

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119578
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	313347
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Mackay
Headteacher	Mr Michael Barrett
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2004
School address	Slater Lane Leyland Lancashire PR25 1TL
Telephone number	01772 422769
Fax number	01772 455188

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized school serves families across the parish and from a very wide range of backgrounds. The number of pupils who take up free school meals is higher than usual. There is an above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British or Irish heritage.

There has been some disruption and change in staffing at the school recently. At the time of the inspection, the senior manager in school was the headteacher, supported by a team of middle managers. Extended provision at the school includes before- and after-school clubs organised by an independent provider.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Anne's Catholic Primary is a satisfactory and improving school. Pupils' personal development and the quality of care, guidance support provided are good. Parents have positive views of the school. One commented on the 'excellent atmosphere around school; one of respect, compassion and understanding.' Others praised the 'approachable and dedicated teachers' and the good attention given to their children's welfare. Very good partnerships with the church and other educators bring extensive benefits for pupils' learning, especially in terms of opportunities for sport and physical education, and in their personal development.

Achievement is satisfactory overall and standards for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are average. Under the focused leadership of the headteacher and the management team, the school is successfully implementing well-laid plans to raise standards and achievement. Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils should achieve. Subject management for English provides good support for teaching and learning. The new approaches to teaching sounds and letters, grammar and punctuation are leading to improved progress in writing. Progress in mathematics and science is improving but is variable between classes. The proportion of pupils working at the higher level in both these subjects is below that seen nationally. The subject management of mathematics and science has led to some improvements but has not made a significant difference to raising achievement for the more able.

Pupils' personal development is good. The school's Catholic foundation provides a strong, caring ethos which ensures that pupils feel secure. As a result, there is a calm, productive atmosphere and pupils enjoy their learning. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. For example, they take on responsibilities, such as being 'playground buddies' and they help to raise funds for charities. Such experiences prepare them soundly for life in the wider world.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and some is good. In most lessons teachers provide a good level of challenge but, in mathematics and science, the more able pupils are not consistently stretched. The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched through an interesting range of after-school clubs. A strong emphasis on personal, social and health education enables pupils to make informed choices about their lifestyles and they learn to deal with social and moral issues. Good attention is paid to safeguarding pupils and to health and safety matters.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and managers have identified the essential issues to be tackled and driven through a range of improvements in teaching and management to raise standards. They take good advantage of help provided by the local authority. There have been some good initial successes in English and managers have a clear idea of what to do next. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Attainment on entry to the Nursery varies but in most years is below that found for children of the same age nationally. Children have limited skills in speaking and listening and some have difficulty using paint brushes and writing tools. A good programme of introducing children to the Nursery and Reception classes enables them to settle quickly and they enjoy school. Behaviour is good and children work and play together happily.

The curriculum is well organised; the environment for learning and the involvement of parents is good. Teachers in both classes maintain meticulous records of achievement so they know what children need to learn next. Sessions include some opportunities for independent exploration and for children to follow their own interests but there is scope to extend free-choice activities further. By the time children leave the Reception class, most meet expectations fully. Progress in personal, language and mathematical development is especially good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement by raising the level of challenge in lessons for more able pupils in mathematics and science.
- Improve leadership and management in mathematics and science to ensure that provision is consistent across all classes.

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

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average by Year 6. Some good improvements have been made because teachers are setting higher expectations and are firmly focused on raising standards further.

Pupils enter Year 1, with broadly average standards. They make satisfactory progress and by Year 2 standards remain average. Improved work on letters and sounds is helping to boost standards in reading and writing which, compared to the national picture, is slightly better than in mathematics. A good number of pupils attain the average Level 2 in mathematics but fewer are working at the higher level.

The school has placed a very strong focus on writing in Key Stage 2. Progress is often good in class and standards in English are rising. In mathematics, progress and standards have improved over the last two years but too few pupils are working at the higher level. Progress in this subject varies between classes from very good to satisfactory. Pupils are secure in their knowledge of scientific facts but less well developed investigative and experimental skills means that some of the more able are not taking their learning to the higher level. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress towards their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' spiritual development is excellent. Their behaviour is good; pupils show respect and consideration for each other. They are adamant that bullying is not a problem and say they feel safe in school. Attendance is good and pupils say they enjoy their lessons. The Healthy Schools and Activemark awards recognise the good work done in teaching pupils about healthy lifestyles and encouraging exercise and participation in sport.

