

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100629
Local Authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	307428
Inspection dates	29–30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Jane Chesterfield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	424
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Siraut
Headteacher	Sister Linda Cameron (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2003
School address	6 Durham Street London SE11 5JA
Telephone number	020 7735 4516
Fax number	020 7820 8757

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primaries and serves an inner London area of mainly social housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is double the national average. The majority of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, the biggest groups being Black African and Portuguese. Most are at the early stages of learning English when they join the school. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is above average. These difficulties are mainly speech and language or behavioural. The school has been led this year by an acting headteacher and assistant headteacher, but a new headteacher has been appointed from September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Anne's Catholic Primary is a good school where pupils achieve well and develop excellent personal qualities. Parents are full of praise for the 'ethos of openness and fairness,' and the 'warm atmosphere' which pervade the school. There is a strong culture of care and respect for others which derives from the school's Catholic values. This is appreciated by parents, who recognise that their children are able to flourish and grow in confidence in such an environment.

Pupils make good progress at school because of the support and encouragement given to them by staff. They make particularly good progress in English. Most arrive in Nursery at the very early stages of learning English, but reach average standards or above by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. In mathematics pupils' progress is satisfactory but improving. From a low starting point they have been reaching below average standards by the end of Year 6 in recent years. However, the school has improved its systems for tracking and supporting pupils in mathematics this year, and Year 6 pupils are on course to reach broadly average standards. The school has identified that pupils have not been doing as well as they could in mathematics because they lack the vocabulary needed to solve problems and apply their skills, and it has set about tackling this.

Good teaching and a well balanced curriculum mean that pupils are able to overcome the difficulties of learning in a language that is new to them. Teachers are very skilled in meeting the needs of pupils new to English, putting an emphasis on opportunities for speaking and listening, developing relevant vocabulary and checking pupils' understanding. However, there is an inconsistency in the extent to which teachers match their work to the needs of the different ability groups in class. More able pupils are not always given enough challenge and opportunities for independent work, and this means that they do not always reach the higher levels of which they are capable, especially in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported so that they make good progress. The needs of those with speech and language difficulties are well met in every class, and the ones with behavioural difficulties are expertly managed and helped.

The school's outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that their personal development is excellent. Pastoral care and guidance for pupils is first class, leading to considerate, thoughtful and self-disciplined behaviour from pupils of all ages. Relationships are mutually supportive and respectful within the whole school community. The acting headteacher, capably supported by the acting assistant headteacher, has led the school well while it has been without a permanent headteacher. She has focused attention well on the school's most pressing priorities, keeping a constant emphasis on the need to maintain and drive up standards, and developing structures to improve the work of the school. The roles of subject leaders have been strengthened, for example, and individual literacy and numeracy targets for pupils introduced. Consequently the school has a good capacity to improve further. As one parent said, 'St Anne's is a school to be proud of'.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Most children start Nursery with a level of skills that is much lower than expected for their age, particularly in their mathematical development. Staff work hard to assess children's needs and establish strong relationships with parents. As a result, children settle quickly and many parents

become actively involved in their child's education. Children make good progress because their learning is carefully planned to meet their needs. Staff work well together to help children learn. Assessment is generally well used to plan activities, though this is not always consistent across all the classes. The Foundation Stage Leader has a clear view of the challenges faced by staff and pupils. She has introduced a number of good strategies, which are already having a positive impact in improving standards and achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards in mathematics throughout the school.
- Ensure that teachers consistently plan to meet the needs of all abilities in their class, particularly the more able.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with a level of skills below those expected for their age. They make good progress in English, reaching broadly average standards in reading and writing by the time they move into Year 3, though as so many are new to English, few reach the higher levels. In mathematics they make satisfactory progress, and are still below average going into Year 3.

