performance of teachers are robust and rigorous. Teachers' targets are linked to pupils' progress and the main priorities for the school and are checked regularly before any decisions about pay progression are made. High-quality professional development has improved the quality of teaching and is effectively supporting the development of leaders at different levels.
- The curriculum is organised to interest pupils and develop their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics effectively. St Anthony's has links with a school in Italy and pupils are taught Italian, which means that when older pupils have the opportunity to visit, they are able to converse with their peers. Pupils' computing and design and technology skills are also supported by the use of additional teachers.
- Through its links with the local church and with schools and organisations in other countries, including China, Brazil and Ethiopia, pupils' understanding of different cultures is good. Pupils regularly raise money to support these organisations. Children have a good understanding of Christianity and other religions through the work they do in school; they are taught about different values such as peace, justice and democracy, which fosters good relations. This ensures that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- As a member of a multi-academy trust, the school benefits from opportunities for teachers and leaders to learn from one another. Regular meetings enable teachers to share pupils' work, check how well their pupils are doing and how accurately teachers are assessing this. Through this partnership, the school works with an adviser who supports and challenges the school's leaders well.
- The primary school sport funding is used very effectively to employ specialist staff who both develop the skills of staff and pupils and have also broadened the sporting opportunities for pupils. Pupils spoke positively of the opportunities to attend after-school clubs and to take part in competitive sports with other schools. The introduction of sporting activities at lunchtime has been popular with pupils. Governors, staff and pupils say it has helped with improving behaviour at lunchtime. As a result, more pupils are taking part in sporting activities, which are promoting their well-being and helping them to stay healthy.
- Most parents are positive about all aspects of the school's work. A small proportion of parents feel they do not receive enough information about their children's progress. Inspection evidence found that the information parents receive and the opportunities for them to discuss their children's learning are similar to those of other schools.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and are effective. Staff receive updates and training on how to keep pupils and themselves safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the different strengths and areas for improvement in the school. This is because they regularly visit the school; they also have opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and progress of pupils through attending meetings with leaders, including those on data about pupils' progress, observing lessons and looking at pupils' work. Governors understand well how teachers' pay progression is related to pupils' progress and the quality of teaching so that any

under-performance can be tackled and effective teaching rewarded. Governors have agreed that the pupil premium funding is used to provide additional staff to support eligible pupils and receive information on how well this is being used. They have a very good understanding of how the primary school sport funding is spent and how this has improved the range and participation of sports on offer as well as the quality of provision in physical education (PE). Governors have accessed training to improve their skills through the local authority, the diocese and more recently through the academy trust of schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. In lessons and around the school pupils are polite, well-mannered and courteous to one another. Pupils enjoy school and take a pride in their work and school environment. The older pupils are excited about the building of new classrooms, which will provide Year 6 with their own learning environment.
- Pupils say that teachers are kind and make lessons interesting. They are keen to answer questions and to do their best; as a result, very little time is wasted in lessons. Occasionally, a few pupils sometimes lose concentration when their work lacks challenge.
- Pupils spoke very positively about the work the school council has done to improve the playgrounds and the resources they have at lunchtime and playtime. Older pupils are keen to be playground pals and leaders, taking these responsibilities seriously.
- Pupils feel that behaviour is good and most parents agree. School records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour and that these are managed appropriately.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying well and say that bullying does not happen very often in the school. They are confident that any incidents would be swiftly sorted out. Older pupils said that any incidents are usually related to 'falling out' and that they sort it out because they 'will be friends again'.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. The police have delivered assemblies to support pupils' understanding of cyber-bullying, for example. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe around the school, particularly during a period of ongoing building work. Even the youngest children know they have to wear hard hats in their construction area.
- Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has decreased significantly because the school has good procedures to check on absence and to promote good attendance.

The quality of teaching is good

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior and middle leaders, has managed the significant staff changes well to ensure that the quality of teaching is good overall and that the majority of pupils achieve well over time.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work and the standard of presentation is of a good quality across the school. Relationships between pupils and the adults who teach and support them are very positive and this promotes positive and productive classrooms.
- Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils well to stimulate their thinking skills and also to get them to give clear explanations. In one session, a group of pupils, having read a short passage, had to explain what they thought certain phrases might mean or imply. The searching questions asked ensured that pupils used their comprehension skills well to infer meaning.
- Pupils are keen readers. In one enterprising Year 6 class, the pupils have decided to contribute to the purchase of new books. They have a wish list of books they want to read and when there is sufficient money, these are purchased. They proudly showed their class library and how they are cataloguing their books.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is taught well and younger pupils are able to use their phonics skills to break down unfamiliar words so they can read them. In a Year 1 class, pupils were encouraged to use thesauruses to find other words to improve their writing. Pupils used these confidently, explaining

clearly what they were and reading, selecting and using alternative words.

