

St Anne's CofE VC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135036
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	381779
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2012
Lead inspector	Graham Sims

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Robinson
Headteacher	Simon Tapp
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Graham Sims	Additional inspector
Linda Rowley	Additional inspector
Andrew Morrish	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors visited 36 lessons, observing each class at least three times for varying lengths of time and seeing all 13 teachers teach. They also observed the teaching of small groups of pupils undertaken by teaching assistants and volunteers. They listened to pupils read and looked at their written work. They held discussions with the headteacher, groups of pupils, nearly all of the teaching staff and six members of the governing body. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's attendance data, behaviour logs, the school development plan, assessment data, planning, safeguarding procedures and other documentation. Inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by 163 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 22 staff.

Information about the school

St Anne's Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average.

On-site pre-school provision is available for three- and four-year-olds at Community Corner. Before- and after-school care for children aged three to 11 is available at Stay and Play. Both of these facilities are run by private providers and are inspected separately.

In 2011, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress for pupils at the end of Year 6.

The school's latest accreditations include the Activemark, Healthy School status and Eco-School status at bronze level.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- St Anne's Primary School is a good school which has improved significantly since its previous inspection. The school is led and managed well and pupils make good progress. Parents, carers and pupils have a high opinion of the school because of its ethos and the quality of its pastoral care. It is not outstanding because the quality of pupils' writing is not yet high enough and the teaching and work in some subjects lack depth.
- Pupils achieve well. They have made good progress over the last two and a half years and attainment has risen in all year groups. Standards rose from significantly below average in 2009 to just above average in 2011. Progress in reading and mathematics is particularly good. It is improving in writing, but teachers do not mark pupils' work rigorously enough or give them enough opportunity to respond to their comments.
- The quality of teaching over time is good. It has improved markedly as a result of good leadership, well-focused training and good procedures to develop teachers' accountability and provide support where needed. Aspects of teaching which have been a focus for improvement, such as reading and mathematics, are particularly strong. However, the work in some subjects, which have not received a similar level of attention, lacks challenge and does not do enough to support the development of pupils' writing skills.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave well. They feel safe in school and have full confidence in the school's systems to sort out any problems. The level of attendance is well above the national average.
- Strong leadership from the headteacher and governing body has improved teaching, and good performance management has raised standards. Some subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to develop their areas of responsibility.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and accuracy of pupils' writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length on topics and subjects which interest them
 - making better use of opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across all subjects of the curriculum.

- Improve the quality of teachers' marking by:
 - evaluating pupils' work more rigorously and providing more critical analysis which shows pupils where and how they might improve their work
 - ensuring that pupils have the time and opportunity to read and respond to their teachers' comments, to improve their work and to learn from their mistakes.

- Ensure the teaching and level of work are sufficiently challenging in all subjects by:
 - providing subject leaders with the opportunity to develop their subject areas and bring similar improvements to those seen in reading and mathematics
 - exploring ways in which the teaching in one subject may complement the teaching in other subjects
 - reducing the use of worksheets and simple activities which do little to develop pupils' skills, knowledge or understanding.

Main report**Achievement of pupils**

Most parents and carers feel their children make good progress and most pupils say they learn a lot in lessons. The inspection findings support these views and indicate that pupils throughout the school have made good progress since the previous inspection. The results of end-of-year assessments in 2011 for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage were the best ever and showed above-average levels of skills, knowledge and understanding. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen every year since the school opened and were significantly above the national average in 2011. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards went from significantly below average in 2009 to significantly above average in 2010, when standards in reading and mathematics were more than half a year ahead of the national average. They were just slightly lower in 2011, but nevertheless above average, and pupils had made greater progress than the year before given their different starting points.

These improvements reflect closely the school's drive to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning, particularly in reading and mathematics where pupils' attainment is strongest. Standards in reading are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Even the lowest-achieving pupils are developing a good

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understanding of how to decode words, and the well-organised guided reading sessions are helping pupils throughout the school to develop their ability to understand, analyse and interpret what they are reading. Pupils enjoy learning in mathematics because teachers make lessons fun and engage them in practical activity. One-to-one intervention sessions have helped pupils who are in danger of falling behind in mathematics to become much more confident in using numbers and to make rapid progress in a short space of time. Progress in developing writing skills is more variable. Some of the work observed in Years 1 and 2 shows remarkable progress over the course of a year, but the broadly average standards in writing throughout the school lag behind those in reading and mathematics.

In lessons, pupils are generally attentive and settle down to their work quickly. They work together well, either with partners or as part of a group. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The school has thorough systems for identifying their needs, provides good support through intervention groups when necessary, and varies its strategies for supporting these pupils in lessons. These strategies are helping to reduce the gap between the performance of those with particular learning needs and other pupils, and the school's data show improvement this year in the progress of the lowest-attaining pupils.

Quality of teaching

A very high proportion of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire and almost all feel their children are well taught. Most pupils also feel that the school is helping them to develop their skills. Inspection evidence supports these views and indicates that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Observations undertaken jointly with the headteacher during the inspection indicate that leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and can evaluate its effectiveness in a lesson with accuracy and insight.