Pupils' serious attitudes to their learning means that their progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6. As one pupil said, 'they don't mess about in lessons'. In English particularly, teachers cover a range and quantity of work which gives pupils the skills and knowledge to reach average standards and the higher levels by the time they leave the school. Careful attention is given to the progress of different ethnic groups. The school is aware that Black African pupils perform better than Portuguese pupils, and has taken steps to address this, for example by holding workshops for parents in Portuguese so that they have the confidence to support their children at home.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The role models offered by staff and their high expectations of pupils make a very strong contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. Pupils have a genuine interest in the cultures of others, and they feel very certain that all races mix peacefully in their school. Assemblies provide a calm and serene start to the day, and pupils show care and consideration for others at all times. The school is a very safe place to be as a result.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy through exercise and food choices. They make the most of the excellent opportunities they have to contribute to the community. The 'chat chums' scheme means that older pupils can help younger ones to learn English, for example, while the school council confidently took part in interviews for the new headteacher. They devised their own questions, such as, 'Do you like challenges?', and, 'How would you reward a child?' Pupils' excellent teamwork and social skills, along with their improving literacy and numeracy skills, mean that they are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the school are good, because teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of pupils who are mostly new to learning English. One boy voiced some of the difficulties facing new learners when he said, 'I know lots of words, but I don't always know how to put them into a sentence or a story.' Teachers take extra care to explain lesson intentions fully and to go back to recap on points made. They give pupils a good grounding in the basic skills of English. Teachers also boost pupils' confidence by showing that they value what pupils know in their home languages. Pupils' commitment to their learning and pride in their work is evident in the high standards of presentation found throughout the school.

Most teachers keep up a lively pace in lessons, choose their resources well, and plan to meet the needs of their classes carefully. However, not all provide enough challenge for their more able pupils, who have shown that they are more than capable of taking responsibility for their own learning when given the chance. Marking too is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers provide pupils with helpful next steps in their learning, while others only praise or correct pupils' work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good coverage of subjects and is well structured to meet the varying needs of learners. There is a good emphasis on developing literacy skills and fluency in English. The mathematics curriculum is currently being developed to match learners' needs more closely, and this is beginning to have an impact. Pupils have good opportunities to learn information and communication technology skills, but these are not yet widely used in other subjects. A good range of clubs and additional activities add variety and excitement to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school offers excellent pastoral care for pupils in a welcoming family atmosphere and safe, stimulating surroundings. Vulnerable pupils are very well supported, and there are excellent links with external agencies to ensure they are given every opportunity to do their best.

Systems for tracking pupils' progress are thorough and have been recently improved. School leaders use these well to evaluate the impact of provision on pupils' progress. However, systems for individual target setting for pupils are new and are not yet used consistently throughout the school to help pupils understand how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management at all levels mean that the school is running smoothly in the absence of a permanent headteacher. The acting headteacher and the acting assistant head are striking a skilful balance between continuity and change, and building a strong sense of team spirit within the school. There are good systems for evaluating the work of the school,

involving subject leaders fully in monitoring provision, tracking outcomes and planning for improvement. This is leading to better progress for pupils. Parents appreciate the 'dedication and professionalism' of staff, who are enthusiastic about what they do.

The governing body fulfils its duties and support the school well. Governors have a good understanding of their role and of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, thanks to the efforts of the chair of governors and the acting headteacher. They are growing in their confidence to challenge the school and hold it to account.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

08 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne's Catholic Primary School, London, SE11 5JA

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly when we visited your school. We really enjoyed meeting you and talking to you. We agree with you and your parents that St Anne's is a good school, and we could tell that you like going there. You are doing well in your lessons, because your teachers know you well and know how to make your work interesting so that you learn new things.

We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour in the school and the playground, and we thought that you all get on together very well indeed. The staff take very good care of you, and those of you who need extra help are well supported.

Your headteacher and her staff run the school well, and know how to make it even better in future. We have agreed that they are going to do more to make sure that all of you achieve as well as you can in mathematics. They are also going to make sure that everyone has work that is right for them in lessons, and that no one has work that is too easy. You can help by telling your teachers if you find your work too easy or too hard, and by letting them know if there is anything you don't understand in class.

Well done to you all, and best wishes for the future.

Jane Chesterfield

Lead Inspector