



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School
High Street
Saltney
Flintshire
CH4 8SG**

Date of inspection: March 2013

by

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the school's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with Section 28 of the Education Act 2005.

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Publication Section
Estyn
Anchor Court, Keen Road
Cardiff
CF24 5JW or by email to publications@estyn.gov.uk

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Context

St. Anthony's Catholic Primary School is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school, in Saltney, about half a mile from the Welsh border with England, on the outskirts of Chester. It is maintained by Flintshire local authority. The school serves the parish of St. Anthony's in the Diocese of Wrexham although children are admitted from other parishes and from non-Catholic families. The annual intake covers the full ability range.

Generally, the area the school serves is neither prosperous nor economically disadvantaged. Almost a third of the pupils come from across the border in England, including many from an area of high social deprivation and economic disadvantage.

There were 165 pupils between three and 11 years of age on roll during the inspection, including 15 pupils who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Nearly all pupils come from English-speaking homes. No pupils come from homes where Welsh is the first language. A few pupils come from a minority ethnic background. A few have English as an additional language. Currently, 20% of pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is higher than the local authority and national averages. The school has identified 11% of pupils as having additional learning needs. This is lower than the average for primary schools in Wales.

The headteacher was appointed in September 1995. In addition to the headteacher there are five full-time teachers and three part-time teachers.

The individual school budget for St Anthony's Catholic Primary School in 2012-2013 means that the budget is £2,973 per pupil. The maximum per pupil in the primary schools in Flintshire is £13,748 and the minimum is £2,758. St Anthony's Catholic Primary School is 57th out of 73 primary schools in Flintshire in terms of its school budget per pupil.

Summary

The school's current performance	Good
The school's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The current performance of the school is good because:

- most pupils make good progress and achieve well during their time at the school;
- nearly all pupils are well behaved, they are courteous and have a good attitude to learning;
- high quality, creative and stimulating learning experiences and good quality teaching and support staff support learning effectively;
- there is effective provision to promote wellbeing and the school provides a happy and caring learning environment; and
- a good range of partnerships make a positive contribution to pupil outcomes.

Prospects for improvement

The school's prospects for improvement are good because:

- the headteacher has a clear vision for the school that focuses clearly on pupils' wellbeing and on improving standards;
- all members of staff are clear about their roles, support one another and work effectively as a team;
- the school has a good knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses; and
- all staff are involved effectively in school improvement activities that improve pupil outcomes.

Recommendations

R1 Further improve pupils' Welsh language development

R2 Improve pupils' handwriting and their presentation of work

R3 Extend provision for outdoor learning in the Foundation Phase and education for sustainable development and global citizenship across the school

R4 Ensure that the school development plan has a manageable number of priorities to enable governors to monitor progress and standards effectively

What happens next?

The school will produce an action plan that shows how it will address the recommendations.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?	Good
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Standards: Good

The majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are lower than normally expected for pupils of a similar age. During their time in school, most pupils, including those with additional needs, and pupils of higher ability make good progress and achieve well.

In lessons, most pupils recall previous learning well and they use this information effectively in order to acquire new information and skills. Most show good knowledge and understanding of what they have learnt. Nearly all pupils work well together in pairs or in groups. They listen well and respect the views of their peers. Many ask questions confidently and respond readily to questions posed by their teachers and other adults. Most speak confidently in a wide range of situations.

Standards of reading are good. Most pupils in the Foundation Phase have a good knowledge of letter sounds and use a range of strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar words well. They read with enjoyment and increasing fluency, accuracy and understanding. In key stage 2, most pupils read a wide range of texts with confidence. Many read with fluency and with good expression. They read for increasing lengths of time. They talk readily about books and authors they like or dislike and have a good understanding of characters and storylines. Many older pupils are increasingly able to skim a passage to gain its meaning and gather information. Many apply their reading skills well in different subjects and can locate and use reference books effectively.

Most pupils in the Foundation Phase make good progress with their early writing skills and by the end of Year 2 many write successfully for a range of purposes and audiences in full sentences with correct punctuation. Most pupils in key stage 2 write well independently using a range of interesting vocabulary. They write confidently and accurately in a variety of forms and their writing is often thoughtful and imaginative. Many pupils consolidate and extend their writing skills well to produce good quality extended pieces of writing across the curriculum. However, presentation and handwriting skills are inconsistent and often do not reflect the good quality of the content.

