



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 110040
LEA Slough LEA
Inspection number 278355
Inspection dates 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006
Reporting inspector Olson Davis AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Farnham Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Farnham Royal
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Slough SL2 3AA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01753 645828
Number on roll	357	Fax number	01753 645011
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Vicky O'Brien
Date of previous inspection	5 June 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Margaret Stacey

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Anthony's is a large Catholic primary school which serves a diverse population. Although the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average a significant minority of pupils come from homes of economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is about the national average. The attainment of children entering the school is significantly below the national average. At the time of the previous inspection it was judged to be slightly below average. The percentage of pupils from a minority ethnic background is well above average as is the percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language. In the past two years there has been an influx of pupils at the early stages of learning English. These pupils now represent three-tenths of the school population. At the time of the previous inspection there were only a few pupils at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the normal times is above average. There has been a very high turnover of staff. Seven members of staff joined the school at the beginning of this school year. The headteacher joined the school in September 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its effectiveness to be satisfactory and inspectors confirm this view. The school has been through a time of turbulence, especially in staffing, which has had a detrimental impact on pupils' progress. The school is now coping well with these changes under the effective leadership of the new headteacher. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has accurately identified its strengths and has successfully implemented plans to bring about improvements. As a result the school has the capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory although few children attain the expected goals for their age by the end of the reception year. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress but standards in English, especially writing, should be higher for more able pupils. Teaching is satisfactory with good features. However, there are inconsistencies in the way that assessment information is used by teachers to match work to pupils' abilities. The result is that some lessons lack pace and challenge, and more able pupils do not make the progress they should. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory, especially for pupils in Year 1. The care given to pupils is good and reflects the school's Christian ethos. Parents praise this area of the school's work. Pupils enjoy and benefit from a satisfactory curriculum which is enriched by a good range of activities outside of the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

* Improve standards in English, particularly for more able pupils* Improve the consistency of teaching by sharing best practice, making effective use of assessment to provide challenge and pace in lessons particularly for the more able pupils* Improve attendance especially for pupils in Year 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their initial starting points. Pupils enter the school with low levels of skills in all areas of learning especially in communication, language and literacy. The teaching programme in reception helps children, including those at the early stages of learning English, to make a satisfactory start. Their social skills develop well. Inspection evidence shows that pupils make satisfactory progress but by the end of Year 2 their skills in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 2 to Year 6. Standards in mathematics in 2005 improved significantly and are now broadly in line with the national average. Standards in English have also improved, and the school met its suitably challenging targets in this subject, but the more able pupils could do better. More able pupils are not doing as well as they should because some teachers are not using the results of their assessments to match work well enough to pupils'

abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported which helps them to make similar progress to their classmates. Pupils from a minority ethnic background achieve as well as their peers. Those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because of the effective support given by the school, especially in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being are satisfactory with some good features. The pupils are well behaved and show good attitudes to learning. Relationships are good and the pupils feel confident and valued. The school successfully supports pupils' spiritual, social and moral development through its Christian and Catholic ethos and character and through the use of special visitors. Social development is enhanced through a good range of out-of-school clubs and educational visits, including residential visits for older pupils. As a result pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and this marks an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils show a satisfactory understanding of healthy living and respond well to advice by choosing the healthier options and taking regular exercise. They are learning to make a positive contribution to the community through the responsibilities that they readily take on and their eager participation in local activities. They know how to stay safe, such as when using tools in school and when playing outside. Pupils gain sound economic awareness through fund raising activities in school, but their limited English skills hamper them in some respects. Although pupils enjoy school, a view that is overwhelming endorsed by their parents, attendance is below average. The school has worked well with outside agencies to improve attendance among older pupils but there remains poor attendance in some groups especially Year 1.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some of the lessons observed were good and all were at least satisfactory. Pupils work hard and cooperate well in lessons. In the good lessons teachers make effective use of assessment to plan stimulating work that captures pupils' interest and provides pace and challenge because it is well matched to the learning needs of different ability groups within the class. Assessment is used well to identify support for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers are vigilant when marking and checking the pupils' work and use the information to guide pupils on how to improve. Some aspects of assessment are unsatisfactory; it is not used consistently especially to set challenging tasks for the more able. Teaching and learning in the reception year are satisfactory. In teacher led sessions learning activities are practical and challenging and the teacher makes good use of visual aids, although sometimes some activities go on too long and slow the pace of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It broadly meets the needs of pupils, including those learning English as an additional language. Since the last inspection the school has improved the links between subjects to make learning more relevant and purposeful. The school is successful in developing the pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. For example, when studying food groups and through healthy eating choices made at lunchtimes. The use of information and communication technology has improved, for example, teachers use interactive whiteboards to illustrate key learning objectives that stimulate and interest the pupils. The school organises a good range of out-of-class activities which make a good contribution to pupils' learning. A well planned programme of visits and visitors adds extra enjoyment to learning. Residential visits in particular make a significant contribution to the pupils' social development. The school's planning for reception children is satisfactory and ensures that they start with a secure platform for future learning. The provision is enhanced with good opportunities for the children to choose activities for themselves.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and are embedded in the school's ethos and practice. Child protection procedures are regularly reviewed and known to all staff. The school undertakes systematic risk assessments, for example, for school trips, as part of its health and safety procedures. Pupils' views and ideas are valued and acted on through the school council and pupils' questionnaires. Older pupils supervise younger ones and act as 'buddies' to ensure that everyone, including new arrivals, is looked after and supported. The pupils say they feel safe, secure and well cared for. Good information is provided for parents and the large majority believe their children are well supported. The school tracks the academic and personal development of the pupils but the use of assessment is not rigorous enough to provide challenge for more able pupils. Partnerships with other schools, pre-school providers and the church are good. There are good opportunities for the pupils to take part in clubs and fundraising. These enable them to contribute to their community and influence the lives of others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and improving. The headteacher provides good leadership in what have been, and are, turbulent times for the school. She has created a clear vision for the school centred on raising standards and promoting a strong Christian ethos of care for pupils. She provides a strong emphasis on treating all pupils equally, whatever their background or individual needs. The headteacher has successfully developed a senior leadership team which is now more focused on raising standards. Senior staff are gaining in skills and confidence as a result of effective training and provide satisfactory support. They are involved in

monitoring the effectiveness of the school's work and show a clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Senior staff have a realistic picture of the school and are using analysis of strengths and weaknesses to determine priorities for development. Parents, pupils and other stakeholders are consulted and feel that their views are considered. These priorities are translated into clear plans describing what the school needs to do next to improve. For example, monitoring of teaching has identified inconsistencies and the assistant headteacher is working successfully alongside colleagues. Similarly, subject leaders have provided clear plans and advice to promote the consistent development of skills and knowledge in their subjects and these actions have led to improved teamwork and a shared sense of purpose. However, assessment remains a priority for improvement. Governors are supportive of the school and are beginning to play a more active role in monitoring and evaluating its work. Progress on addressing the issues identified in the previous inspection has been satisfactory. The school has satisfactory capacity for improvement.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	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?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and took careful note of your comments. We also read your parents' responses to the questionnaire. They were almost entirely positive and they made many good comments about your school. We agree with the headteacher, staff and governors that your school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some of the good things we found when we visited your school: * you are making good strides in your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development* you behave well in lessons and around the school* you are learning to be safe and to have healthy life styles* the teachers and other adults take good care of you at school* you enjoy your school and the many opportunities it offers such as after school activities.

There are some areas that we think your school needs to keep working at. These include trying to get some children to come to school more often. You can help with this by making sure that you come to school when you should. We have also asked teachers to help you to improve your skills and knowledge in English, especially writing. They can do this by sharing their knowledge about what works best in some lessons. They can also do this by using the information they have about your skills to plan more challenging work so that you make as much progress as you should. We hope that you will support your teachers as they try to make your school the best that it can be for you.