

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Highfield South, Rockferry, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH42 4NE

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| Inspection dates | 8–9 June 2016 |
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is improving. Since the previous inspection, school leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching which is now consistently good.
- Pupils benefit from an engaging and stimulating curriculum. This helps to ensure that the vast majority of pupils in all groups make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress and achievement made by disadvantaged pupils at key stage 2 is a strength of the school.
- Children get off to a flying start to their education in the early years. This is due to good teaching and the caring and nurturing approach of staff.
- Governors know the school well and have worked tirelessly to ensure that it continues to improve.
- Pupils feel safe and are keen to learn. Behaviour in the school playground and in the dinner hall is good. Children move around the school in a sensible manner.
- As a result of a concerted effort by the school, attendance is on an upward trend.
- Most parents are positive about all aspects of the school's work. They believe that their children make good progress and are safe in school.
- Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and firmly embedded in the school's own values. There is a strong emphasis on raising pupils' aspirations.
- Staff morale is now high. Teamwork is strong and staff are determined to nurture pupils' academic, social and personal development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The best teaching practice in the school is not shared widely enough.
- At times, the most able pupils do not achieve their full potential.
- Although improving quickly, the progress of disadvantaged pupils at key stage 1 is not as good as it is at key stage 2.
- The role of foundation subject leaders is not as well developed as those of English and mathematics.
- On occasions, behaviour in lessons is not as good as it could be.
- The performance of teaching assistants is not managed as effectively as that of teachers.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are consistently challenged
 - continuing to close the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at key stage 1 with a particular focus on reading.

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that expectations for behaviour are made clear in lessons in order to eliminate any minor low-level disruption
 - sharing best practice across the school.

- Develop leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the performance of teaching assistants is managed with the same rigour as that of teachers
 - embedding the role of middle leaders so that they have a greater impact on teaching, learning and assessment in the foundation subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Improvements made by senior leaders since the last inspection have ensured that pupils' outcomes and teaching have improved. They are ambitious for the school, staff and pupils.
- Staff told inspectors that 'it is a privilege to work at this school'. They show a strong determination to contribute to the school's ongoing success, ensuring that pupils flourish and achieve well.
- Senior leaders are crystal clear about what the school does well and what further improvements are required. These priorities are clearly set out in the short-term school development plan. Leaders' success in addressing the school's longer-term objectives demonstrate the school's capacity for further improvement.
- Senior leaders keep a close check on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make. Leaders are committed to providing training to ensure that teachers have the knowledge and skills to help pupils on their journey to success. Performance management is effective and teacher's targets are securely linked to school priorities. However, the performance of the teaching assistants is not managed with the same rigour and senior leaders recognise this.
- Some teachers have opportunities to visit other schools to observe other teachers at work to develop their subject knowledge. However, there are no clear or structured procedures in place for teachers to observe best practice within the school.
- The pupil premium funding is used wisely and leaders carefully evaluate the impact of the funding to ensure its effectiveness. Disadvantaged pupils receive academic and emotional support to ensure that any barriers to learning are broken down, allowing them to take part in all that the school has to offer. Such good practice demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.
- The school has also used the sport premium to good effect. It has funded support from specialist coaches who have worked with teachers to help them deliver high-quality physical education (PE) lessons. It has also been used to fund additional sports clubs, which pupils enjoy.
- Knowledgeable leaders of English and mathematics have played a key role in improving outcomes for pupils. Both leaders have a clear overview of the strengths of each subject and what further improvements are required. They monitor the planning and delivery of each subject very closely and track pupils' progress clearly as they move through the school. However, the roles of leaders of the foundation subjects are not so well developed.
- A carefully planned, broad and balanced curriculum meets the needs of all pupils well. Subjects are either taught discretely or as part of a topic. Pupils' learning is further enriched by numerous trips, visitors to the school, after-school clubs and special events. British values are strongly embedded in the curriculum, which supports pupils' spiritual social, moral and cultural development well.
- Outdoor learning for older pupils is well promoted through 'Forest School' type activities. Pupils clearly relish the time that they spend outdoors. They develop many aspects of their learning as they make rafts and dens from sticks; learning how to look after nature and the environment and about the importance of being able to work as part of a team.
- The local authority has provided the school with effective guidance and support on its journey of improvement since the last inspection.
- The school strives hard to develop positive relationships with parents to help promote security and consistency in pupils' lives. Overall, parents are happy with the quality of education and levels of care afforded to their children.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They offer senior leaders support and challenge in equal measure.
 - Governors are committed to ensuring that every child achieves to their full potential both academically, spiritually and socially. Safeguarding duties are taken seriously. A stringent eye is kept on the school budget, which is managed well.
 - Governors are not complacent or afraid to make difficult decisions with regard to finances to ensure the stability and sustainability of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and procedures to follow should there be a concern about a pupil's welfare. They

understand that anyone can make a referral and are aware of the differing roles of the designated officer within the local authority and children's services. They talk with confidence about risks such as extremism, radicalisation and female genital mutilation. The school site is secure and the identity of visitors to the school is closely checked.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- As a result of effective leadership, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Poor teaching has now been eradicated. From observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' books and displays of their work, the inspection team judge that the quality of teaching is now consistently good, in line with the school's self-evaluation.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and activities are well planned to meet the different needs of pupils. However, at times, activities are not sufficiently challenging for the most able.
- Pupils enjoy what they are learning because resources engage their interest and activities are fun. For example, a Year 6 maths lesson was combined with a PE session to help develop pupils' awareness of equations. On another occasion, Year 4 pupils went outdoors and walked around the school boundary to internalise their understanding of the meaning of 'perimeter'.
- Skilful questioning is used by staff to deepen and extend pupils' understanding. For example, during a science lesson relating to food and nutrition, pupils were asked to consider which groups certain foods belonged to, why each food group is important and what happens to food once it has been eaten.
- Pupils are not afraid to take risks. They are given time to reflect on their learning and explain their thought processes. This allows teachers to deal with any misconceptions and ensures that pupils learn from their mistakes.
- Overall, teaching assistants are well deployed and work well with the class teacher to support children as they learn.
- The school fosters pupils' love of reading well. Younger children confidently use their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) to sound out unfamiliar words. They talk about their favourite books with enthusiasm. Reading records show that children read regularly at home and with adults in class. Good use is also made of the school library to further extend opportunities for children to develop their reading skills. Older pupils were eager to tell inspectors about their favourite authors. They talk with confidence about the different types of books that they like to read. For example, one pupil told the inspector that she had recently enjoyed reading Barack Obama's *Dreams from My Father*.
- Pupils write across a wide range of subjects and for different purposes. For example, they complete book reviews and write about the importance of attending school on a regular basis. As part of a history topic children wrote a chronological account of the life of the Beatles. Pupils put pen to paper and write about the strategies that they have used to solve mathematical problems. As part of a geography topic, pupils in key stage 1 wrote about Antarctica and the animals that live there.
- The marking policy is used consistently by teachers and supports pupils in improving their work. Homework is age-appropriate and popular with some pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Good emphasis is placed on inspiring all groups of pupils to achieve well in life. The school values of respecting others, being ready to learn, taking responsibility for your actions and being resilient and resourceful are fully incorporated into all aspects of school life. These values are affectionately known as the '5Rs'. Pupils openly talk about these values and what they mean to them personally.
- At the start of every academic year, the school holds an 'Aspiration Week'. During this week pupils discuss their hopes and desires for the future. Activities are planned to encourage pupils to think about others who inspire them, such as Martin Luther King. Inspirational speakers such as Olympic athletes and the mayor are invited in to talk to pupils to inspire their hopes and dreams for the future. The successes of former pupils are also very well promoted to enhance the school's belief that there is no limit to what can be achieved.
- Pupils are keen to learn, take pride in the presentation of their work and say that they feel safe.

