

Annecy Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114571
Local Authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	357574
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Helen Hutchings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Margaret Coyne-Prout
Headteacher	Miss Fiona McGonigle
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons involving seven teachers and also observed assemblies. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and representative governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at planning documents, school evaluations, assessment information and pupils' work. In addition, inspectors received and analysed questionnaires from 84 parents and carers as well as those from a sample of staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress pupils make throughout the school, particularly in mathematics.
- How well teachers use assessment information to match work to pupils' abilities and ensure a good pace of learning for all groups of pupils.
- The effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum in promoting pupils' progress by making learning interesting, and in providing opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills.
- How well leaders and the governing body have managed staff changes to ensure continuity of learning for pupils.

Information about the school

Most pupils in this smaller-than-average-sized primary school are from White British backgrounds, but many other ethnic heritages are represented in small numbers. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. While the percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, a higher-than-average proportion have statements of special educational needs. Pupils' identified needs mostly relate to specific learning, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder. A significantly higher proportion of pupils join or leave the school during their primary education than is found nationally.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. Three Key Stage 2 year groups are taught in mixed-age classes to accommodate the varying numbers in each cohort. Staffing has been stable for a number of years, but there have been significant staffing changes throughout this year resulting in almost all classes having had changes of teacher during the academic year. The school provides care on a flexible basis for children who arrive before the start of the school day. The school has many awards for its work, including Healthy School, Activemark and Eco School awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Anney Catholic Primary School is a good school with a welcoming, caring ethos. Pupils are guided and supported well in developing respect for others. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is firmly based on the school's faith status, and ensures that pupils have positive relationships with one another and with adults. This results in a happy and friendly atmosphere where pupils feel safe and are cared for well. The good guidance and support are major factors in developing pupils' confidence as active citizens within school and the wider community. Pupils behave well and undertake a wide range of responsibilities in school which promote friendship and contribute to an orderly and lively community. They regularly support parish activities, such as singing in church. Recently, school council members promoted the school's learning values well with their peers. They discussed these at their meetings and then acted as 'learning detectives' within their classes, identifying and taking photographs of classroom activities which illustrate the values.

Over the last two years, attainment at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 has been broadly average. Since the start of this academic year, improvement has accelerated and attainment in both English and mathematics is rising, with pupils making good progress in their learning. In mathematics, the improvement is impressive and this is a direct result of a thorough analysis leading to revised approaches to the teaching of calculation and an emphasis on mathematical vocabulary.

Although the school has gone through a number of staff changes, these have been managed well and pupils are making good progress in their learning. Good teaching was observed as the norm during the inspection and is reflected in the quality of work and good progress seen in pupils' books. Teachers plan activities for pupils which are well matched to their earlier attainment so that learning is being taken forward progressively. Pupils' spelling skills are not as well developed as aspects of grammar and punctuation because the teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) has not been given a sufficiently rigorous emphasis beyond Year 2.

The curriculum gives pupils good opportunities to practise their writing: for example, pupils strengthened their understanding of both history and writing when they wrote a play based on the divorce of Henry VIII from Catherine of Aragon. Because pupils thoroughly enjoy such activities and the curriculum is interesting, they concentrate and work hard. Pupils have a good understanding of how to improve their work because they have regular opportunities for self-review to identify their most important next steps. However, in some lessons opportunities are missed to reflect on the smaller steps in learning because the success criteria are rather broad. Sometimes they are more focused on the activities taking place than on the precise knowledge and skills being developed in the lesson. Children make satisfactory gains in their early learning in Reception and

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develop good social skills, largely because of the warm, encouraging relationships with adults. The outdoor area is used regularly but is not organised well enough to give children easy access to equipment and resources to promote their development across all of their areas of learning.

The headteacher's effective leadership and the astute oversight of the governing body are seen in the improvements achieved and the continuity maintained in learning during a time of significant staffing disruption. There is a strong team spirit within the school because staff feel valued and empowered in their roles. The school's self evaluation is challenging and accurate, and has been used well to inform developments. A well-targeted staff development programme is bringing about rapid improvement. Consequently, the school has improved well since its last inspection, and particularly over the last year, so that the quality of education has moved from satisfactory to good. This record shows the school's good capacity for sustained development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve aspects of teaching to accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - making sure that the success criteria identified for learning are sufficiently refined for pupils to reflect accurately on their achievement at the end of the lesson
 - extending the teaching of phonics (letters and sounds) into Key Stage 2 to improve pupils' spelling and reading.
- By September 2011, reorganise and improve the outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that it gives children richer opportunities for a broader range of learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and reflect maturely on how they enjoy the increasing opportunities they have to learn through first-hand experiences, such as researching information and ideas for themselves. Consequently, pupils take a pride in their achievements and present their work well. Pupils benefit from the input of teaching assistants and volunteers, who provide encouragement for pupils to talk through their ideas and to do things for themselves. This approach is enabling pupils who have the greatest level of adult support, usually those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are at an early stage of learning English, to make good progress from their starting points. There is considerable variation in pupils' attainment on entry each year, which accounts for some differences in the Year 2 and 6 assessments. In past years these have been similar to the national average, but current standards of work seen in lessons, in pupils' books and in school tracking data, show that attainment is rising. This is seen particularly in the sharp increase in the number of pupils working at the higher levels of national curriculum assessments.

