



Inspection report

St Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary School

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 101654
LEA Bromley

Inspection number 274494
Inspection dates 23 and 24 May 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs J Clemence, Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Genoa Road
School category	Voluntary Aided <i>Diocese of Southwark</i>		Anerley London SE20 8ES
Age range of pupils	4 to 11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8778 7681
Number on roll	375	Fax number	020 8778 3091
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Father James Nolan
Date of previous inspection	November 2004	Headteacher	Mrs L Mountain

Age group 4 o 11 years	Published 27 June 2005	Reference no. 274494
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Introduction

When St Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary School was inspected in November 2004, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses. In May 2005, Additional Inspectors reinspected the school to monitor its progress.

Description of the school

St Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary School is larger than average, with 375 pupils on roll. It serves a community with significant social and economic disadvantage, with a high level of mobility among the pupils and their families. Pupils come from very diverse ethnic backgrounds and more than 10% have English as an additional language. There is a high proportion of pupils, more than one third, who have special educational needs, and an average number of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is approximately one third, well above the national average. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below average, particularly in their language and communication skills.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

There are weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school, and the headteacher is not having a strong enough impact on raising standards, improving teaching and learning and establishing high expectations of staff in helping the pupils achieve their best. Standards by the end of Year 2 are very low and the pupils' progress is poor. The pupils' gains are inconsistent and vary unacceptably as they move through the school. There is no secure upward trend overall in the school's national test results. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory, though the high proportion of unsatisfactory and occasionally poor teaching dampens their enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning.

Improvement since the last inspection

Important weaknesses identified at the time of the previous inspection remain, including low standards, and pupils' achievements. Limited progress has been made in all the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report of November 2004, and there has been a decline in the quality of teaching and learning.

Capacity to improve

Currently, there is limited capacity to improve. The headteacher's leadership and management are not resulting in the necessary rise in standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher is working with a depleted senior management team and this in turn hinders what can be achieved. On balance, however, strengths in the staffing are outweighed by weaknesses. The pace of change is slow, and despite the high level of support given by the local education authority (LEA) and other external professionals, there are widespread shortcomings that persist.

What the school should do to improve further

The key priorities for the school's development plan are to:

- raise standards throughout the school, giving priority to English and mathematics;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning, and increase the rate of pupils' progress;
- improve the headteacher's leadership and establish effective management of the school;

- establish effective strategies for supporting the pupils' academic achievements.

Achievement and standards

There is no clear upward trend in standards, and pupils' achievements by the end of Year 2 are poor. National test results for pupils in Year 2 in three of the last four years have been well below average in reading. In 2003 and 2004, standards in writing and mathematics were in the lowest 5% nationally. In the most recent national tests in 2005, the school considers that standards reached by pupils in Year 2 were very low overall and similar to previous years. There are some signs of improving standards in Years 3 to 6, though pupils' achievements vary significantly as they move through the school. The standards observed in English and mathematics in Year 2 were poor, as a result of poor quality teaching. In English and mathematics in Year 2, pupils do not have the necessary basic skills in reading, writing and number. The pupils struggle to read with any fluency, and they have too few opportunities to develop their skills in speaking and listening.

By Year 6, the pupils have many gaps in their mathematical knowledge, and they struggle to perform basic numerical operations. The quality of the pupils' work in English books is inconsistent and in many instances, in Year 6, work is presented poorly, unmarked and incomplete, with basic errors in grammar and spelling left unchecked. Overall, standards in Year 6 are very variable and dependent upon the grouping and teaching received.

The pupils who have special educational needs achieve well due to the good support and teaching they receive, particularly in small groups; tasks are well matched to their needs and pupils show pride in their achievements. The higher attaining pupils are not challenged systematically or rigorously, and their achievements are unsatisfactory. Overall, few pupils reach the standards expected for their age, and very few of the more able reach the higher levels.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory in lessons and around the school. They show enthusiasm and effort when lessons are interesting and the work is pitched at a suitable level. Most pupils are compliant even when work is tedious and poorly matched to their needs, and explanations are inadequate. While there are some pupils with behavioural problems, the great majority settle to their tasks and want to learn. The quality of relationships is satisfactory between pupils and with adults.

