

St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100852
Local Authority	Southwark
Inspection number	276405
Inspection dates	12–13 December 2006
Reporting inspector	Barry Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	336
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev J OConnor
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Owens
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2000
School address	Etherow Street Dulwich London SE22 0LA
Telephone number	02086936852
Fax number	02086932958

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 December 2006
Inspection number	276405

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and caters for an area that is a little more disadvantaged than most. It is over-subscribed and the great majority of the pupils are Catholic. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than in the great majority of schools. There are few pupils at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is less than in most schools. Attainment on entry to the school is above average. The school has a one and a half form entry each year and so some classes are taught in mixed-age groups.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Anthony's is a good school with outstanding features. This is a school in which every child does matter. Pupils' personal development and well-being are excellent. The high quality of the relationships reflects the very strong Catholic ethos and the excellent links between families, parish and the school. Pupils behave in an exemplary way and are very considerate to one another. They are polite and courteous and play their full part in making this a very welcoming school. As a result, they enjoy school very much, attend well and feel very safe. The great majority of parents are very appreciative of the school's efforts and values. As one parent wrote, 'I cannot fault this school. My son is being nurtured and being exposed to learning activities to set him up for life'.

Children start well in the Foundation Stage. They receive good teaching and make good progress overall. Most enter Year 1 with skills that are above the national expectation. Standards are consistently well above national averages by the end of year 6 and in some years they are exceptionally high. Consequently, achievement is outstanding. The main reason for this is the good teaching they receive and, in particular, there is a high proportion of outstanding teaching in Years 5 and 6. Pupils make the best progress in these classes. The other reasons are the high level of parental support and help and the good relationships with other schools. Some pupils benefit from extra skilled tuition on Saturday mornings at nearby independent secondary schools. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well coordinated and they make the same progress as their classmates.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and the school makes the best use of the restricted outdoor area. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is good and has been improved significantly since the last inspection. Teachers work well as teams and ensure that the planning meets the needs of individual pupils. Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved and they are used satisfactorily. However, opportunities are missed in some classes to use ICT to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has high expectations for pupils and staff. The school's self-evaluation is good and consequently the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The tracking of pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is excellent. The school is able to detect early any dips in individual pupils' performance and uses this information well to target support. This contributes significantly to the excellent progress made by many pupils. The effectiveness of middle managers is more mixed. Roles and responsibilities have been revised recently and several are still adjusting to their new roles. The governors hold the school to account effectively. Hence, given the track record of improvements and high standards the capacity to improve further is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that subject coordinators monitor and evaluate their subjects effectively
- Extend the use of ICT across the curriculum

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage in all areas of learning. The progress made by pupils slows in Years 3 and 4 but accelerates rapidly in Years 5 and 6 because of the

outstanding teaching and the effective additional support, both in and outside school. Some pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit by attending literacy, numeracy and ICT Saturday morning classes at one of three local independent schools. Across the school, progress is excellent in mathematics and science and good in English. Standards in writing are lower than for reading although the difference is less than that found nationally. The school has adopted whole-school strategies to improve standards in writing and these are leading to improvements. There are close links with parents and some pupils benefit from the additional help, particularly for reading. There are no underachieving groups. Several pupils with learning difficulties attain the nationally expected level in the Year 6 tests. Given their starting points their progress is outstanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils take pride in their school. The school's Christian ethos is central to its work. Consequently, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils act responsibly and make a very effective contribution to the school and to the wider community. For instance, the choir entertains patients in hospital, charitable causes are supported very well and they give good support to the many events organised by the parents. The pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy living principles. They have supported the introduction of healthy menus at lunchtimes and take up is good. They participate in physical activities enthusiastically. This results from the school's very good provision including the use of specialist sporting coaches. This is recognised by national awards for health matters and for physical education. The pupils are well prepared for secondary schools as they have very good skills in literacy and numeracy and learn to work collaboratively. Their ICT skills are satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers plan their lessons well and objectives are clear and shared with pupils. They manage classrooms very well and there is a very positive learning atmosphere. The teachers are enthusiastic and this is appreciated by the pupils and contributes to their positive attitudes. As one pupil remarked 'I love lessons. We learn but they are fun'. They use questioning well and the pupils' responses are very good. The pupils express themselves clearly and develop their arguments well. Good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils with learning difficulties. Teachers vary in their ability to match work to individual needs and so in some classes the more able are not challenged sufficiently. Marking is good generally. It is excellent in English and gives pupils clear guidance on how they might improve further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. In the Foundation Stage there is a good balance between adult-led activities and providing opportunities for children to learn independently. However, the outside area cannot be used in bad weather but the school is remedying this. In the main school there is good provision for literacy, numeracy and personal and social education and contributes significantly to the high standards in the school. Subjects are planned well over a two-year cycle and this ensures that the curriculum meets the needs effectively of pupils in mixed-age groups. The curriculum reflects well the very diverse, multicultural community within the school.

