

St Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 104470 |
| Local Authority | Knowsley |
| Inspection number | 355587 |
| Inspection dates | 7–8 December 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Frank Carruthers |

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

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| 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 | 226 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Mark Helme |
| Headteacher | Mrs Jan Cunningham |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 April 2008 |
| School address | Higher Road Halewood Liverpool L26 1TD |
| Telephone number | 0151 288 8940 |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eleven lessons or parts of lessons were observed involving 10 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and five parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, school assessments, planning and school policies, including those concerning the safeguarding of pupils. Inspectors analysed 52 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and 89 completed by pupils.

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

- How well pupils of all levels of ability and different needs are progressing.
- The effectiveness of the improvements made to the systems to assess pupils' progress since the last inspection.
- The quality of extended school provision, given the change of management of the after-school club.
- How robust are all aspects of safeguarding.
- How effective are leadership and management at all levels.

Information about the school

St Andrews is an average sized-primary school in a suburb of Liverpool. Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the average for primary schools nationally. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The school provides a breakfast club and has just taken on the management of a privately run after-school club. The school has gained the Healthy School status and follows the International Primary Curriculum.

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

The school provides a good education for pupils. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. Pupils enjoy school and achieve well. On entry to the Nursery class, most children's skills are below expected levels. The skills of some children are well below expectations, especially in their personal and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. The great majority of pupils reach the expected level of attainment in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school in Year 6. This constitutes good progress. Standards in reading are above average and are higher than in writing. The school has put in place several measures to improve standards of writing, particularly that of boys, but this remains an area for further improvement. In mathematics, not enough pupils are achieving above the expected level. The pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and the behaviour of almost all is outstanding. Pupils are polite and courteous. They take on responsibilities exceptionally well and older pupils look out for younger ones.

The quality of teaching is good overall and some lessons are outstanding. A particular improvement since the last inspection is the excellent way in which teachers use their knowledge of how pupils are progressing to improve the quality of their learning. This enables them to set work which matches the pupils' attainment and challenges them very well. The curriculum is good. There is a very good emphasis on linking subjects together to help pupils' understanding. It is enriched by an international dimension, as well as an interesting range of visits out of school and visitors to school. All aspects of care, guidance and support for pupils are excellent. Parents and carers are unanimous in their view of the school as a place that welcomes you and they particularly appreciate its family atmosphere.

The senior leadership team has been bolstered since the last inspection and, as a result, several aspects of leadership and management have improved. Of particular note are the monitoring of teaching and learning, the way the school promotes the welfare and achievement of all pupils and the partnerships it generates, both with parents and carers and with a network of other schools and agencies. All these aspects are outstanding. The school has maintained the quality of its provision and outcomes for pupils since the time of the last inspection. School leaders and the governing body successfully continue to drive forward improvement, based on accurate self-evaluation. As a result the school has good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on pupils' good achievement in English and mathematics by:

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- increasing all boys' interest in and enthusiasm for writing
- increasing the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reach Level 5 in mathematics.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' achievement, enjoyment and learning in lessons are good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very few from minority ethnic backgrounds, make good progress. Pupils' excellent behaviour and their enthusiasm for learning are important factors in their achievement. They answer questions readily, cooperate with one another and work well on group tasks or independently. These good outcomes are promoted by the school's focus on encouraging pupils to be aspirational, which is evident in its slogan, 'Dream It, Believe It, Reach It'. Pupils take a pride in their work and standards of presentation in their workbooks and folders are good. Pupils' handwriting is clear and often very neat. They use punctuation and spelling with increasing accuracy. Recently introduced initiatives to develop boys' interest in writing have had a positive impact on the quality of older boys' writing, but this is not evident as yet in all year groups. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 is in line with the average for all pupils nationally. However, the proportion reaching the higher Level 5 is below average and this is an area for improvement.

Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities in school and to support work in the wider community. Fund-raising for overseas projects is a regular feature and pupils talk enthusiastically about what they have done. The 'Green Knights' help to keep the school environmentally friendly. The school council provides a clear voice for pupils, and school prefects are particularly proud of their roles around school and of helping younger pupils. They are considerate towards one another. The very few who display challenging behaviour are given very good support so that they continue to benefit from their schooling. Attendance is above average and pupils are punctual to school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and how to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle. These aspects are promoted well by the school through the curriculum and after-school clubs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, promoted very well by the school's ethos.

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.

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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 | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 1 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| 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 | 2 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good. Teachers' planning is consistently clear and their excellent use of assessment supports pupils' learning extremely well. Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and pupils gain a good understanding of what their targets are and how to achieve them. In the best lessons, the teacher uses questioning extremely well. For example, during a whole-class introduction to the subject of points of the compass and coordinates, the teacher challenged the more able, while at the same time aimed questions at other groups that would also challenge them. In another lesson, a particularly talented mathematician was given a task appropriate to his needs. A clear marking policy is consistently followed throughout the school so that pupils know how to improve their work. The curriculum is very well designed to interest all pupils and to support individuals or groups of pupils who have particular needs. There are several intervention strategies in reading, writing and mathematics, in which teachers and teaching assistants use their specialist training to provide very effective support. The curriculum also promotes pupils' personal development very well. Regular opportunities for pupils to discuss social and moral issues, for example, in relation to disability or cultural diversity, are very well planned and promote tolerance very well.

Outstanding care, guidance and support provide the foundation upon which pupils thrive academically and personally. The role of the learning mentor, especially in helping the more vulnerable children, is very valuable in these aspects of the school. Pupils and their parents or carers know there is always the opportunity to raise any concerns with staff. They are consulted on a regular basis, for example, on the current transfer of responsibility for the after-school club from a private provider to the school. Both the

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breakfast and after-school clubs provide very good quality care, and activities that pupils enjoy and parents and carers appreciate. The school is keen to develop its extended school provision.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 1 |
| 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?

All aspects of leadership and management are at least good. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership in improving teaching, learning and the overall performance of the school. She is a very good role model for other members of the senior leadership team. Thanks to good opportunities for professional development, subject coordinators make an increasingly effective contribution to the work of the school. The headteacher has a high profile in the network of local schools and this increases the value of these excellent partnerships for the school. Staff benefit from well-organised programmes of professional development and pupils often take part in events with other schools that promote well their cultural development. Excellent partnerships with parents and carers have a similarly very positive impact on the effectiveness of the school. The governing body promotes the strategic development of the school well. It is involved in all aspects of planning. Members of the governing body have strong links with different year groups and are closely involved in the school's activities.

Equality of opportunity is promoted outstandingly well. Senior staff monitor and track the performance of all pupils exceptionally rigorously to ensure that no pupil underachieves. They also keep a watchful eye on how well pupils relate to and support those amongst them who are more vulnerable. Strategies to tackle discrimination are outstandingly successful. Regular risk assessments and thorough child protection measures, including the safe recruitment of staff, mean safeguarding procedures are good. The school's work to promote community cohesion is good. For example, the school takes the opportunity to visit different places of worship to help pupils' awareness of other cultures and faiths. Senior staff have plans to promote links with schools that have a different ethnic mix to help to extend even further pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in society today.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 1 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 1 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 1 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

All aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage are at least good. An excellent feature is the way the children quickly become well adjusted to the Nursery setting. They cooperate well with one another and play harmoniously together. Progress in these aspects of their development is excellent. Good teaching throughout both the Nursery and Reception Years means that children make good progress from their individual starting points. By the end of the Reception Year the majority are working at the expected levels in most areas of learning. However, a large minority are still working towards them in key areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. There are very good opportunities for the children to work indoors, beyond the two adjoining rooms in the conservatory and outside in the secure play areas. The balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities is good. The children soon become inquisitive learners in the well-equipped rooms with their attractive displays and imaginative play areas. Children particularly enjoy and benefit from the links they have with older pupils, for example, in helping them to read well. All aspects supporting the children's welfare and safety are good. Despite a change of leadership in this key stage since the last inspection, leadership and management are good. Teamwork among all adults is a particular strength. Staff know the children very well and monitor their progress closely. Parents and carers report they are very pleased with the progress their children make in the two years. They feel very much part of their children's education. Many have benefited from a programme of courses organised for the school by a visiting parent mentor, who is herself a parent of pupils at the school.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

In terms of the percentage of questionnaires returned, the response was fairly typical of most inspections of primary schools. Almost all the parents and carers who responded expressed highly positive views of the school. This was also true of several parents and carers that met with the team. They greatly value the welcoming, family atmosphere the staff generate. A comment typical of many received by inspectors was, 'This is a lovely school.' They appreciate how the school helps their children to achieve well and are unanimous in reporting that their children enjoy school. Inspectors endorse these opinions and consider they are a reflection of the highly-successful partnerships the school has with parents and carers. A few parents or carers expressed concern that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively. Inspectors find the school has excellent levels of support for the very few pupils who display challenging behaviour and take any incident of disruptive behaviour very seriously.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew the Apostle 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 37 | 71 | 15 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 38 | 73 | 12 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 30 | 58 | 20 | 38 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 34 | 65 | 13 | 25 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 32 | 62 | 16 | 31 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 32 | 62 | 17 | 33 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 30 | 58 | 21 | 40 | 1 | 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) | 26 | 50 | 24 | 46 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 31 | 60 | 16 | 31 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 23 | 44 | 23 | 44 | 4 | 8 | 1 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 26 | 50 | 21 | 40 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 34 | 65 | 15 | 29 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 34 | 65 | 13 | 25 | 3 | 6 | 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 58 | 36 | 4 | 2 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 43 | 40 | 9 |
| Secondary schools | 10 | 35 | 42 | 13 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 39 | 45 | 3 |
| Special schools | 33 | 42 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 18 | 40 | 29 | 12 |
| All schools | 11 | 42 | 38 | 9 |

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



9 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew the Apostle Catholic Primary School, Liverpool, L26 1TD

It was a great pleasure to inspect your school. You were all extremely friendly and helpful and we enjoyed finding out from you how you are getting on. We particularly enjoyed the meeting we held with the school council and other pupils. On behalf of the inspection team I would like to share with you what we found.

Your school is providing you with a good education. Some of its work is outstanding. Your behaviour is excellent and this means you learn well. You told us bullying is very rare and that, if it happens, the staff deal with it promptly. You take on responsibilities extremely well and we were very impressed with how older pupils take care of the younger children, helping them to feel part of a big family. You make good progress in lessons and, by the time you leave at the end of Year 6, most of you reach the standards expected in English and mathematics. This is because the teaching you receive is good and you work hard. You told us how much you enjoy the activities in school. School leaders do a good job. Your headteacher is an outstanding leader. The way staff check how well you are doing to make sure no one is slipping behind is excellent. The staff take outstanding care of you all so that you feel safe and have someone to turn to if you have need. They have built up excellent links with your parents and carers and with other schools, all to very good effect.

Part of my job is to identify how the school can be even better. There are two improvements for staff to make.

- Boys are not doing as well as they might with writing so the school is going to continue to focus on this. Boys, you can help by knowing your targets for writing and doing your best to improve your work.
- There are not enough of you achieving Level 5 in mathematics, so staff will aim to help you to do better. You can all help by really trying your best in lessons.

Please continue to work hard and enjoy school. I send you all my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Frank Carruthers

Lead inspector

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