



Anson Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101495
Local Authority Brent
Inspection number 286084
Inspection dates 29–30 November 2006
Reporting inspector Susan Gregory HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Anson Road
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	3–11		NW2 4AB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02084528552
Number on roll (school)	350	Fax number	02084503845
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Tracie Desmond
		Headteacher	Mr Jeff Smith
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and two Additional Inspectors. While at the school, the inspectors spoke to pupils, parents, staff and governors, observed lessons and looked at pupils work. They also examined the school's data, records and other documents. Well over half of the parents responded to the questionnaire distributed just before the inspection.

Description of the school

The school is culturally diverse. Well over 90% of the pupils represent minority ethnic groups, almost three quarters speak English as an additional language and over 20% are at the early stages of learning English. Thirty-five languages are spoken and after English, Urdu is the main language, followed by Arabic, Punjabi and Gujarati. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is high, as is the number of pupils who arrive at or leave the school at other than the expected times. A few children have recently left war torn countries and six of the current pupils are refugees.

The majority of pupils enter the school with levels of language that are well below national expectations. About one quarter have learning difficulties and disabilities, including three pupils who are in the process of receiving a statement of special educational needs. There are two children who are looked after by the local authority.

The school offers after school care - Kidz Club. The provision was inspected by Ofsted in March 2006 and judged to be good.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Anson Primary School provides a safe, 'extended family' where pupils receive a high level of care and a good standard of education. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher, the staff, governors, parents and pupils work together very successfully to promote a high degree of racial harmony. Governors and parents say, 'This school understands what it means to 'include' every child' and, that 'Anson feels like a village school in the middle of the United Nations of Brent, where there is a strong culture of mutual respect'. The overwhelming majority of parents express a high regard for the work of the headteacher, staff and governors and many particularly appreciate the way in which the staff make themselves available. They also like the good opportunities for family learning and say that the staff help them to better understand how they can support their children's learning at home.

The headteacher and his senior staff are effective leaders who provide the school with the clear direction it needs in tackling the potential barriers to learning faced by a good number of pupils, such as their lack of knowledge of spoken English. The impact of the leadership is clear. Many pupils enter the school with very low starting points, several having first attended other schools. They do well, and even though their standards are not quite at the national average, this represents good achievement for almost all.

Much has been achieved by the staff in their drive to create an environment which nurtures all its pupils. As a result children move on quickly in their personal development. Pupils are responsive to the school's expectations, accept increasing responsibility, behave well, and have exceptionally good attitudes to work because they think that learning at Anson is fun. The staff are very successful at helping children to develop their speaking and listening skills from the earliest stage, both for communicating with others and for thinking, and because of this, children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. The learning opportunities for the older pupils are also good, and the provision for those at the early stages of learning to speak English is outstanding. Consequently, most pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with learning difficulties, those from the different ethnic backgrounds, looked after children, and pupils that have arrived recently.

The senior staff make a good team. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school's work well, have a clear, accurate view of what needs to be done to bring about necessary improvements and have ensured that their initiatives permeate all levels of management. A very good example of this is seen in the successful improvement that has been made to the systems for assessing pupils' learning since the last inspection. The staff have a good understanding of what pupils have already learnt and what they need to learn next and this is making a difference to the speed with which pupils make progress; almost all pupils make good progress and some are doing better.

Other important factors that enable pupils to do well are the good teaching and curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants work together successfully to provide interesting, relevant lessons. However, although the staff work hard to plan activities

that are well-matched to pupils' abilities, this is not always as successful as it might be in mixed-age groups. The teaching strategies that staff use work best when the pupils are taught in separate year groups, whereas in the mixed-age groups, occasionally, children of the highest ability are not helped to do as well as they might. The challenge for the school is to find ways of organising teaching groups so that all children make even better progress and achieve higher standards in English, mathematics and science.

The good quality of the education and care and the achievements of pupils demonstrate that the school provides good value for money. The inspectors have confidence that the school has the capacity to continue to move forward because of its steady pace of sustained improvements since the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- carefully considering the most effective way of organising pupils' teaching groups so that all pupils, including the most able, do as well as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

During the inspection, the lessons seen and pupils' work show that there are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils. Most pupils make good progress, generally from starting points well below the expected levels.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good gains especially in their personal, social and emotional development and language skills. By the time they move into Year 1, the majority are working at levels close to national expectations in most areas with the exception of early literacy and numeracy. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and over the past three years standards in English, mathematics and science have been improving, although few pupils reach the higher levels. Between Years 3 and 6 pupils' good achievement is sustained, including that for the high number of pupils that are new arrivals at the school, some of whom speak no English at all. This reflects the excellent provision for pupils learning to speak English. By the time they leave, test results indicate pupils reach standards that are below average, but closer to the national expectations for their age than when they joined the school. Pupils' targets set for national tests in 2007 are challenging but realistic, they reflect the school's improved assessment procedures and pupils are well on track to achieve them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Those of all ages love to come to school and as a result their attendance is unusually high. They have good social skills and a healthy sense of right and wrong. The heavy emphasis that staff place on pupils looking after

each other has generated a climate of respect and care in which pupils make a valuable contribution to the well-being of others. They have a strong 'voice' through the School Council and feel valued as important members of the community.

