



St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110003
LEA Reading LEA
Inspection number 278339
Inspection dates 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006
Reporting inspector Wiola Hola

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Washington Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Caversham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Reading RG4 5AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189 015537
Number on roll	239	Fax number	01189 015538
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Sean Walsh
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Kait Feeney-Nash

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 7 June 2006 - 8 June 2006	Inspection number 278339
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is of average size. Roughly two-thirds of pupils are from White British backgrounds; others are from a wide range of backgrounds. A few children are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is average but the proportion with statements of special educational needs is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school in the view of inspectors and the school. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good. Teachers have honed their skills in recent years in keeping a close check on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science so that standards and achievement have risen. Standards in these core subjects are above average.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school, pupils develop their personal qualities well because they are taught to respect and value each other and those around them. Pupils' behaviour is good. Relationships are very strong and supportive, amongst pupils, the staff and with the local community. Older pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities but there are far fewer for the younger ones. Pupils are diligent and some show initiative in their work, posing their own questions, for example. In the main, however, pupils' development as independent learners is a relative weakness. Some pupils are clear about their targets for learning and how to improve their work but others less so. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and feel that their children enjoy school and are safe and well cared for.

The curriculum is good overall, with strengths in the core subjects and religious education. It includes many enrichment activities, particularly in sport and music. Teachers are working to make links across the curriculum in order to raise standards in all subjects and enhance pupils' enjoyment. This work is clearly visible in religious education, where writing skills are applied well. Opportunities are being missed, however, to use pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects.

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The headteacher is very clear about how the school could improve further and staff share her vision. Subject leaders are generally adept at keeping their subjects under review although there is some inconsistency in practice. Improvement since the last inspection has been good overall. The school has the capacity to improve further and provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils as independent learners, aware of their targets and how to improve their work; provide them with progressively greater responsibilities as they get older.
- Improve standards in all subjects by forging more effective links between subjects and by ensuring that pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT are applied and developed well across the curriculum.
- Develop further the role and effectiveness of subject leaders so that they all keep a close check on pupils' progress in their subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievements are good and standards are above average. Children come into school with levels of attainment that are broadly typical for their age. They make good progress in the reception class and, by the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1, most reach the expected learning goals.

Progress continues to be good in Years 1 to 6. Results in the Year 2 national tests have generally been above average in recent years. In Year 6, results in national tests have been significantly above average for the last three years and have shown a rising trend. They were exceptionally high in 2005 for all three core subjects; this group of pupils made particularly good progress. Targets for the national tests are generally challenging.

The improvement in standards in the core subjects is linked to class teachers' increased awareness in recent years, of how to use attainment data to promote pupils' progress. Standards in ICT have risen since the last inspection because of the considerable investment in resources. Standards in design and technology have risen but modestly. Some good examples of pupils' writing for a wide range of purposes exist in their religious education books but the same is not generally true elsewhere. Many pupils are articulate and the school works effectively to develop speaking skills in lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress because they are well supported.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. There is a family atmosphere within the school which parents and pupils appreciate. Pupils have positive attitudes to school and generally enjoy their work. They are clear about how to stay safe and healthy and most pupils make healthy choices. Attendance is average.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with some strengths. Cultural development is the relatively weaker area. The school recognises this and aims to encourage pupils from different backgrounds and religions to share their experiences for the benefit of all pupils. Pupils' spiritual development is very good, especially through religious education and daily routines of prayer. Pupils behave well. They are keen to share their ideas and feelings, are considerate and able to negotiate with others. Relationships are very good, between pupils and also with adults. Pupils in Year 6 use their initiative and take on responsibility, in organising the 'Charity Day', for example. Younger pupils are keen to be involved, but feel they have fewer opportunities to do so. Making a difference in the community is a very positive aspect of the school's work and pupils are involved in many ways, often as part of the wider Catholic family. Pupils are equipped well with skills for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall because lesson planning is thorough, teachers set high expectations of work and behaviour, pupils are diligent and all lessons are undertaken in a positive and supportive atmosphere.

In the Foundation Stage, teaching and learning are particularly good in personal, social and emotional development. Literacy and numeracy are generally taught well. Sometimes, however, resources are not used effectively to allow children to develop their creativity.