- Mathematics is taught well. Pupils are able to use their knowledge to apply it to solve problems. In a Year 6 class, pupils were using their understanding of times tables to work out the fraction of a number, from their previously gathered data. They then converted this into a decimal, showing rapid progress in their learning. The introduction of 'maths passports' across the school has also improved pupils' mental calculation skills.
- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to write for different purposes and the work in books shows that pupils enjoy writing and make good progress. Pupils are able to apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills into their writing because these are taught regularly and well. As a result, the standards reached in these skills by pupils in Year 6 improved in 2014.
- Homework is well planned and supports pupils' learning. Younger pupils are able to select from a menu of activities which enable them to develop their literacy, numeracy and research skills, for example. The standard of presentation in these books is of the same good quality found in pupils' other books.
- Work is marked regularly. In the best examples, particularly in writing, there is clear guidance given and pupils know what to do to improve their work. However, this is not yet consistent across all subjects or classes.
- Teachers plan activities which engage and interest pupils. Occasionally, pupils are not always given work that is challenging enough, especially for the most able, and this slows their progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils usually start Key Stage 1 with skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress across Key Stage 1 to reach standards which were above those found nationally in 2014. The standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 improved on the previous year, particularly in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels, which was above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels also improved in reading and mathematics.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2014, the overall standards reached by pupils were lower than those reached in 2013 and similar to those found nationally. Standards in reading were lower than in writing and mathematics. Although most pupils made the progress expected of them in each subject, the proportion doing so in reading was lower. The proportion of pupils making better-than-expected progress in each subject was below average, particularly in reading. A number of pupils narrowly missed attaining the next level of attainment in reading and this had a negative effect on their overall attainment and progress. Inspection evidence also shows that some pupils in Year 6 were adversely affected by staffing disruption which occurred during 2014.
- Senior leaders have swiftly responded to the lower standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014, particularly in reading. They identified that pupils' ability to infer and deduce information from texts required improvement. As a result, teachers and teaching assistants received training on how to enhance these skills. Inspection evidence shows that teachers and teaching assistants are delivering good-quality sessions to develop pupils' reading skills, including those of the most able, which are showing positive results.
- In 2014, most pupils in different year groups across the school made the progress expected of them and many made better-than-expected progress. Inspection evidence shows that the progress of pupils currently on roll in school is good in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the standard in the most recent phonics check (letters and the sounds they make) in Year 1 was similar to the national average. Pupils are able to use their phonics skills to successfully read and write words. Year 2 pupils who read to an inspector showed that they were confident and increasingly fluent readers who enjoy reading a range of books by different authors, such as Roald Dahl.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress. In 2014, the attainment of these pupils was approximately one term behind that of other pupils in school in reading, mathematics and spelling, grammar and punctuation. Their attainment in writing was the same as that of other pupils in the school. When compared to other pupils nationally, their attainment was approximately one term behind in mathematics, two terms behind in spelling, punctuation and grammar, two and a half terms behind in reading and in writing there was no difference. Inspection evidence shows that across the school, these pupils make good progress and their attainment is close to that of their peers. This shows that the school is closing the gaps in the performance of different groups of pupils.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are well provided for. The well-planned provision for these pupils ensures that they receive good additional support from effective teaching

assistants. This, along with specific additional group sessions, helps them make good progress from their different starting points.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar good rates of progress to their peers because of the additional support they receive to acquire language skills, particularly in the early years where increasing numbers of children are starting at the early stages of learning English.
- Overall, the most able pupils make good progress. However, some of these pupils do not always achieve the highest standards of which they are capable because they are not always given work that is hard enough to challenge them.

The early years provision

is good

- Children start Nursery with skills which are below, and for some significantly below, those typical for their age, particularly in language and communication. An increasing number of children starting school do not speak English as their first language and the school provides children with additional support to promote their understanding of English. Some children also receive additional support for speech and language development.
- The children make good progress across both Nursery and Reception because teaching is good. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development by the time they leave Reception is similar to that found nationally. As a result, children are well prepared for starting Year 1.
- The warm and welcoming atmosphere in the Nursery and Reception classes means that children settle quickly and are eager and keen to learn. They understand the different routines and purposeful learning opportunities are well planned so that children are able to practise new learning in different ways. Different topics are chosen to interest children and to extend their learning of the wider world.
- There is a good mixture of adult-directed activities and ones which children choose for themselves. They show sustained interest in different activities. For example, three children were engrossed in a numbers game on the interactive whiteboard while others were using tablet computers to work independently on language development. Occasionally, children are not always given work or activities that are challenging enough, especially for the most able.
- Children play and mix well together and their behaviour is good. The adults that look after them ensure that they are well cared for and kept safe. Children are very well supervised when walking to the hall for either lunchtime or physical education (PE) lessons.
- The physical development of pupils is also well planned and children benefit from and enjoy the sessions they have with a specialist PE teacher. Children also enjoy 'Squiggle while you Wiggle' and baby ballet sessions to further develop their physical skills.
- Phonics is taught well. As children develop their understanding of letters and the sounds they make, they are able to use their skills to read words and write simple sentences. Children in a Reception class were particularly keen to 'jump across the river'; having correctly identified the sound in the word they had been given.
- The leadership of the early years is good. The leaders in Nursery and Reception work well together. They ensure that, across the different classes, staff work together to assess children's learning and plan activities that will further develop children's skills well and encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	139458
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	449976

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	672
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr M Murray
Headteacher	Mr R P Ward
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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