The good opportunities for pupils to reflect on what they see and hear and to share their thoughts and feelings in 'circle time' contribute to pupils' good spiritual development. The staff make the most of the richness of pupils' heritages and as a result their cultural development is particularly good.

Staff pay good attention to safety matters and this effectively helps pupils to adopt safe practices. The campaign to introduce first-rate school lunches and the good opportunities to be physically active, successfully encourage pupils to adopt healthier lifestyles. Pupils are well prepared to function effectively in their future working lives through the good progress they make in their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A positive learning environment is created by the very strong relationships between pupils and adults. Of particular note is the quiet, unobtrusive way in which adults throughout the school deal with any elements of challenging behaviour, ensuring that learning activities are not disrupted.

Teaching is good; teachers and teaching assistants use assessment well for planning, and to track pupils' progress. Lessons have pace and teachers ask questions that effectively challenge their pupils' knowledge and understanding. In the very best lessons seen by the inspectors, for example where older pupils were taught in separate year groups, teachers set, and achieved, high expectations of their pupils, particularly those who are more capable.

The teachers' supportive marking of work celebrates pupils' successful achievement of their own targets and the intended outcomes of lessons, but does not always provide pupils with advice on how to make further improvement. This is an aspect of teaching that staff are tackling, to make it more consistent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum. Resources are of good quality and have been carefully chosen to capture the imagination and stimulate interest. For example, a stunning work by a local artist attracts attention when pupils pass through the main corridor, and the wildlife area outside has been designed to make the most of a small space.

The youngest children benefit from a lively and exciting curriculum. The curriculum for the older pupils is effective too in meeting their needs, and pupils' learning is enriched by effective links with the local community. The good use made of information

and communication technology (ICT) has helped teachers to improve their practice and as a result is also helping pupils to develop their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils are appreciative of the many opportunities that the school offers them; these include sporting activities, outings, clubs, and after school care.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior staff place a strong focus on helping all pupils to settle and to develop their self-esteem, so that they become confident, well motivated learners. All pupils are very well cared for, and in their work they are guided well. As a result they feel safe and make good gains in their learning and personal development.

The staff and governors take all reasonable steps to ensure that pupils are safe; child protection procedures are robust, there have been no incidents of racial discrimination and inappropriate behaviour or bullying is dealt with swiftly and sensitively. The school has developed dedicated links with external agencies; these partnerships support the needs of vulnerable children very effectively.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management are good. The strong leadership of the headteacher sets a good direction for future developments. He has put effective self-evaluation processes in place and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to maintain the momentum for improvement and raise standards further, for example by tackling the difficulties of the school's mixed-age classes. There are also good plans in place to support the school's further development and the senior team carries out well-targeted monitoring of the school's improvement programmes. Monitoring by governors is secure; the governing body discharges its responsibilities well and is effective in holding the school to account. Financial housekeeping is good.

The senior team provide the staff with very good opportunities for professional development and this has had a positive impact on the quality of the school's work. A good number of staff have gained further qualifications and it is a credit to the school that staff at all levels are asked to lead projects for the local authority, and share their expertise more widely.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

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	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for letting us come to visit your school and for making us so welcome. The other inspectors and I really enjoyed meeting you to talk about your work and what you like about your school. We think Anson Primary is a good school.

What we like most about Anson Primary School:

- you love coming to school and try to do your best
- you behave very well and look after each other
- your teachers and the adults in the school make sure that you are safe and happy and have interesting things to do
- your teachers are good at making sure that those of you that are starting to learn English do well
- your teachers and parents talk to each other about how well you are doing.

What we have asked your headteacher to think about:

- we have asked your headteacher to make sure that when he and the teachers organise your classes, they make it easy for you to do as well as you possibly can ,especially in English, mathematics and science.

We hope that you will carry on helping each other, your teachers and the adults in your school.

Yours sincerely

Susan Gregory HMI

Lead inspector