

Anchorsholme Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119249
Local Authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	291363
Inspection date	9 May 2007
Reporting inspector	John Gornall HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	618
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Morton
Headteacher	Mr Graeme Dow
Date of previous school inspection	1 May 2002
School address	Eastpines Drive Thornton-Cleveleys Lancashire FY5 3RX
Telephone number	01253 855215
Fax number	01253 863927

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	9 May 2007
Inspection number	291363

© Crown copyright 2007

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.

Description of the school

This is a large school drawing pupils from two local authorities. In recent years it has grown significantly in size and popularity. The vast majority of the pupils are White British. Children join the school with average to above average abilities. The proportions of pupils at an early stage of English acquisition and those eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well below average. The school is an Investor in People and has gained the Healthy Schools Award. The school takes a lead role in a local Primary Learning Network and provides a range of training opportunities including supporting initial teacher training and senior leadership programmes.

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 with some outstanding features. Visitors to the school soon recognise this is a warm, happy and friendly place. A particular strength of the school is its strong commitment to the personal development and well-being of pupils. The headteacher and staff promote good relationships throughout the school. The pupils enjoy the friendships they make and always have someone to turn to for help. Attendance is above average and reflects the pupils' enjoyment of school. Behaviour is excellent and the pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to work and play. Older pupils have specific responsibilities as prefects, playground buddies and lunchtime helpers. Younger pupils appreciate this and mutual respect is nurtured. The pupils understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and make well informed choices about keeping fit, healthy and safe, as reflected in the achievement of the Healthy Schools Award. The school is held in high regard by parents. As one parent wrote, 'I feel very privileged that my children attend Anchorsholme School'.

Few children enter the school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a significant proportion of them have above average attainment. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of good quality teaching and a stimulating curriculum. Standards by the time they join Year 1 are well above the expected level for their age. In Years 1 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning are good and the pupils continue to make good progress in most areas. The school's results in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are well above average in English, mathematics and science. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is given a high priority and a pioneering aspect of this work is in the use of video conferencing techniques to develop links with other schools and organisations in this country and abroad. Some pupils' writing is underdeveloped; while much of it is satisfactory and some of it good, the range of writing is narrow and the overall quality is not commensurate with the pupils' abilities. Staff are hardworking; they plan their lessons well and manage their classrooms effectively. One aspect of the teaching that is inconsistent relates to the guidance that pupils are given about how to improve their work. Marking of work is inconsistent; some of it is good but elsewhere it does not generally tell pupils how well they have done or identify the next steps for them to achieve. The school has grown significantly in pupil numbers and additional classrooms have been added. However, the basic internal layout of the building, including corridors, halls and communal areas has broadly remained the same. As a result, space is limited and the movement of pupils around the school is difficult at times. The school cannot accommodate all of the pupils together in one place for an assembly.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, who were both appointed earlier this year, have quickly formed an effective leadership team with other senior staff. Together they have begun to introduce a number of changes to how the school operates and these have been positively commented upon by parents and pupils.

The governors are very supportive, reflected in the full membership of the governing body and their 100% attendance at meetings. They have a good overview of the school's work. The school understands its strengths and areas to develop. There were no issues for improvement identified at the previous inspection. The leadership shows that it has the capacity to continue to improve. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' writing across the school.