Good behaviour means that pupils are able to work well together in groups, or concentrate on their individual tasks if that is required. Pupils are confident to question when there is something they do not understand because they know that they are listened to and their ideas valued by the teacher and other pupils. Classrooms are a hive of purposeful activity, with pupils developing a responsibility for their own learning. For instance, in a Year 2 lesson when a few pupils had completed their individual work on

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subtraction and grouping numbers, they sought out an additional challenge for themselves from a bank of question cards readily available to them in the classroom. Pupils' good personal learning skills equip them well for the next stage of their education.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles, recognised in national awards, and evident in their keen involvement in extra-curricular sport and the popular use of the adventure playgrounds. Pupils have a strong respect for their school, shown in its clean, tidy and welcoming appearance. Pupils benefit from the information they receive from outside agencies, such as the police and fire brigade, on how to stay safe, leading them to identify recently that they want to find out more about railway safety. Pupils' consideration of the feelings of others is reflected in the fact that instances of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident that these will be dealt with promptly and effectively when they occur because of the trust they have in adults to help and support them in whatever way is necessary.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

The improvements in teaching are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics. For example, in a lesson where pupils were using protractors for the first time, they mastered the practical skills quickly and then used their measurements to draw conclusions about the sum of the angles in a triangle. Teachers work well together to identify good practice and share expertise. Teachers value the

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opportunities they have to assess pupils' progress and discuss this with senior leaders. This helps them to have a clear understanding of the action necessary when a pupil is not making the expected progress. They then use this knowledge of individual pupils effectively to plan activities in lessons which are matched well to differing needs of pupils within their classes. Consequently, the needs of different groups and ages are met well within the mixed-age classes. Teachers use software and computer technology well to model tasks and share examples of good work at the end of lessons. These plenary sessions are often used effectively to introduce new ideas for the next lesson or to provide additional challenge, but do not always maximise opportunities for pupils to reflect closely on the detail of the learning which has taken place. However, pupils are given good guidance about how work can be improved through regular marking. The periodic self-reviews and development of school and home targets ensure that pupils have a good understanding of their key next steps in learning.

Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum which is enhanced well by enrichment activities, benefiting pupils' personal, creative and artistic development alongside the acquisition of literacy, numeracy and scientific skills. Pupils' active involvement in learning through practical tasks contributes to their engagement and enjoyment of lessons, for example, when Year 2 pupils made a mini wooden wheelbarrow following a comprehensive research into similar products. French, evident in every corner of the school, holds a special place in the curriculum, and provides a good basis for further study in secondary school. Pupils' realistic models of Native American totem poles are examples of how the school develops their awareness of other cultural lifestyles. The locality is used well as the basis for study, including a local river study, a port visit studying fishing and marketing, and visits to the Herstmonceux Science Centre for a workshop on forces as part of a bridge-building project. Such activities are used effectively to provide relevant contexts for good cross-curricular learning and development of basic skills.

The school has strong relationships with almost all parents or carers so that staff know individual pupils and their circumstances well. This helps them to support parents and carers in sensitive and challenging situations, and pupils are nurtured well. The breakfast club provides a positive start to the day for those pupils attending. Good induction and transition arrangements help pupils start school, whether in Reception or later, and to transfer between classes and to secondary school with confidence. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English is good because of the school's rigorous identification strategies and the follow-up support systems that are put in place. The success of the school's promotion of attendance is seen in improved attendance, and most particularly in the reduction of persistent absence and better punctuality.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Many parents and carers commented positively on the headteacher's strong and dedicated leadership. Teamwork is very evident across the school, so that there is a shared sense of purpose to provide opportunities which value and develop pupils as individuals. The governing body, under the purposeful and determined leadership of the Chair of the Governing Body, gives a firm strategic lead to the school which is based on informed first-hand evidence of its day-to-day work. These strengths have served the school well during a time of significant change. Staff are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating aspects of the school. As a result, self-evaluation is challenging and accurate, so that planning is based on the right priorities to sustain improvement. Links with other schools locally are beneficial for staff to share ideas and cost-effective training, while others are used to enable pupils to join in activities with pupils from other schools which broaden their experiences and provide additional challenge for gifted or talented pupils.

