

St Anne's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109159
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	309905
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Julia Coop

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	307
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Cleary
Headteacher	Sean Quinn
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2003
School address	School Road Oldland Common Bristol BS30 6PH
Telephone number	01454 862500
Fax number	01454 862501

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. This inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the success that leaders and managers are having in increasing the performance of the more able pupils, particularly boys, and especially in mathematics and in writing; and the effectiveness of academic support and guidance provided for all groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics and English. Evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, sampling pupils' work, discussion with pupils, staff and governors, and from the school's documentation and assessment information. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

St Anne's is a little larger in size than average. The vast majority of pupils are from White British families and those few from minority ethnic backgrounds speak English well. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, but higher in some year groups. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 are taught in mixed-age classes. There are a significant number of pupils who join or leave the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Since September 2007 there have been several new appointments, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and some teaching staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parents are correct when they say that St Anne's is a good school where 'everyone is friendly and approachable'. Parents appreciate the hard work and commitment of staff and value the recent changes to improve communication with them, with many commenting that the school is 'changing for the better'. Only a very small minority of parents expressed individual concerns. Discussions with the school show that these issues are already well known and, where possible, actions have already been taken, such as to improve homework. The pupils agree that this is a 'great school' and love the opportunities to work alongside older or younger friends in the mixed-age classes.

An impressive feature of the school is the way that pupils look out for each other and value each other's differences and talents. All observe quiet moments of reflection and prayer in assembly and pupils show a great deal of kindness and compassion towards vulnerable pupils. Through the good curriculum, with an impressive array of additional activities, afternoon carousel of creative activities, special themed weeks and annual, highly acclaimed, theatrical productions, the pupils are highly confident young people. As a result, they undertake their roles and additional responsibilities within the school or wider community, such as being peer mediators or office helpers, with maturity and aplomb. They admit that, while behaviour is good, 'It isn't perfect', but say this is 'just a little silliness on the playground', which has improved a lot because 'they made posters and talked about it'. Many pupils take part in a wide range of sporting activities, older pupils organising rotas to encourage playground exercise or leading 'huff and puff' sessions for younger pupils. Through the very effective school council and eco-committee, the pupils have an excellent awareness of the environment and of the importance of recycling, and are not afraid to express their opinions or work with builders on the siting of their Trim Trail. They are very effective representatives of the school and, through running stalls, handling money and developing negotiation skills, are very well prepared for life beyond St Anne's. Together with the excellent care, support and guidance they receive, it is not surprising, therefore, that the pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding.

It is not reliable to make a year-on-year comparison of standards because there is a lot of movement in and out of the school. Academically, pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their capabilities and different starting points, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children make a good start in Reception and standards are above average at the end of Year 6, where there has been an upward trend year on year. Standards in science are a particular strength throughout the school because of the emphasis on developing the pupils' confidence to plan and carry out investigations aided by the highly focused science weeks, which without exception all pupils love. Results at the end of Year 2 have been more static. This is mainly because few more-able pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing and mathematics, a picture that is also reflected in Year 6 results. Throughout the school, the boys do not do quite as well as girls in writing, while this trend is reversed in mathematics. The school's own assessment and tracking data show that in the past there has been some difference in the progress made by pupils in different year groups, reflecting variation in the quality of teaching and learning.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken robust action to strengthen teaching and learning and have made a number of staff changes. Inspection evidence shows that these are bearing fruit. Typically, teaching is good. Lessons observed show that, following a review of planning, there is a good emphasis on promoting the boys' interest in writing through topics

such as 'pirates'. There is also a more creative and practical approach in the teaching of mathematics, for example, through a 'smartie challenge' that is successfully grabbing the girls' attention and helping them develop their mathematical skills and understanding.

There are common strengths in teaching, exemplified by very good relationships, a good balance between class and group work, effective and supportive teaching assistants and good use of interactive whiteboards. Nevertheless, not all teachers have the confidence to ask more probing questions or really stretch the more able pupils. While activities are suitably planned to meet the needs of pupils with different abilities within the mixed-age classes, they are not always delivered to the best effect, which means that some pupils do not make the full amount of progress they should, particularly the most able. The school recognises that there is scope for subject leaders to ensure that best practice is shared and developed.

The school is not complacent and knows that more needs to be done to close the gender gap. It recognises, for example, that whilst Reception children use the extensive school grounds successfully as an outdoor classroom, which really motivates the boys in particular, the full potential of the school grounds to enhance and extend learning has not been fully realised. Although some plans are in hand, for example, to build a sensory garden, this is a missed opportunity to make learning even more relevant and practical, particularly for pupils in Years 1 and 2, who prefer a more hands-on 'topic' style of learning.

The school fully deserves its good reputation within the community. Following recent staff retirements, the governors have worked with great determination to appoint skilled staff based on an excellent and astute understanding of what is required to build on the school's previous strengths. They are supportive, yet challenging; consequently, the new headteacher, deputy and senior managers have hit the ground running. They have quickly got to grips with their new roles and have established an effective team in which all are motivated to do even better for the school's success. The headteacher is ambitious and forward thinking and has made a clear and honest appraisal of where improvement is needed. As a result, much has been achieved in a short time. Pupils, for example, are much more involved in checking on their own learning and work more closely with their teachers to identify their next learning steps. This is helping to spur on learning.

The school has many strengths and there is a positive atmosphere. Initiatives introduced have already begun to improve learning and pupils themselves agree that 'lessons are more fun now'. The school is well placed to build on this effective platform and move forward.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The children's happy smiling faces at work and play are a testament to the good quality of teaching and learning, effective curriculum and high quality care they receive. Routines and expectations are well established so that the children are happy and settled, willingly working with their partners on the apparatus or when in the classroom. Early literacy and mathematical skills are promoted well through practical activities and the outside area is used particularly well to support independent or guided learning. For example, children showed delight in their composting activities. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-selected activities, which promotes good learning. The early years leader is an effective manager, keeping a close eye on the children's progress and adjusting planning as necessary so that the children achieve well. She is a highly experienced and skilled practitioner and a very good role model.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure writing and mathematics activities are always sufficiently challenging and interesting so that more-able pupils achieve as well as they can, particularly the boys in writing and girls in mathematics.
- Make sure that subject leaders identify and share best practice to ensure inconsistencies in teaching quality are tackled systematically.
- Move forward on plans to develop the use of the outside area as an environment to extend learning, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

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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?	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?	1
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	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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
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	1

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?	1

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	1
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

16 January 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Anne's C of E Primary School, Bristol BS30 6PH

Thank you so much for the mature and friendly way you chatted to me when I visited. I really enjoyed the chance to learn all about the work of your school council and to hear all about your theatrical productions and plans for your sensory garden. This letter is to tell you some of the things I found out about your school. The most important thing to say is that you go to a good school and it is a friendly, happy place.

Here are some of the best things about your school:

- You are extremely confident, very sensible and you behave well.
- I was delighted with the way you really care about each other.
- You are taught well and make good progress, especially in science.
- You all get off to a good start in Reception.
- The staff make sure that you have lots of interesting clubs and extra activities.
- Everyone takes very good care of you so you are happy and safe in school.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to make your school an even better place in which to learn.

What I have asked the school to do now to make things even better:

- Provide even more interesting and challenging activities in some lessons, especially to help some of you learn more in mathematics and writing.
- Make sure that the school looks very closely at the quality of teaching to make sure that it is always good or better.
- Make even better use of your lovely school grounds to help you learn more.

You are very lucky to attend such a caring, happy school and I hope you go on trying hard and enjoying all of the interesting activities which help you learn.

Yours sincerely,

Julia Coop Lead Inspector










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