

Holy Infant and St Anthony RC Primary School

Address: Mitre Street, BL1 6QJ

Unique reference number (URN): 105219

Inspection report: 6 January 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Pupils feel a sense of belonging here. They enjoy being part of the positive environment that leaders have created. Most pupils attend school each day and on time. Leaders carefully check pupils' attendance levels. They work effectively with families and with external agencies where pupils' attendance needs to improve. This helps to reduce barriers to attending school that pupils may face, so that they can engage successfully with school life.

Pupils enjoy their learning. They behave well during lessons and at social times. Pupils are respectful, polite and well mannered towards others. Bullying is rare. Leaders act quickly to resolve any incidents, should they occur. This contributes to the school's calm and orderly environment. While some low-level disruption happens during lessons, staff manage this well to ensure that pupils' learning is not interrupted. Pupils understand the school's rules. They follow routines well and appreciate recognition for their efforts. Leaders have taken effective action to improve the behaviour of all pupils, including by providing training for staff and engaging with specialist services. Initiatives and strategies to help pupils to manage their own emotions have shown a demonstrable improvement in pupils' behaviour and their engagement with education.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Staff build warm relationships with children and their parents and carers. From the outset, children settle quickly into well-established routines. For example, they arrive happily each morning and complete 'check-ins' to let staff know how they are feeling.

Leaders have high expectations for what children can achieve. They have established a well-thought-out curriculum. Staff foster children's independence and self-care skills well, which helps children to successfully develop their knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. For example, children enjoy exploring in the 'dough disco' area to strengthen their fingers. This helps with their pencil grip. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and are ready for their eventual move into key stage 1.

Communication, language and reading have a high priority. Children benefit from listening to a range of carefully chosen stories and songs that help to develop their vocabulary and understanding of texts. Staff engage children in high-quality interactions, using skilful questioning to develop children's thinking skills. Effective teaching, following a well-ordered phonics programme, enables children to develop their early reading skills well.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

Leaders ensure that pupils, regardless of their differing needs, benefit successfully from the support and opportunities that the school has to offer. They have established effective systems to quickly and accurately identify pupils' individual needs, including for disadvantaged pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND). Leaders prioritise relationships with parents, carers and external professionals so that staff have the information that they need to support pupils effectively.

Leaders identify and address any barriers to learning or wellbeing that pupils may face. This includes using appropriate adaptations to learning environments and resources, which enables pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers. Regular reviews and focused monitoring help staff to know which pupils need additional support, including vulnerable pupils and those who are disadvantaged.

Staff have a secure understanding of pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that staff receive professional learning to develop their knowledge of how to support pupils well. Using additional funding effectively, leaders have adopted specialist expertise and a range of targeted strategies to support disadvantaged pupils' achievement, wellbeing and attendance. Staff understand these strategies and implement them well. This is further supported by a well-considered, step-by-step approach to meeting pupils' needs, which involves appropriate signposting to specialist agencies when required.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders and governors act in the best interests of pupils. They have a sharp understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Leaders have focused on identifying and improving many aspects of the school's work. For example, they have successfully strengthened the provision in early years to ensure that children start their education well and are well prepared for what comes next. Furthermore, leaders have overhauled the curriculum to ensure that this now meets the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders recognise the need for renewed effort to close gaps in learning and to address weaknesses in pupils' writing skills. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work on securing improvements in pupils' achievement.

Leaders provide staff with a wide range of high-quality professional learning, which enables staff to continue to improve their teaching practice. Leaders also make use of advice from external professionals, for example support from the English hub and external behaviour services.

Leaders support staff well, especially during periods of change. They provide the time and coaching that staff need to complete their roles effectively and to develop their expertise. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration for their wellbeing.

Governors are committed to supporting and challenging the school to continue in its success. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively, for example in relation to safeguarding and financial accountability. Governors check how well pupils participate in school life, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged, to help ensure that they benefit from the school's offer.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders provide well for pupils' personal development, ensuring that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, can access new experiences. They have ensured that pupils

learn important information that prepares them well for their future lives in modern Britain. For example, they are aware of faiths and cultures that are different to their own. Pupils enjoy taking part in a range of activities, including visits to museums and music concerts. These opportunities help pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them. Pupils develop their social and leadership skills through a variety of roles in school, including as 'pupil parliamentarians' and 'happiness heroes'. They enjoy these responsibilities and feel a sense of pride and accomplishment from helping others.

Pupils learn how to make a positive difference in their local area and beyond. Pupils, including those in the 'faith in action' team, learn how to be responsible and active citizens. For example, they raise money for charities and hospices, and provide support for local food banks. Pupils enjoy clubs in sports, such as gymnastics and dodgeball. They take part in enrichment activities, such as a careers project that helps them to broaden their horizons and challenge stereotypes. Disadvantaged pupils are supported effectively to take part in these wider opportunities. They help to develop pupils' self-esteem and improve their self-confidence.

Pastoral support is a strength of the school. Staff forge caring and nurturing relationships with pupils. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, including democracy, tolerance and respecting the differences between themselves and others. They know that it is important to treat others how they want to be treated. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, such as when crossing roads and while online. They also understand how to protect their physical and mental health through eating healthily and keeping fit.