Pupils are encouraged to reflect on a wide range of topics and explore issues about feelings such as fairness or sadness. Older ones speak sensitively about cultures and traditions other than their own. Pupils contribute well to the school and wider communities. They volunteer

for jobs to aid the smooth running of school and take leading roles in church services. Pupils are soundly prepared for the next stage of their education, having achieved satisfactory skills in basic subjects together with good skills of collaboration. In many lessons, pupils take responsibility for planning and evaluating their own learning, thus developing good skills as independent workers but this is not always the case.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in English and for pupils with learning difficulties. Relationships are good which means that pupils develop good attitudes to learning and a willingness to persevere with tasks. Many improvements have been made in teaching recently. However, not all improvements have had time to become embedded and there are some variations in practice. In most lessons tasks are well planned to build on previous learning and promote good progress. A scrutiny of mathematics and science books shows that there are occasions however, when the more able are doing the same work as the majority and so are not fully challenged. On the other hand, pupils who find learning difficult are well supported and learn well. In some classes pupils have practical tasks and problem-solving activities that keep them well motivated. However, pupils sometimes lose interest when they sit listening to the teacher for too long. Generally, marking is helpful in telling pupils what they do well and providing advice for further improvement. Sometimes it does not fully explain what to do to help move learning on.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, effectively promoting pupils' creative, physical, personal and practical skills as well as their academic abilities. A good programme for personal development supports an awareness of citizenship and teaches pupils how to stay safe and healthy, both in a physical and emotional way. Planning generally includes sound opportunities for consolidating writing, mathematical and computer skills. In some cases, however, the written work requires only a limited response and does not extend independent thinking or writing skills. The school has plans to develop its provision for gifted and talented pupils but this is not yet in evidence.

There is good enrichment for learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about out-of-school opportunities to extend their talents in music, art and sport and to enter competitions. The extensive programme of visits and visitors is highly valued by the pupils and motivates them well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The pastoral care provided for pupils is good and underpins their good personal development. Parents praise the fact that teaching and support staff know pupils well and are dedicated to meeting their needs. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is good and the school goes to great lengths to secure resources and expert help to meet individual needs. Safeguarding arrangements meet government requirements. The procedures for child protection and health

and safety are thorough and understood by all staff. The school has very good, ongoing links with the secondary school and, as a result, older pupils feel confident about moving on.

Academic guidance is good. Pupils have helpful individual targets and advice to help them improve in English and mathematics. Those who are not meeting teachers' expectations receive appropriate support to help boost their progress. Guidance to take pupils' learning forward in science is based on class or group targets and is less effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and have some good features. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is leading the drive for improvement. He is instrumental in maintaining the school's nurturing ethos and is well regarded by parents and governors.

The headteacher, middle managers and other staff work well together as a team and are keen to raise standards further. Subject leaders ensure that non-core subjects, for example music, art and physical education are effectively led and managed. Provision in all areas is checked annually and issues identified are fed into development planning. As a result of this process, more rigorous systems to assess and track pupils' progress have been introduced enabling managers to see if pupils are on track to achieve their challenging targets. In English, the information is well used so achievement is improving. There has been a lack of continuity in the management of mathematics and science. The information gathered in these subjects has not been used effectively and some issues have not been addressed. The current team of managers are well placed to resolve matters.

The governors are a very knowledgeable and supportive group who play an active role in the day-to-day life of the school. Their role in monitoring standards and achievement is developing and they clearly know where further action is needed. At present, governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

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

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	2

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	2
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?	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?	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

25 June 2008

Inspection of St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Lancashire. PR25 1TL

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for helping my colleague and I when we came to visit your school. I would like to tell you what we found out.

St Anne's provides you with a satisfactory education and has some good features. Your behaviour is good; you get on well together and take good care of each other. You enjoy your learning and try hard. We enjoyed chatting with some of you and learning about the things you do. It is good to know you like your school and as one pupil said, 'We couldn't think of going anywhere else'. We think you have some exciting visitors such as 'ancient Greeks and Romans' to make your learning interesting.

Please thank your parents for sending us lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are happy with the school and think that you are becoming confident individuals. They say you especially enjoy all the activities that your teachers organise after school, such as the computer, sports and arts clubs.

You are making satisfactory progress and have worked hard to improve your reading and writing. Well done! I think some of you could make further improvements in mathematics and science. I know that you like new challenges in mathematics so I have asked the school to ensure your teachers make some of your work a bit harder in these two subjects. In science, I have asked them to consider including some more investigations and experiments to really stretch your thinking. I have also asked the school to ensure that those responsible for mathematics and science make sure that you all have the best opportunities to do well in these subjects.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had throughout the two days and for letting us know your views so clearly. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector