

St Anne's Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108956
Local Authority	Bristol, City of
Inspection number	309842
Inspection dates	30 April –1 May 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoff Burgess

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Tournay
Headteacher	Mary-Jane Hinchliffe
Date of previous school inspection	1 January 2004
School address	Bloomfield Road Brislington Bristol BS4 3QJ
Telephone number	01179 031435
Fax number	01179 031436

Age group	3–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This medium-sized infant school with its own nursery serves an area of mixed housing in the south of Bristol. The majority of pupils are White British and almost all speak English as their first language. Around half the children start school in the nursery, the remainder in the Reception classes. Their attainment when they start school is a little below that expected for their age. A below-average number of pupils has been identified as needing help with learning, mainly connected with their language skills. The school has recently achieved some stability after an extended period with repeated changes of staff.

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 a satisfactory school. Thanks to astute and resilient leadership, the impact of a very high turnover of teachers in recent years has been minimised. The school has been able to encourage the whole-school community to 'Reach for the Stars'. Pupils and parents are delighted with their school, as shown by the fact that so few pupils leave before the end of Year 2. Parents particularly like its positive ethos. One speaks for many by saying that it has 'a wonderful welcoming approach – it has a village school atmosphere and feels like an extended family'.

This is exemplified every morning when the whole-school community mingles in the central hall, which becomes the 'village square'. With the headteacher welcoming families on the playground and all staff in class, parents meet and talk or join in with their children's activities. Younger siblings play. Pupils make their way into class and get on with work prepared. Messages are delivered, work is celebrated, experiences shared and by nine o'clock, the day has got off to an excellent start. High quality pastoral care, together with the strong emphasis on personal, social and health education, ensures that pupils' personal development and well-being are good. From a very early age, they learn how to keep healthy, fit and safe. They enjoy learning together and have very positive attitudes to work. As a result, behaviour is always good and sometimes excellent.

Achievement is satisfactory. Children get a good start in the Nursery because of good teaching, a well-developed curriculum and very effective use of procedures for evaluating progress. Good provision continues into the Reception classes, although the use of assessment to match work to pupils needs is less well established. Satisfactory provision in the rest of the school ensures that children, including those who find learning difficult, make satisfactory overall progress. However, teaching and progress are stronger in Year 2, where good use is made of assessment to match work to the needs of all children. Academic support and guidance is not yet as effective in Year 1. The curriculum covers all the required elements, with numeracy and literacy suitably emphasised and a good range of enrichment activities on offer. Standards are average overall, although stronger in mathematics and weaker in writing, especially among boys. However, information and communication technology (ICT) is not used enough in Years 1 and 2.

Leadership and management have been much affected by changes of staff but the last year has seen the evolution of a strong team, including the governing body. Guided and encouraged by the very effective headteacher, senior leaders and managers have accurately evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses, and have put together an ambitious agenda for change. A good deal has been achieved already and this, with the confidence brought about by growing stability, indicates that the school is in a sound position to keep improving. However, the school acknowledges that many changes are not yet fully embedded and that developing the role of less experienced teachers who are new to leadership is a priority.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents speak very highly of the good provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. One speaks for many in saying, 'I have been extremely impressed with the level of care and the wide range of activities introduced.' They note how much their children like the staff and how very happy they are at school. Significant strengths in teaching, including detailed planning and relationships and the use of colourful resources and enticing activities, ensure that children

achieve well. Children's personal development is good because the skilful staff make sure that they become increasingly independent and confident learners, who discuss, negotiate and help each other.

Inspectors agree with a parent who notes that, 'Staff work very hard to provide an exciting range of learning opportunities.' Teachers take every opportunity to encourage children to communicate orally and through early writing. Children enjoyed 'writing' instructions on how to take a bath after they watched a real baby being bathed. Children also enjoy daily outdoor activities, where they happily take on large projects such as constructing an enormous dragon. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make all teaching as effective as the best by making better use of assessment to provide work that meets the learning needs of pupils of all abilities.
- Raise standards in writing to match those in other subjects, especially among boys.
- Help subject leaders to make a full contribution to developing provision for all subjects, but especially in ICT.

A small proportion of 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

Good provision ensures that children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and that standards are in line with expectations at the end of the Reception Year. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall, although there was a slight dip earlier this year in Year 1 brought about by staffing difficulties. The school's actions to remedy this have seen pupils in Year 1 classes catching up on lost ground. With all the staff changes, Year 2 national test results in recent years have been inconsistent. However, in 2007, with some stability achieved, standards were a little above average. The school's records and evidence from pupils work indicate that this year, standards in mathematics are a little above average; in reading they are average, while in writing they are a little below. The school has identified that this is mainly because boys' writing skills are not as good as the girls' are.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The proud way in which school councillors talk of their contributions to school life epitomises the good personal development of all pupils. Pupils are very caring of each other, describe their school as 'happy' and 'colourful', and find it very difficult to think of anything they do not enjoy. Their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is evident in the way that they celebrate their own work and the achievements of others. Pupils feel safe from bullying and are confident that adults deal fairly with any problems. Despite pupils' very positive attitudes, attendance is only satisfactory, but the school works hard to make it as good as it is. Pupils contribute well to the community through fund raising for various charities. They like helping people and enthusiastically collect food, warm clothes and toilet requisites for a local homeless shelter. All these activities are helping to give pupils a better understanding of their future lives and economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Activities and lessons in all year groups are well planned and managed, making good use of all available adults. Interactive whiteboards are used well to focus pupils' attention. Pupils make a strong contribution to learning by their good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Some differences in the quality of teaching and learning are centred on the way work is set at different levels to match the needs of pupils of different abilities. In the Nursery and in Year 2, the use of well-developed assessment procedures is a strength of teaching. In the Reception classes and in Year 1, the use of assessment is less well developed and consequently the match of work to pupils' needs is not as good.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Senior leaders are currently refining the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 to increase meaningful links between subjects, notably in promoting writing for boys. Well-planned, regular additional activities assist pupils with learning difficulties to reach personal goals. Staff use ICT effectively but older pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their ICT skills in all subjects. A rich variety of extra-curricular activities such as book weeks and sleepovers successfully promote pupils' enjoyment of school and enhance their personal development. The school emphasises the importance of regular activity for all pupils, and Reception children enjoy a weekly after-school fitness club. Pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles and their clear knowledge of how to keep safe reflect the good provision for personal, social and health education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Parents are delighted with the high quality pastoral care provided by the school. Those who have children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities value the individual support and sensitive care given by the staff. Parents of pupils whose first language is not English say they appreciate the sensitive way their children are helped to learn English. Staff are vigilant in making sure that pupils are safe. Risk assessments are thorough and any health and safety matters receive immediate attention. However, relatively new procedures to guide and support pupils in their learning are not yet well enough rooted or consistently well used to be fully effective in ensuring that they all do as well as possible.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Parents are very appreciative of the contribution made by the headteacher to the way the school has coped with the uncertainties of recent years. One typically notes that she provides, 'A strong and visual lead for the school – she always has time for parents.' Governors are also very pleased with the way she has encouraged them to play a more proactive and challenging role and supported them in developing their expertise and ways of working. In all of this, she works closely with and is well supported by key leaders, who are making a significant impact

on their areas of responsibility. Senior leaders have a realistic, clear and accurate view of the school and a shared vision for its future. Expectations are high and targets are being raised as stability grows. However, frequent changes of staff have meant that much of this work is still in the early stages of development. Newer and less experienced colleagues are keen to play a full part but, of necessity, more time will be needed for this to happen.

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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
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

3 May 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Anne's Infant School, Bristol BS4 3QJ

Thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school. We liked the way everybody got on well together and smiled a lot. It is a shame that there is not a little more space for play – especially a field to run around – but you seem to enjoy your playtimes anyway. We think your school is satisfactory right now but that everyone is working hard to make it better.

These are the good things we found.

- The way everyone comes together at the start of each day is fantastic.
- You behave well, love learning, work hard and do your best.
- You know how to stay healthy, fit and safe.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes love school and do well.
- Your teachers and helpers work hard to help you learn.
- They plan a good range of extra things to do for you to enjoy.
- The grown-ups do all they can to make sure your time in school is as happy as possible. You know that there is always someone to turn to if you need help.
- Your headteacher is great at making it possible for everyone to feel a part of the school and do their best.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure you all learn really well by giving you work to do in every class that makes you think and try hard.
- Help you all to do as well with your writing as you do with reading and mathematics.
- Make sure that teachers who look after different subjects are able to help you to learn even better in their subjects, especially in ICT. You can help too by continuing to work hard and do your best. Again, thank you for all you do to make your school as good as it is. It was a pleasure for me to share it with you for a short time.

Yours sincerely,

Geoff Burgess Lead inspector

3 May 2008



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Yours sincerely,

Geoff Burgess
Lead inspector