Safeguarding arrangements are good, including those relating to child protection, and meet all current requirements. Elements of safety are introduced into the curriculum effectively to help pupils to learn how to look after their own safety. The school's commitment to equal opportunities and tackling discrimination is seen in the action taken to monitor and iron out any discrepancies in the performance of different groups. For example, pupils who join the school during Key Stage 2 make similar progress to those already in the school because of the attention given to understanding their starting points and using this to match provision to their needs. The school places itself at the heart of the church community and has analysed its role within the local area, so that the actions it takes make a good contribution to community cohesion. Pupils learn about religious beliefs present in today's society, which helps them to understand diversity in Britain, and have good opportunities to learn about society globally.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

The skills, knowledge and understanding of children when they enter Reception vary considerably from year to year. As a result of well-organised induction systems and positive links with parents and carers, children settle well. This year, continuity of provision has been affected by staff illness and a change of teacher mid-year. Children develop their confidence and make satisfactory progress. In some areas, including personal and social development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, progress is good. An increased focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills is leading to good development of communication and early literacy skills. Relationships between adults and children are positive, which makes a strong contribution to children's social development. Adults engage children in conversation, asking questions to promote understanding, although these are not always sufficiently challenging or probing to extend children's thinking further and to help them make more rapid progress in all their areas of learning. Planning ensures a balance of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to choose for themselves and learn through play. The rooms are well organised for practical activities. Children have engaged in a number of interesting activities beyond the classroom such as a farm visit to give them first-hand experience of animals. Currently the outdoor area is not fully maximised as resources are not well organised to engage children: for example, construction equipment and kitchen play equipment are not organised in a way to encourage productive imaginative activity where children can identify the purpose of their play. Adults ensure that all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are included in activities and that all are cared for well. Leadership and management have ensured that staff work as a close team to minimise the impact of staffing changes on children's progress. However, in spite of a commitment to securing improvements, the capacity to drive change forward has been

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limited over the year. Now that staffing has been confirmed for next year, there is clear action planning in place to improve provision further.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are positive about all aspects of the school. The return rate was higher than for most primary schools and a minority of parents and carers made additional positive comments about the school's work. In particular, they felt that children are safe and helped to have a healthy lifestyle, that teaching is good, and that the school is led and managed effectively. The inspection confirms these views. A few parents and carers did not agree that pupils make enough progress or that the school meets their child's needs. The inspection found that pupils make good progress and that individual needs are met well. A few returns indicated that parents and carers had concerns about how poor behaviour is managed. Inspectors found that good behaviour is one of the strengths of the school's positive ethos and that when behaviour is unacceptable it is dealt with quickly so that it does not impact negatively on the learning or experiences of others.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Anney Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 84 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 171 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	61	28	33	3	4	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	64	76	19	23	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	49	38	45	5	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	48	33	39	9	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	47	56	33	39	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	54	31	37	6	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	67	23	27	4	5	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	37	44	36	43	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	50	30	36	10	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	42	35	42	8	10	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	46	34	40	6	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	43	51	35	42	3	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	65	22	26	6	7	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Annecy Catholic Primary School, Seaford BN25 4LF

You may remember that inspectors visited your school recently. Thank you for making us so welcome and for explaining what you were doing when we came to see you in lessons. We enjoyed talking to the school council members, who were very good at explaining how you feel about your school. This letter is to explain what we found out.

The school give you a good quality of education, which means that you are prepared well for secondary school. There are many good things about how the school helps you to develop as young people. You understand how to keep safe and how to lead healthy lifestyles. We saw how keen you are on sport after school and how active you are at playtimes. You make good progress in your learning. It was good to see how you concentrate in lessons and take care with the presentation of your work. It was also good to see how lessons can be fun, such as when you were writing your play scripts about Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon at the start of your Tudor topic. There are some really interesting things to do, particularly when you visit other places or when visitors are invited in to talk to you about the things they do. We have made some recommendations for your headteacher and teachers to help you to make even faster progress. We have asked them to:

- make sure that the success criteria for your tasks are explained in a way which helps you to reflect on exactly how much you have learned during the lesson
- help you to improve your spelling and reading by giving you more phonics practice in Opal and Sapphire classes
- reorganise the outdoor area for Reception so that children can use it for more of their activities.

We are sure that you will continue to work hard.

We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Helen Hutchings

Lead inspector

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