The pupils' personal development is satisfactory, though there are instances where the school's expectations and procedures do too little to foster care and consideration for one another. The breaktime for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is an example where pupils have little idea of how to play together, and play quickly becomes rough. During the inspection, some pupils' needs were overlooked in such situations. The pupils' attendance is below the national average but rising.

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, and there is considerable emphasis upon the Roman Catholic faith and values, for example in assemblies.

Quality of provision

A high proportion of the teaching and learning was unsatisfactory, representing a poorer picture than in November 2004. The quality of teaching was good in five lessons, satisfactory in eight, unsatisfactory in six, and poor in one lesson.

In the most effective teaching, lessons were challenging and lively, and high expectations were set for the pupils academically and socially. Pupils in turn responded positively, showing enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. In parts of Year 1 and Year 6, for example, activities were set at an appropriate level and the atmosphere for learning was lively and purposeful.

The unsatisfactory teaching was characterised by slow pace, lack of clarity and purpose to the learning, and tasks that were not well matched to the pupils' wide-ranging needs. In the poor teaching in Year 2, the chaotic organisation, weak management of the pupils' behaviour and poor explanations led to little learning taking place.

A scrutiny of the pupils' books in Year 2, and in some instances in Year 6, showed poor marking, inconsistent routines and low expectations for the presentation of work. Pupils are not sufficiently aware of their personal targets and have little idea of what they could do in order to improve further.

There are weaknesses in the provision for the Foundation Stage. The pupils are not trained in the good habits for work and learning that could be built upon in the future. Teachers do not always establish high enough expectations for the pupils to listen, and follow instructions. The lunchtime routines for pupils in the Foundation Stage are weak. Activities designed to quieten them sometimes have the opposite effect. There are areas of the provision that are messy and disorganised, as reported at the previous inspection.

The quality of assessment is improving but remains unsatisfactory. The assessment information is not used effectively enough to ensure that pupils have work that is matched to their needs and achieve what is realistic in relation to their starting points. The assessment co-ordinators are working hard to address the weaknesses in assessment, though there have been many gaps in the information about pupils' academic achievements.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has aspirations for the school and its pupils, though these are not translated into strategies that are effective and implemented consistently. The leadership and management are not having a strong enough impact on raising standards, improving the quality of teaching and learning and establishing high expectations of staff in helping

pupils to achieve their best. Action is being taken to address some areas of weakness in teaching and learning, though this has been slow to come about. The unsatisfactory deployment of teachers means that some of the poorest learning takes place in Years 2 and 6. In some instances, such as those linked to assessment and marking, procedures are simply not followed by all staff. The headteacher has a realistic overview of the school and its relative strengths and weaknesses, though but she is not always effective in directing others and bringing about the required changes to professional practice.

The senior management structure is imbalanced. The assistant headteacher has many areas of responsibility, but insufficient authority to carry out her work across the school. The headteacher is working, in effect, without someone undertaking the role of a deputy headteacher. The contribution of subject leaders is variable. Although the headteacher has plans to reorganise key areas of responsibility, the present deployment of staff does not always utilise strengths, or minimise the impact of weaknesses. The headteacher has carried out some monitoring activities in conjunction with the LEA, though this has not yet had a significant impact on raising standards or improving teaching and learning.

The chair of governors is active and committed to the school and makes regular visits, both formally and informally. Governors are supportive of the headteacher and staff, and want the best for the pupils. Their role has developed over time, though they are not fully aware of the degree of weakness across the school.

The LEA has been supportive to the school and challenged its work. There has been a coherent and co-ordinated response to the school's areas for development, using external expertise to help staff and senior managers alike. The headteacher is responsive to the LEA's support, but advice and guidance have not been fully embedded into practice across the school and have failed to make the required impact.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

St Anthony's Roman Catholic Primary School was inspected in November 2004 under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and team of inspectors. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

In May 2005, two Additional Inspectors returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Twenty lessons or parts of lessons and two assemblies were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, the chair of governors and a representative from the LEA, and informally with other staff. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and areas for improvement in the inspection report of November 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those areas.

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