Pupils with additional learning needs often make good progress in line with their ability. A wide range of support programmes for literacy and numeracy are effective in raising the standards achieved by targeted pupils.

The majority pupils make appropriate progress in gaining skills in the Welsh language. They achieve well in their structured lessons and listen and respond appropriately to greetings and general instructions in other lessons. Their ability to use Welsh outside these lessons is limited.

In 2012, the percentage of Foundation Phase pupils achieving the expected outcomes (outcome 5) or the higher outcome (outcome 6) was below the Wales average and just below the family average. In comparison with that of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's performance was in the lower 50%.

At key stage 2, over the past four years, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) or higher in English shows a trend of improvement. In the past two years performance was above the Welsh average and amongst the highest in the family. The school's performance in 2012, in English, placed it among the upper 50% of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in mathematics and science varies. It has been above family average and in the upper 50% of performance levels for similar schools in two of the past four years.

The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (level 5), in all three subjects in key stage 2, placed the school in the upper 50% of similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in English has been higher than the family and Welsh averages in three of the past four years. Performance in English has placed the school in the top 25% of similar schools in two of the previous three years. Performance in mathematics and science has generally placed the school in the lower 50% during this period.

There is no consistent pattern in the relative performance of boys and girls over the past four years although boys generally do better than girls in mathematics. In English, whilst there is no significant difference at the expected level, girls generally perform better than boys at the higher level.

There is also no consistent pattern in the performance of pupils who are entitled to free school meals when compared with that of pupils not entitled to free school meals.

Wellbeing: Good

Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. They feel safe in school, confident that staff deal promptly with any worries or incidents of bullying. They have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily and take regular exercise.

Nearly all pupils co-operate effectively with one another in their lessons and activities. Most work well independently and under the direction of adults. Increasing involvement in assessment, agreeing success criteria and setting personal targets, is helping pupils to gain an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.

Nearly all pupils get on well together and standards of behaviour are high. Pupils of all ages play together happily at break time and lunchtime. They are courteous and polite and show respect for each other. This contributes successfully to the overall caring school ethos.

Attendance figures over the past four years are consistently above those for similar schools. Nearly all pupils arrive at school punctually.

The school council make a valued contribution to school life. Members are involved identifying areas for improvement in the day-to-day life of the school. They also choose charities to support and then help to raise the necessary funds.

Many pupils contribute well towards activities in the community. This has a positive effect on their development as rounded and responsible individuals.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?	Good
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Learning experiences: Good

Teachers provide a good range of interesting and relevant experiences for pupils that cover Foundation Phase, National Curriculum and religious education requirements. They provide Foundation Phase pupils with a good range of high quality, creative and stimulating learning experiences in most areas of learning. However, outdoor provision for older Foundation Phase pupils is not wholly effective. Learning experiences in key stage 2 build successfully on pupils' skills knowledge and understanding. An extensive range of extra-curricular clubs enriches and extends pupils' learning.

Teachers plan systematically for the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. In particular, teachers' planning ensures regular opportunities for pupils to use and extend their reading and writing skills across the curriculum. Teachers review their planning regularly and ensure that it builds progressively on pupils' previous learning.

Provision for the Welsh dimension, to promote pupils' understanding of the culture and heritage of Wales, is good. Provision for Welsh language development is appropriate. However, it does not successfully promote pupils' independent use of the language.

Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their knowledge of the importance of recycling. However, education for sustainable development and global citizenship is at an early stage of development.

Teaching: Good

Throughout the school, staff and other adults have developed positive working relationships with pupils which foster learning effectively. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. Additional adults contribute successfully to support less able pupils.

In most lessons, teachers' presentations are enthusiastic and engage nearly all pupils fully. They share clear learning objectives and success criteria effectively. They use a range of teaching approaches successfully, which ensures that pupils are motivated and make good progress in their learning. In the very few sessions where teaching is excellent, exciting teaching approaches and highly effective challenge and feedback extend the learning of all pupils very well. In the very few lessons where teaching is less effective, learning lacks pace and tasks do not always challenge pupils of all abilities well enough.