Much of the teaching observed during the inspection was good and some aspects of the curriculum have a positive impact on learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children were being taught phonics (the sounds that letters represent) with great clarity then, later in the day, enjoyed exploring and investigating independently in their Forest School. A group-reading session for all of the classes in Years 3 and 4 was very well organised, so it resulted in good progress for different groups of pupils. Teaching assistants played their part well, asking pertinent questions to encourage discussion. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 received careful and methodical instruction in how to construct a paragraph of persuasive writing, and contributed well to the class discussion, and to collaborative work with a partner. The support provided for pupils with specific learning difficulties was thoughtful and helpful, and was geared towards helping pupils to develop independence. The teaching contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Values such as respect and cooperation, which are introduced in assemblies, are reinforced and put into practice in the classroom. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, were

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observed developing a strong sense of empathy with the lives of Victorian children and discovering how cultures change.

Some of the teaching observed during the inspection, however, was not challenging enough. Expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving in some of the work in a few subjects, such as the planned curriculum in science and design and technology, are too low, and work in pupils' books indicates too many tasks, which involve the completion of worksheets, lack stimulation and challenge. Teachers also miss opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills through these subjects.

The accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment has improved markedly. This has been brought about by training and moderation activities both within the school and with external organisations. As a result, the school now has a good understanding of pupils' progress. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the marking is often not critical enough, as mistakes are left unchallenged. Although teachers give some indication as to what pupils can do to improve, pupils rarely respond to teachers' written comments and they are not given time to go back over their work and improve it.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Observations during the inspection support the views of parents, carers, pupils, staff and governors that behaviour is good. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in the steadily increasing level of attendance which is now well above the national average. Pupils show positive attitudes to learning, collaborate with staff and each other, and behave well in lessons. They are respectful and courteous.

Discussions with pupils, responses to the parents' questionnaire and the school's behaviour records indicate that bullying occurs rarely. One pupil acknowledged, 'We are not always angels'; others explained that bullying is restricted to the occasional name-calling or falling out as friends, and is dealt with effectively by adults. The school council has recently introduced a new system to act as an intermediary should pupils require it. A few pupils have specific behavioural difficulties; the school's consistent management and excellent support have brought about good improvement in behaviour for these individuals.

Pupils say they feel safe in school, and their parents and carers agree. Pupils have every confidence in their teachers and the adults who support them in the classroom. They have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example, when using the internet.

Leadership and management

Since the previous inspection, strong leadership from the headteacher, phase leaders and an engaged, supportive and knowledgeable governing body have helped the school to tackle successfully its most important priorities, thereby demonstrating good capacity for further improvement. The quality of teaching has improved, pupils'

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achievement in all year groups has risen, the assessment and tracking of pupils' attainment have become much more secure, and the senior leadership team and phase leaders are carrying out their responsibilities effectively. The school's self-evaluation and development plans show a good awareness of what still needs to be improved. Professional development has been effective, as seen in the improvements to the teaching of reading and mathematics. Teachers' performance has been managed effectively; staff appreciate the training they have received, have a much greater awareness of their accountability for pupils' progress and are working well together to bring further improvement.

The curriculum is satisfactory because some subjects are not yet planned with sufficient rigour and not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum. There are, however, good aspects of the curriculum. A wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, particularly performance and sports-related activities and residential visits for all pupils in Key Stage 2, makes a strong contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development. Active links with the local church, thoughtful assemblies and an emphasis on teaching and reinforcing values contribute well to their spiritual development and are key factors in the school's successful work to tackle discrimination.

The school's hard work ensures equality of opportunity for all. The progress of all pupils is monitored carefully. Support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is very well coordinated and having a positive impact. The school has also been successful in integrating a small number of pupils who have particular needs and who have made good progress because of the care and attention they have received. There are good procedures to ensure that all pupils are kept safe and that staff are fully informed and trained in safeguarding.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



15 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne's CofE VC Primary School, Bewdley, DY12 2UQ

My colleagues and I really enjoyed visiting your school recently. We should like to thank you for making us feel welcome and for talking to us. You told us very clearly that you think St Anne's is a good school, and we agree with you. The school has improved significantly since it was last inspected. These are the main strengths.

- Your progress in all year groups is much better now than it was a few years ago; in some years, you reach higher standards than many other schools.
- You say you enjoy school and you show this through your positive attitudes in the classroom and your good behaviour around the school.
- The teaching is improving and much of it is good; the teachers are most successful in teaching you mathematics and how to read.
- You particularly enjoy your residential visits and the wide range of activities which the school provides.
- The staff support your headteacher who has worked hard with the governors to bring improvements and has good plans to make the school even better.

Because your writing is not yet quite as good as your reading, we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to write on topics which interest you. We have also asked them give you more guidance when marking your work, by showing you where you might improve and then giving you time to learn from your mistakes. Sometimes you are given too many worksheets which are not particularly interesting or challenging. So, we have asked the headteacher to give subject leaders a bit more time to see how they can make all of the subjects you study as interesting and challenging as possible. You can help to improve the standard of your work even more by taking care over your writing, thinking carefully about your teachers' comments and trying to improve your work once it has been marked.

We hope you continue to enjoy your time at St Anne's and wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Graham Sims
Lead inspector

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