- The school has an elected school council which encourages pupils to share their ideas, make decisions and learn about democracy. Pupils enjoy being members of this council and the responsibility it brings. They have been instrumental in planning a party for the Queen's birthday and for designing a sensory garden in the playground. Members of the school council are also included on the interview panel when new members of staff are being recruited.
- Attendance is improving but remains an issue which the school is actively and successfully addressing. A pastoral support worker and family partnership worker have been employed to support families who are reluctant to attend school. Those who attend on a regular basis have their achievements celebrated.
- Good procedures are in place to help pupils understand about keeping themselves safe. For example, they learn about the importance of not talking to strangers and of using flint and steel safely to make fires when taking part in 'Forest School' type activities. E-safety is well promoted. For example, pupils told inspectors that they 'must let their parents know when they are on the internet', 'keep personal information private' and 'if someone bullies you when you are online, you must block them and tell your parents'.
- Pupils look after their school, both indoors and outside. The playground is free from litter and pupils look smart in their school uniform.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. During the inspection, pupils were observed walking sensibly along school corridors and holding doors open for adults. They play safely together in the playground and enjoy the varied range of play equipment such as hoops, balls and skipping ropes that are made available for them to enjoy.
- Pupils enjoy socialising and chatting with their friends at lunchtime. They queue for their lunch in a sensible and orderly manner.
- Strategies for managing behaviour have recently been revised. Pupils believe the system named 'Good to be Green' is fair and behaviour is improving. Parents did express some concerns about behaviour but overall inspection evidence does not support these concerns.
- Most teachers manage behaviour well in the classroom and make pupils aware of what is expected of them. However, occasionally low-level disruption occurs which has an impact on learning.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying and the distress that it can cause to others. They say they bullying does happen at times but it is dealt with effectively by staff. Records maintained by the school confirm that this is the case.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Children come into the early years with knowledge and skills that are below those that are typical for their age. However, some children face specific challenges with regard to their personal, social, communication and language skills. From their different starting points all groups of pupils, including the most able, make good progress and achieve well in a range of subjects.
- School leaders do not shy away from addressing any shortcomings. For example, the results of the phonics screening check dipped in 2015 and immediately the wheels were put in motion to address this issue. Booster classes were started for those most in need and clear written guidance was given to parents to help them develop their children's phonics skills at home. Consequently, school records show that the number of pupils in line to reach the expected standard in the phonics screening check has risen this year.
- Good progress continues as pupils move through the school. Published data shows that standards rose sharply in 2015 and school records show that this has been sustained in 2016.
- Staff are quite rightly very proud of the progress and achievement of disadvantaged pupils at key stage 2. They perform significantly better than their classmates and others nationally. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at key stage 1 is closing quickly in mathematics and writing but this is slower in reading.
- Class teachers know their pupils well and closely monitor the progress that they make. As a result, the most able pupils are provided with activities that encourage them to think more deeply. However, at times, activities do not challenge them to achieve their very best. As a result, on occasions, the progress

of this group of pupils slows.

- Due to good partnership working with outside agencies, timely interventions and good teaching, pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress taking into consideration their diverse needs. Some parents were keen to tell inspectors about the 'excellent' support their children had received from staff and the 'amazing' progress they had made.

Early years provision

is good

- The leadership and management of the early years is good.
- Activities are well planned across all areas of learning. Children's progress is clearly monitored to identify any underachievement. For example, published data showed that boys did not perform as well as girls in reading and writing. During the inspection, inspectors observed many varied and interesting opportunities for boys and girls to develop these areas of their learning.
- Adults are calm, kind and caring. Children are safe, behave well and they show good levels of concentration as they play and learn. There are no breaches to the statutory welfare requirements.
- Language skills are well promoted. Adults talk to the children as they play, engaging them in meaningful conversation. For example, during the inspection, the role play area was an ice-cream parlour. Staff had made different flavours of ice-cream available to the children who were encouraged to try the ice-cream and think of adjectives to describe the taste. This led to a flurry of activity and generated a wide variety of describing words, enhancing children's language skills.
- Children have as much fun outdoors as they do inside. For example, they enjoy making meals in the mud kitchen, steering wheelbarrows filled with straw to the farm to feed the animals and looking for bugs using magnifying glasses.
- Good procedures are in place to ease children into the early years. Parents receive a home visit where staff talk to them to gain an understanding of what each child knows, likes and can do. Parents also enjoy attending 'stay and play' sessions where they can gain an understanding of how their children learn.
- The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in 2015 rose significantly from 38% in 2014 to 56%. The school's own records on children's performance show another rise this year to 62%, which is much closer to the national average. As a result, a greater number of children are ready for their move into Year 1.
- Parents are kept informed about their children's progress. Staff involve parents in their children's learning by giving them support and guidance to help develop their children's learning at home. Links are also available on the school website as a further source of support.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 105088 |
| Local authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 10012153 |

This inspection 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 | 217 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Father Bernard Forshaw |
| Headteacher (acting) | Lorraine Prescott |
| Telephone number | 0151 645 3682 |
| Website | www.stannes.wirral.sch.uk |
| Email address | www.schooloffice@stannes.wirral.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 15–16 May 2014 |

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average. The term disadvantaged pupils is used to describe those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after. These pupils receive additional support from pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of pupils who have a special educational need or disability is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- Children attend the Nursery class part-time in the afternoon and Reception on a full-time basis.
- There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection including the appointment of a new chair of governors.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. The headteacher took part in one joint observation with an inspector.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, at lunchtimes, breaktimes and when they were moving around the school.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, governors and senior leaders. A telephone call was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and looked at work in their books and on display.
- They observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of 12 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). They also held a meeting with parents and spoke to them informally at the beginning of the day. An evaluation of the school's own questionnaire to parents in the autumn term 2015 was also considered.
- Questionnaires completed by pupils were also reviewed.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, Lead inspector

Sheila O'Keeffe

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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