The school has appropriate forms of assessment that provide staff with clear evidence of the standards that pupils achieve. Teachers give pupils good oral feedback during lessons. They mark pupils' work thoroughly. Teacher comments are supportive and constructive. Pupils are regularly involved in assessing their own work and identifying targets for improvement.

Records of pupils' progress are clear and teachers use them well to identify the need for additional support. Teachers have worked successfully with staff from other local schools to strengthen their understanding of levels of attainment. Reports to parents are of a good quality.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The high level of care and the good relationships between staff and pupils contribute well to pupils' wellbeing. There are effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, which contribute successfully to the very positive ethos that is evident in the school.

Learning experiences promote pupils' personal development well, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Effective arrangements exist to support pupils' health and wellbeing and for ensuring that they enjoy regular opportunities to participate in a range of physical activities. The breakfast club provides a caring environment and offers a healthy start to the day for the pupils who attend. The school makes good use of specialist services, when required.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements and give no cause for concern.

Teachers identify pupils' additional needs early and give well-planned and targeted support. Staff review and update individual education plans effectively and regularly in consultation with parents, the pupil, and the appropriate specialist agencies. There are clear systems in place to monitor the progress of these pupils.

Learning environment: Good

The school provides a happy and caring learning environment that successfully promotes its aims and values. The school's positive Christian ethos underpins its commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and fairness and respect for all. The school consistently encourages pupils to show respect and care towards others. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school recognises and celebrates pupils' achievements and diverse backgrounds well through school events, assemblies and class activities.

The accommodation is sufficient for the number of pupils on roll and provides a stimulating and well-maintained learning environment that supports teaching and learning effectively. Classrooms are well equipped with good quality resources that match pupils' needs appropriately. The wall displays create an interesting learning environment for pupils. Not all parts of the building are accessible to people with disability. The grounds are spacious, well maintained and secure. Although younger Foundation Phase pupils enjoy a stimulating outdoor environment, provision for older Foundation Phase pupils is not developed well enough.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The headteacher has a clear vision and high expectations. She shares these successfully with staff, parents, pupils and governors. She provides clear and purposeful leadership for the school and manages its work effectively, in line with the vision. She is well supported by the senior teacher and all staff. They work together effectively as a team.

Regular staff meetings, which focus clearly on improvement priorities, ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and their roles in achieving the school's priorities. All teachers coordinate one or more areas or subjects. They fulfil these roles conscientiously and effectively. Annual performance management for teachers and job reviews for teaching assistants are effective.

Governors support school leaders well. Each governor is linked to several aspects of the school's work. This helps them to be well informed about how the school operates from day to day. However, governors are not sufficiently involved in holding leaders to account for the standards that pupils achieve.

The school responds well to local and national initiatives, particularly in relation to improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and in securing pupils' wellbeing.

Improving quality: Good

Managers accurately evaluate all aspects of the school's provision and the standards that pupils achieve. Self-evaluation strategies draw on a wide range of first hand evidence including classroom observation and scrutiny of pupils' work. The school seeks the views of pupils and parents regularly. Performance data is used effectively to monitor and plan for improving standards. This, together with local authority advice, provides leaders with a thorough knowledge of their school.

Teachers are fully involved in monitoring work in the areas they co-ordinate. They monitor work in all classes by observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' books and talking to pupils. Their development plans promote a climate of continuous improvement across all aspects of the school's work.

The school uses information from the self-evaluation well to identify priorities that focus clearly on improving pupil outcomes. Discussions of improvement strategies are major items on the agenda of almost every weekly staff meeting. This ensures that all staff are effectively involved in school improvement. However, the school development plan is over-complex and the priorities too numerous to enable the governors to monitor their progress effectively.

The school is developing well as a learning community. A culture of collaboration and sharing of good practice is developing well, both within the school and beyond. A good example is the school's commitment to working with other schools to improve provision in physical education and sport.