- Improve the consistency in the quality of feedback provided to pupils about their work and how best it might be improved.
- Seek further ways to improve the school building to better meet the needs of the large school population.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The children entering the Foundation Stage present few barriers to their potential for learning and they achieve well. For most pupils, this good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1 and 2. Boys and girls do equally well. The school's national test results are above average and this has been the trend for a number of years. However, not all pupils have the ability to write confidently for a range of different audiences and purposes. A small number of pupils have been identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They receive additional support, their progress is carefully tracked and they make at least satisfactory progress. Higher-attaining pupils are identified and work is provided that meets their needs in most lessons. The pupils' work is displayed imaginatively in some classrooms which further reflect the good standards being reached by many of the pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's mission statement describes 'A community in which everyone matters and is accorded equality of opportunity'; the school is highly successful in meeting this aim. The pupils are very positive about the school. They enjoy learning and taking part in all that the school provides. Members of the school council and those acting as prefects and helpers carry out their duties in a mature and conscientious way. The house points system, class awards and the golden book scheme all effectively contribute to the promotion of a positive and celebratory ethos. The pupils have a very good sense of right and wrong and relate extremely well to each other and to adults. Any rare incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively and pupils say they feel safe. A wide range of opportunities contribute to pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, teaching and learning are of good quality. The school works closely with initial teacher training (ITT) providers and most of the teaching staff have been trained as ITT Mentors. As a result, they have good observational skills and have become highly reflective practitioners. The enthusiastic pace of the very best lessons keeps pupils on their toes. A very good dance lesson in Year 6 helped the pupils to be aware of how music can be interpreted through physical movement. The pupils are given lots of opportunities to work with partners and this helps them to try out their ideas, share their thoughts and make a positive contribution to lessons. Staff make very good use of the interactive whiteboards to enliven their teaching. A developing aspect of ICT is the use of software and the Internet to promote learning. In Year 2, pupils were using computers effectively to do some research to enhance their knowledge of dinosaurs. There is good and effective classroom support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils and meets statutory requirements. Regular curriculum reviews are effective and the headteacher is seeking ways to enrich further the opportunities afforded to the pupils. The school provides an effective and detailed personal, social and health education programme and this includes a multicultural dimension. Staff in the Foundation Stage have introduced a new and exciting way of delivering the curriculum and are regularly reviewing their approach. The curriculum is enriched by visits, visitors and the very high number of after school clubs. Sessions with qualified sports coaches help pupils stay fit. The school provides a broad range of extra-curricular activities including sport, languages, ICT, media and performing arts. Parents appreciate the efforts the school makes to provide additional activities for the pupils. The school is a member of a sponsored video conferencing group and links with other schools home and abroad enhance the pupils' experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents express confidence in the good pastoral care given to their children. Staff give high priority for pupils' welfare, and arrangements for health and safety including child protection are embedded. Safeguarding procedures are in place. Much is done to ensure a smooth transition when pupils move to and from school. The care displayed by older pupils for the welfare of younger ones is evident. Systems for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress are established and effective. The use of targets to provide an effective steer for pupils' learning is good in some classes, but lacks consistency across the school. Similarly, marking acknowledges effort and provides praise, but is inconsistently applied and only in some cases does it regularly indicate what pupils must do to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management are good with some important strengths. The individual members of the senior leadership team each bring with them specific skills and experiences that collectively make for a very effective team. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. The headteacher, senior leadership team and governors are determined to maintain these good standards, while at the same time, enriching and broadening the pupils' experiences. The new improvement plan is linked to the publication Every Child Matters and offers a clear strategic direction for the school's future. Governance is good. There are effective links between individual governors and co-ordinators to help forge good professional relationships and to deepen the governors' understanding of how well the school is doing. Governors regularly work in school supporting teaching. Training and development are well catered for, as demonstrated in the school's status as an Investor in People.

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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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?	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	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.

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	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

10 May 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Anchorsholme Primary School, Lancashire FY5 3RX

When I visited your school to find out how well you are doing you made me very welcome. I enjoyed talking with many of you and also meeting your school council. I found that Anchorsholme is a really friendly and happy primary school; it provides you with a good education.

Importantly, the staff care for you well, you all get on together and the school is good at helping you understand the importance of keeping safe and staying healthy. Your parents agree with this. Did you know that your attendance is higher than in a lot of other schools? This shows that you enjoy school and all it has to offer. You behave fantastically well and this helps you to learn. Your headteacher makes sure you are all treated equally and that there are plenty of visits, visitors and clubs for you to enjoy.

I found that children get off to a good start in the reception classes and do well. This good progress continues in Years 1 to 6. Most of you do very well and by the time you leave your school standards are good. I had to think really hard about what you might need to do get even better. After talking it over with Mr Dow I suggested that three things will help in particular: your writing skills and the type of writing you do could be improved; your teachers are very helpful, so I have asked them to try to help you individually know how well you're doing and what you need to do next to get even better; finally you told me, and I agree, that you need more space in school.

I wish you all well in making your good school even better. You can help, by continuing to enjoy school, working hard and being so friendly and helpful. You have lots to be proud of.

Best wishes

John Gornall HMI

Her Majesty's Inspector