

Ankermoor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124160
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	292910
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Barnes
Headteacher	Norah Rowley
Date of previous school inspection	1 April 2002
School address	Rene Road Bolehall Tamworth B77 3NW
Telephone number	01827 475730
Fax number	01827 475732

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ankermoor is a smaller than average primary school situated in an area of above average social and economic disadvantage. Nearly all pupils are of White British background and they all speak English as their first language. An above average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The present headteacher was appointed in September 2006 and the deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is an improving school which provides pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils' achievement in the past has been inadequate and a cause for concern. The current headteacher has displayed the vision and determination to ensure the school benefits from its partnership with outside agencies. This has led to the successful implementation of a number of intervention programmes aimed at improving teaching. The impact of these has been a marked improvement in pupils' achievement, which is now satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage.

Children enter the Foundation Stage with well below average skills. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because of consistently good teaching. Teaching and learning throughout the rest of the school are satisfactory and ensure that most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. Standards in Year 6 are presently below average. However, this represents satisfactory achievement for this group of pupils. There are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching throughout the school which sometimes hinder pupils' progress, particularly that of the more able pupils who are not always provided with work matched to their abilities.

Pupils enjoy being part of the school community. Their personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils make sensible and healthy choices and have a good awareness of the need to keep safe. Good moral and social development is reflected in pupils' good behaviour and their good relationships with others. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their understanding of the world around them, especially the multicultural nature of British society.

The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched by a range of additional activities that develop pupils' skills and their enjoyment of learning. However, pupils rarely have opportunities to visit places of interest. The level of care, guidance and support for pupils is satisfactory. Parents value the good pastoral support the school offers their children. However, academic support and guidance are not fully effective. Processes of setting targets are not used consistently throughout the school to help pupils make better progress. In addition, teachers' marking does not always give pupils effective guidance on how to improve their work.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The governing body carries out its duties appropriately and is now beginning to offer an adequate level of challenge to the school. The headteacher has worked well with the deputy headteacher and governors to analyse the school's performance and implement change where needed. The school has clear plans to bring about further improvement and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to achieve them.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching in order to raise the standards and the achievement of all groups of pupils, especially the more able.
- Improve target-setting and the effectiveness of teachers' marking in order to consistently provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the cultural diversity in modern British society.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills well below expectations for their age, especially in regard to communication, language and literacy. They make good progress and achieve well in both the Nursery and Reception classes and this prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

The school has worked hard to improve pupils' achievement during the present academic year. Achievement is now satisfactory, although there are still occasions when more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could because they are not consistently challenged with work at a suitable level. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6 because they receive the appropriate level of academic support.

Even though standards have improved, they are still below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Weaker areas include pupils' writing, especially extended writing, pupils' ability to use basic mathematical skills when solving problems and also their investigative skills in science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn, as reflected in their recently improved attendance rates. They are friendly and polite and eager to please. Pupils are beginning to make informed choices about what they eat and the need to keep healthy and fit. They play sensibly together in the playground and display a good regard for the safety and well-being of others. They know there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem and say they feel safe and that adults deal with instances of unkind behaviour quickly. Older pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities such as acting as 'Buddies' to younger children. Pupils talk enthusiastically about how the school council gives them opportunities to participate in decision making. Their satisfactory progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills, together with their growing understanding of individual and collective responsibility, means that they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. Good behaviour and positive attitudes stem from effective moral and social development. However, whilst their spiritual development is satisfactory, pupils' appreciation of life in a multicultural society is less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching in both Foundation Stage classes is good. Teachers are well organised and provides children with a range of interesting activities. An effective combination of independent learning and tasks led by teachers helps children to make good progress.

The strategies for the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning have not been in place long enough to ensure that teaching is of a consistently good quality throughout the school. Nevertheless, pupils usually work hard in lessons and show a willingness to learn.

Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively together to help pupils with their learning, especially when supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow and teachers do not consistently inspire pupils or engage their interest. Pupils say that, in some lessons, they are given tasks that are too hard or too easy. This slows their progress, especially the more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs and interests of pupils adequately. Pupils have opportunities to develop enterprise and financial skills through, for example, running the school's 'toast shop'. Good planning for personal, social and health education ensures that pupils become well aware of the importance of fitness and well-being. Pupils have opportunities to take part in a range of out of school activities, including sports clubs. However, they are not provided with regular opportunities to visit places of interest in order to develop their understanding of the world outside their immediate locality. Although provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the previous inspection, ICT is not yet used regularly to enhance learning in other subject areas. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and contributes to the children's enjoyment of learning and their developing independence. The wide range of practical activities on offer to children engages their interest well and helps them to make good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school provides a happy and welcoming environment for pupils. Parents are pleased about pastoral care and comment that their children's needs are 'fully met'. Induction and transfer arrangements are good and help pupils to settle quickly into new routines. Appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place and risk assessments meet current government guidelines. Child protection procedures are understood and followed by all staff. The level of pastoral care and support for vulnerable pupils and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and helps them to be fully included in all activities. Good links with external agencies, for example, educational psychologists, help to support pupils well.

Although the school has procedures to track pupils' progress and to provide pupils with learning targets, these are not yet used consistently throughout the school as an aid to improving achievement. Not all pupils are aware of their learning targets. Year 6 pupils, for example, could explain their individual targets for literacy but had little idea about their numeracy targets. The quality of teachers' marking is also inconsistent. Some is of good quality but most marking does not usually provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Satisfactory procedures for evaluating the school's performance have given staff and governors an accurate picture of where improvement is needed. They have worked closely with outside agencies to implement initiatives to improve the quality of pupils' learning. These are already showing signs of success. However, systems for assessing the effectiveness of initiatives such as target-setting and the quality of marking are not yet sufficiently rigorous.

The governing body offers appropriate support for staff and is also developing its role of challenging the school when appropriate. Parents value the fact that their views are regularly sought and taken into account. Resources are used satisfactorily to support learning, although some ICT resources are now beginning to show their age. The school has developed good links with external agencies and uses these to support pupils' learning well, particularly those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good and is an important factor in ensuring that children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress.

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Annex A

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?	3
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

11 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ankermoor Primary School, Bolehall, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B77 3NW

Thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our day with you and especially enjoyed talking to some of you about your school and seeing you work in lessons.

Here are some of the things we found out about your school:

- It gives you a good start to your education and makes sure you make satisfactory progress.
- You get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress.
- You enjoy school and have good attitude to learning.
- Your behaviour is good and you realise the importance of staying safe and making sure that you play safely in the playground.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make sure that your school continues to improve in the future.

We believe your headteacher, teachers and governors can do some things to make your school better:

- Ensure that lessons always provide work at the right level so that you can all make as much progress as possible.
- Make sure that when your teachers mark your work they always give you ideas about how you can improve.
- Make sure that you all know your personal targets and that you work towards achieving them.
- Help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from different cultural backgrounds.

You can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron Lead inspector