In Years 1 to 6, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is strong and supported by good use of attainment data. Teachers' skills in posing questions are variable and, in some cases, narrow questioning limits the opportunities pupils have for thinking widely or exploring ideas for themselves. A positive feature of learning is the way pupils work with 'talk partners' to share their ideas. Targets for learning are clear to some pupils because they feature on wall displays or in books. Some pupils are uncertain about their targets or how to improve their work.

Teachers have responded positively to the school's drive to use and develop pupils' writing skills in religious education lessons but this endeavour is not so visible in other subjects. The skills of numeracy and ICT are not routinely woven into pupils' learning elsewhere and opportunities are sometimes missed to apply these skills, and writing, in a wide range of contexts.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets pupils' needs and abilities. It covers literacy and numeracy well and provides a good range of after-school clubs and additional events and visits to enhance pupils' enjoyment and achievement. During the inspection, multi-faith week was held and included many activities to develop pupils' understanding about different religions. Musical activities also feature strongly, such as a 'drumming workshop'. Provision for the pupils' personal and social development is good. It includes events that develop pupils' skills of working together and contributing to the community, and also develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils' creativity is promoted, but there are times when curriculum organisation or the use of resources, especially for the youngest children, is too highly structured and does not allow for choice or freedom of expression. The school strives to link work in different subjects, with some indications of success but often these links are not clear enough to be effective. Resources are generally adequate. They have been greatly improved very recently for ICT. Accommodation for the Foundation Stage is showing its age although staff make the best of it; there are plans for it to be improved in the near future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school is a caring and supportive community of learners. Its partnership with parents is strong. Systems to keep pupils safe are effective. Healthy living is promoted. The school works effectively to encourage regular attendance. The few instances of bullying that occur are swiftly and effectively dealt with. The school uses its links with outside agencies well to support the learning and development of pupils, including those identified as having special educational needs.

The school has worked effectively to compile data on pupils' attainment. The headteacher keeps a particularly close eye on how well pupils are doing and who should receive extra support. This work has contributed significantly to rising standards and achievement. The extent to which pupils themselves are fully aware of their own targets to learning is variable. In the main, pupils receive satisfactory guidance, through marking and teachers' verbal comments or questions, about how to improve their work; there are however, inconsistencies in this.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is particularly adept at bringing out the best in staff and pupils, with a very positive, candid and encouraging style. She sees objectively and accurately the school's strengths and areas for development. Ably supported by the deputy, she leads the school well, with a strong vision for the future which staff share. Teamwork is strong. The headteacher employs a good range of strategies for keeping a check on the work of staff and pupils and, with staff, has identified some inconsistencies in practice. Subject leaders are effective and seek constantly to develop provision, although not all keep a close enough check on pupils' progress in their subjects. The school development plan is a coherent and comprehensive document that guides the school forward. Parents and pupils' views of the school have been sought, but this is a relatively recent initiative.

Governors are effective and supportive. They fulfil their role of holding the school to account through challenging questioning and healthy debate. They work in strong partnership with the headteacher. Finances are used thoughtfully and carefully to ensure good value for money.

Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Standards and achievement in the core subjects have risen. Quality assurance systems and reports to parents have improved. There is still more to be done to improve facilities in the Foundation Stage and to develop pupils' initiative and their decision making skills. The school has good capacity to improve further.

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.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

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

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Pupils

I visited your school recently with another inspector, Mrs King. I write to tell you what we found about your school. I would also like to thank you for your help and welcome. We very much appreciated looking at your work and talking to many of you in lessons, over lunch or during break times. You clearly enjoy being in this good school.

These are the best things about your school: * your behaviour is good and you show care and consideration to each other, to staff and visitors * you work hard in lessons and enjoy the many good activities that the school provides * children in the Foundation Stage make a good start at school * teachers prepare lessons well so that your learning is good * teachers and other helpers look after you well so that you are safe and supported * older pupils are very good at taking on responsibilities such as organising the 'Charity Day' * the school is led and managed well; your headteacher, governors and other leaders know exactly what the school is good at and how it could be better.

Here are the main ways in which the school could improve even further: * teachers should help you understand more clearly what you are aiming for in your work and how to improve it * you should be encouraged to do more choosing, thinking and questioning for yourselves and to take on some responsibilities from an earlier age * you could be making more use of your skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT when you learn other subjects and teachers could help you to see how the subjects link together * teachers who take charge of subjects should keep a closer check on how well you are doing in them. You and your parents have told us that you are happy with the school. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Wiola Hola

Her Majesty's Inspector