There is a very good range of after-school clubs and these are well attended. These are supplemented by educational visits which add to the pupils' enjoyment. The school also make good use of visiting specialists, for instance, sports' coaches and theatre groups. The school has just introduced the use of interactive whiteboards into Key Stage 2 classes. It has correctly identified that the use of ICT to promote learning across the curriculum is satisfactory. It is taking steps to make this provision good, too. Plans are currently being implemented to further enhance the satisfactory provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and have some outstanding features. The level of individual care shown by staff to pupils is excellent. This is valued highly by parents and one wrote, 'we are very lucky as parents and carers that our children are in such a loving and nurturing environment, where the staff put every effort into their work'. Child protection procedures are very robust and all staff have been trained recently. The school successfully ensures that all pupils are included and can play their full part in school life. There are good links with support agencies that contribute to the good care for pupils.

Academic guidance is good overall but there are variations between different key stages and subjects. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress are excellent in Key Stage 2, good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. In English, pupils are set targets and these are used well to take pupils onto the next step in their learning. This process is being developed in other subjects.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Senior managers have been effective in raising achievement and standards and maintaining high levels of care. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school and is ably supported by his staff. The monitoring of the quality of teaching is rigorous and the school has adopted robust procedures when weaknesses have been identified. This is allied to a good professional development programme for supporting teachers. The monitoring of pupils' progress is very good in Key Stage 2 and is used very effectively to improve achievement. It underpins the school's success in achieving high standards consistently. The school analyses performance data well. The procedures being implemented in Key Stage 2 this year are exemplary. The data has been used to identify areas of pupils' performance that are relatively less strong. This has been shared with the whole staff and has led to revisions in teaching styles and the curriculum in each year group. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this initiative but it has good potential for promoting further improvements. The governors have a good range of expertise and hold the school to account well. Reports by the headteacher are evaluative and of good quality. The reviews of work in their areas of responsibility by subject coordinators to the governors are too general, however. They do not inform the governors sufficiently about key developments in the subject and their impact on raising standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your help and cooperation when we inspected your school. We spoke to some of you in small groups and others in classes and around the school. You told us that you are proud of your school and we can see why. You told us that you very much enjoy coming to school. The teachers make the lessons fun and interesting. You also told us that you feel very safe at school and that it is very caring. The very rare incidences of bullying are dealt with by adults well. You are listened to and the new school council gives you another way of making your views known.

Our main finding is that St Anthony's is a good school with some outstanding features. We think that the way you develop into mature, responsible young people is excellent. You benefit from the strong Catholic ethos of the school and relationships are excellent. Most of you also make excellent progress in your school work. This is shown by the consistently high standards achieved in SATs. This is because the teaching is good and the staff work very hard to provide you with a rich range of experiences. The school is excellently led by your headteacher. Your parents are very supportive of the school and involve themselves well in its work. This helps to create a family atmosphere in which visitors feel welcome. The school is making the Nursery and Reception outside areas suitable for the children to use in bad weather.

There are two ways in which we have asked the school to improve even further.

- Ensure that, following recent changes, teachers support and check on your work in the subjects that they now lead.
- Computers to be used more often by all teachers to help with work in other subjects.

For your part, keep up the good work and remember to ask if you do not understand. The teachers will be pleased to help.

We wish you every success in the future.

Barry Jones

Lead inspector