Partnership working: Good

The school works effectively with a wide range of partners, including the church, the local community and the local authority. These partnerships make a positive contribution to improving outcomes for pupils. The school works well with parents. This has a positive effect on pupils' wellbeing and attainment. The leadership team and staff communicate effectively with parents and they are supportive of the school's life and work.

There are effective arrangements to support transition from local playgroups to the Foundation Phase. These ensure that the pupils settle into the Foundation Phase quickly. The transition arrangements from key stage 2 to local secondary schools are also effective and prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education. The school works well with a range of outside agencies to meet the particular needs of individuals and groups of pupils.

There are good partnerships within the local cluster of primary schools where they share expertise in literacy and physical education. The moderating of pupils' work in the core subjects has led to the collation of useful portfolios of pupils' work. These are effective in improving teachers' understanding of assessment practices and the standards expected at the end of key stage 2.

Resource management: Good

The school manages its resources well. Teachers are well qualified and have a range of expertise across the curriculum. They attend a good range of professional development activities to extend their expertise. Arrangements for teachers' planning, preparation and assessment are appropriate. The strong, well-managed team of well-trained teaching assistants who work effectively in classes or with individual pupils make a positive contribution to pupil outcomes.

Every part of the available internal accommodation is well used. Teachers and pupils make effective use of good quality learning resources. Pupils have regular access to ICT equipment.

Governors ensure that priority areas for development receive the funds they need. They apportion the staffing budget well. The school has a significant budget surplus. However, governors have agreed appropriate spending plans to reduce the surplus.

In view of the good standards that most pupils achieve, the school provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Commentary on performance data

St Anthony's R. C. Primary is the most challenged school in its family of schools.

Pupils coming to the school from areas of significant deprivation over the border in England are not included in the calculation used for allocating schools within their family of schools.

The baseline assessment of pupils in the reception class shows that the majority of pupils enter the school with skills that are lower than normally expected for pupils of a similar age.

In 2012, the percentage of pupils achieving the Foundation Phase outcome indicator (pupils achieving the expected outcomes (outcome 5) or higher in language, literacy and communications skills, in mathematical development and in personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity in combination) was below the Wales average and just below the family average.

In comparison with performance levels of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's performance, at the expected outcome (Outcome 5) or higher, was in the lower 50% for the Foundation Phase outcome indicator.

The proportion of pupils achieving a higher outcome (outcome 6) was also lower than the Wales average and just below the family average.

In comparison with that of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals, the school's performance, at the higher outcome (outcome 6) or higher, was also in the lower 50%.

In the Foundation Phase in 2012, boys performed better than girls in language, literacy and communication skills and in mathematical development. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls in personal and social skills.

In 2012, at key stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (level 4) or higher in English, was above the Wales average and amongst the highest in the family. Pupils' performance in mathematics and science was below the family average. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in English, mathematics and science in combination has been above family and Welsh averages in two of the previous three years.

The school's performance in 2012 in English placed it among the upper 50% of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. Performance in mathematics and science placed it in the lower 50%. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected levels in English, mathematics and science in combination has placed the school in the upper 50% of similar schools in two of the previous three years.

In 2012, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level (level 5) in English was above family and Wales averages. In mathematics, performance was higher than the family average but below the Welsh average. In science, it was below both family and Welsh averages.

Apart from in 2010-2011, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in English has been consistently higher than family and Wales averages. The school's performance at this level in 2012 in all three subjects placed it in the upper 50% of schools with similar proportions of pupils entitled to free school meals. Performance in English has placed it in the top 25% of similar schools in two of the previous three years but has generally been in the lower 50% in mathematics and science during this period.

There is no consistent pattern in the relative performance of boys and girls over the past four years, although boys generally do better than girls in mathematics. In English, whilst there is no significant difference at the expected level, girls generally performed better than boys at the higher level.

There is also no consistent pattern in the performance of pupils who are entitled to free school meals when compared with that of pupils not entitled to free school meals at key stage 2.

Appendix 2

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

Twenty-one parents or carers completed the questionnaire. Overall satisfaction levels are higher than the average for other primary schools in Wales.

All parents or carers say that their children like school and all are confident that their children are safe there. All agree that their child was helped to settle when they joined the school. All who responded say that staff treat all children fairly and with respect. Nearly all agree that the school encourages their child to be healthy and take regular exercise. Nearly all parents believe that their child is making good progress. However, a few do not feel that they are kept well informed about their child's progress. All parents believe that behaviour is good.

All parents or carers think teaching is good and that teachers expect their child to work hard and to do his or her best. All believe that teachers help their child to become more mature and take on responsibility and almost all who responded say that children are well prepared for the move to the secondary school. All who responded believe that their child receives enough additional support in relation to any particular individual needs. Many parents agree that the homework given builds well on what their child learns in school. Almost all believe that there is a good range of activities including trips and visits. All parents think that the school is well run and almost all who responded understand the school's procedure for dealing with complaint. Almost all feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

Responses to learner questionnaires

Seventy-five pupils in key stage 2 completed the questionnaire. Responses to the majority of questions were above the averages for other primary schools in Wales.

All pupils say that they feel safe in school and almost all believe that the school deals well with bullying. All agree that they know whom to talk to if they are worried or upset. All pupils say that the school helps them to be healthy and almost all agree that the school provides them with plenty of opportunities to be physically active.

All pupils say that teachers and support staff help them to learn and make progress and most feel that they are doing well at school. Nearly all say that they know what to do and whom to ask if they are finding their work difficult. Nearly all think that homework helps them to improve on their work in school. Many believe that there are enough resources to enable them to learn effectively. Many believe that children behave well during lunch and break times but a minority do not agree that all children behave well in lessons.

Appendix 3

The inspection team

Goronwy Morris	Reporting Inspector
Garth Higginbotham	Team Inspector
Justine Barlow	Lay Inspector
Meinir Howells	Peer Inspector
Mrs Oliver	School Nominee

Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the school and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Year groups, the Foundation Phase and key stages

Schools use a common system of numbering year groups from the start of compulsory schooling to 18 years of age. This system emphasises the importance of continuity and eases communication among schools, governing bodies, parents and local authorities.

The following table sets out the age ranges relevant to each year group. For example, Year 1 refers to the group of pupils who reach the age of six and Year 13 is the year group who reach the age of 18 during the academic year.

Primary phase:

Year	N	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Ages	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-10	10-11

Secondary phase:

Year	Y7	Y8	Y9	Y10	Y11	Y12	Y13
Ages	11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18

The Foundation Phase and key stages cover the following year groups:

Foundation Phase	Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Key stage 2	Year 3 to Year 6
Key stage 3	Year 7 to Year 9
Key stage 4	Year 10 and Year 11

Glossary of terms – Primary

Foundation Phase indicator (FPI)

Progress in learning through the Foundation Phase is indicated by outcomes (from outcome 1 to outcome 6).

The Foundation Phase indicator (FPI) relates to the expected performance in three areas of learning in the Foundation Phase:

- literacy, language and communication in English or Welsh first language
- mathematical development; and
- personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity.

By the end of the Foundation Phase, at the age of seven, pupils are expected to reach outcome 5 and the more able to reach outcome 6.

Pupils must achieve the expected outcome (outcome 5) in the three areas above to gain the Foundation Phase indicator.

The core subject indicator (CSI)

Progress in learning through key stage 2 is indicated by levels (level 1 to level 5).

The core subject indicator in key stage 2 relates to the expected performance in the core subjects of the National Curriculum:

- English or Welsh first language
- mathematics; and
- science

By the end of the key stage 2, at the age of 11, pupils are expected to reach level 4 and more able pupils to reach level 5.

Pupils must gain at least the expected level (level 4) in the three core subjects to gain the core subject indicator.

All-Wales Core Data sets

Inspection reports may refer to a school's performance relative to a family of schools or to schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In relation to free school meals, schools are placed into one of five bands according to the three-year trend in the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals in the school. The school's performance is then placed into quartiles (from the top 25% to the bottom 25%) in relation to how well it is doing compared with other schools in the same free school meal band.

The Welsh Government created the families of schools (typically a group of 11 schools) to enable schools to compare their performance with that of similar schools across Wales. The composition of the families draws on a number of factors. These include the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the proportion living in the 20% most deprived areas of Wales. They also draw on the proportion of pupils with special education needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language.