Needs attention ●

Achievement

Needs attention ●

Over time, pupils' overall attainment by the end of key stage 2 is below the national averages. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils in mathematics. While leaders have designed an effective curriculum that is delivered typically well, this has not had a positive impact on published outcomes. These pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for their next steps, including their eventual move on to secondary school.

Some pupils struggle to remember their learning across the wider curriculum. In addition, many pupils do not develop their writing skills securely across the school, although leaders have identified these issues and have implemented several suitable actions. However, these actions to improve achievement and to close gaps in pupils' learning are not consistently embedded across the school.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention ●

Some of the activities that teachers use to deliver the wider curriculum do not enable pupils to learn what was intended as well as they could. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. While leaders have identified aspects of teaching to further strengthen, such as to improving pupils' handwriting over time, they have not implemented these actions

consistently. It is too early to see how successful leaders' recent actions to address these issues are.

Leaders have improved the curriculum since the previous inspection. It is broad, logically ordered and has ambitious end goals. Leaders continue to adjust and refine curriculum content. Teachers understand pupils' needs. They generally adjust learning activities and provide additional support when needed, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Assessment is broadly used well by staff, particularly in phonics, to ensure that pupils learn more over time. However, across subjects, weaknesses in pupils' writing are not checked consistently well. This means that pupils make continual mistakes in handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Staff do not address these issues quickly, meaning that errors persist over time. This hinders pupils' progress.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to belong to their school. They form positive and nurturing relationships with staff and with their classmates. Pupils know that staff will support them if they have any worries or concerns. Staff check how pupils are feeling at the start of each day. This helps pupils to feel settled and safe in school. Children in the early years make an assured and happy start to their early education.

Pupils benefit from the school's improved, ambitious and broad curriculum. They express a keenness to learn new things, and they know that this will help them in their future endeavours. Leaders have high aspirations for pupils' achievement. Pupils develop their fluency in reading and apply their phonics knowledge well to read unfamiliar words. Leaders have made positive changes to help pupils to learn well. However, some of these improvements are not consistently embedded across the school. Over time, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Some have gaps in their knowledge across a range of subjects. Others also experience less success in developing their written work.

Leaders have improved systems to identify and act on any barriers to learning that pupils may face. This helps staff to reduce these barriers, so that pupils can learn increasingly well alongside their peers. Staff enable pupils who are disadvantaged, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to access the curriculum and wider experiences available in the school.

Pupils enjoy seeing their friends in school each day. They attend regularly. Pupils behave well and treat each other with kindness. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any incidents quickly and effectively. Pupils understand why the school's values, including working hard and being respectful, are important to follow in school and beyond.

Pupils increase their confidence and develop a sense of responsibility, for example by acting as buddies to support the younger pupils. Pupils enjoy a range of experiences, including visits to museums and music concerts. These opportunities help pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them.

Next steps

- Leaders should monitor and evaluate the impact of recent actions to raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, so that the achievement of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, improves.
 - Leaders should ensure that teachers routinely identify and address errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar, and handwriting so that pupils write accurately and legibly over time.
 - Leaders should support staff to carefully select and sequence learning activities that help pupils to know and remember more in subjects beyond English and mathematics.
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About this inspection

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspection activities:

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and several other leaders during the inspection. The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. Meetings also took place with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.

Inspectors spoke with pupils, staff, parents and carers. They considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Dr Marguerita Leyden.

This school is registered as having a Roman Catholic religious character. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in June 2023.

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed.

Headteacher: Mrs Diane Furlong

Lead inspector:

David Lobodzinski, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Lisa Hesmondhalgh, Ofsted Inspector

Rebecca Gough, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 6 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

201

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

210

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

37.31%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.99%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

19.40%

Above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	51%	61%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	52%	62%	Below
2023/24	52%	61%	Below
2022/23	50%	60%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	62%	74%	Below
2024/25	68%	75%	Below
2023/24	66%	74%	Below
2022/23	53%	73%	Below

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	67%	72%	Close to average
2024/25	68%	72%	Close to average
2023/24	66%	72%	Close to average
2022/23	67%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	61%	73%	Below
2024/25	61%	74%	Below
2023/24	66%	73%	Below
2022/23	57%	73%	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	44%	46%	Close to average
2024/25	40%	47%	Close to average
2023/24	33%	46%	Close to average
2022/23	57%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	59%	62%	Close to average
2024/25	60%	63%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24	60%	62%	Close to average
2022/23	57%	60%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	67%	59%	Above
2024/25	70%	59%	Close to average
2023/24	60%	58%	Close to average
2022/23	71%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	49%	60%	Below
2024/25	40%	61%	Below
2023/24	47%	59%	Below
2022/23	57%	59%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	44%	68%	-24 pp
2024/25	40%	69%	-29 pp
2023/24	33%	67%	-34 pp
2022/23	57%	66%	-9 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	59%	80%	-21 pp
2024/25	60%	81%	-21 pp
2023/24	60%	80%	-20 pp
2022/23	57%	78%	-21 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	67%	78%	-11 pp
2024/25	70%	78%	-8 pp
2023/24	60%	78%	-18 pp
2022/23	71%	77%	-6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	49%	80%	-31 pp
2024/25	40%	81%	-41 pp
2023/24	47%	79%	-33 pp
2022/23	57%	79%	-22 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	5.2%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24	6.2%	5.5%	Close to average
2022/23	6.4%	5.9%	Close to average

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 terms)	13.7%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24	19.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	19.3%	16.2%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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