

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104681
Local Authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	324090
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Terence Bond

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	221
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Shaw
Headteacher	Mrs J Shields
Date of previous school inspection	3 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Overbury Street Liverpool Merseyside L7 3HJ
Telephone number	0151 709 1698
Fax number	0151 708 9619

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average-sized school with an increasing pupil population. It is situated in the Edge Hill district of Liverpool and serves an area of high social and economic disadvantage. An exceptionally high percentage of pupils is entitled to free school meals. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. About one third of the pupils are of White British heritage, with the remainder coming from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is well above the national average. The school currently has a number of asylum seekers. Not all children join the school in the Nursery: some join in the Reception Year. The school has achieved a range of awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark, and Inclusion Mark, as well as the Healthy Schools and Investors in People awards. The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features in relation to pupils' personal development, the curriculum, and the care, guidance and support provided for pupils. It is an inclusive school, with a real sense of community spirit, which embraces the staff, pupils, parents and governors. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and management. There is a shared vision and enthusiasm amongst staff in the drive to bring about further improvement. This is highly valued by parents. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils show a real enthusiasm for learning. They feel safe and care well for one another. Pupils develop a clear awareness of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding; for example, circle time is used well by pupils to reflect on how they can contribute to improving the lives of others.

Children enter school with skills that are well below those expected for their age. Their skills in personal development and in communication, language and literacy are particularly low. By the time they leave, standards in Year 6 are broadly average across all subjects. This represents good achievement from pupils' starting points. Standards in mathematics are not as high as those in English and science because pupils are not as knowledgeable about how to improve their skills of calculation, for example. In this respect, teachers are rightly focusing on more helpful advice, to increase the number of pupils who attain Level 5. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as those whose first language is not English, achieve well, as the result of the focused support they receive.

Pupils talk confidently about how much they enjoy coming to school. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being prefects and buddies and have contributed to school improvement through the work of the school council. They show very good community awareness, working to improve the school environment and supporting charity fundraising activities. These very positive aspects contribute to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Moreover, the vast majority of pupils attend well.

An outstanding curriculum includes many themed weeks, a superb range of sporting, musical and creative experiences and very many educational visits. All of these opportunities increase pupils' enjoyment of school and enrich their learning. The excellent tri-lateral project, involving links with schools in Spain and Germany, adds an exciting dimension to the curriculum. Teaching is good overall. Teachers make good use of a range of techniques to ensure that all pupils are involved in their learning. This is particularly effective when work is closely matched to the pupils' abilities. There are excellent relationships in classes. Pupils feel valued and well supported.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a clear direction for the school, which all staff support strongly. Governors have a good understanding of the school and provide effective support and challenge. The school works very well with outside agencies to promote the well-being of all pupils. It has successfully addressed issues raised at the last inspection and under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher has good capacity for further improvement. The school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion is evident in its effective promotion of equality, its support for parents and the parish and through its international links with other schools.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make an excellent start to their education. Children join the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development. There is also a high proportion of children whose first language is not English. By the end of Reception, children are broadly in line with expected levels for their age, but skills in reading, writing and calculation are slightly below those levels. Nevertheless, despite their low starting points, children progress exceptionally well. Progress is further developed by the transition arrangements in Year 1, which are aimed at ensuring continuity of children's learning and development. The emphasis which the school places on developing knowledge of letters and sounds is effective. High priority is given to promoting healthy eating and safety through the curriculum, for example by providing healthy snacks and ensuring that all children are safe when using the outdoor equipment. Children are well motivated and play well together in a harmonious atmosphere. They have the confidence to self-select from a wide range of resources. All areas of learning are well developed. Adults in the setting are very caring and highly supportive. Assessments are ongoing and are used very well to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning. Staff work well together as a team to ensure that all welfare requirements are fully met. There are strong links with parents, who feel welcome. They are encouraged to become fully involved in their children's learning and development. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Staff constantly review their practice and look for ways to improve the provision still further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics by improving the quality of marking and ensuring that pupils understand how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities that are close to those expected for their age. Pupils make good progress through Key Stages 1 and 2, achieving well to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. The detailed tracking of progress of different groups of pupils and the analysis of the performance of individual pupils have enabled the school to address areas of underperformance. For example, in 2007, girls performed better than boys at Key Stages 1 and 2 across all subjects, with a particular difference in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. However, owing to the analysis undertaken and the increased emphasis on boys' progress, they are making good progress. The school's own analysis in 2008 and the provisional national data for Key Stage 2 reveals standards to be broadly average with a stronger performance in science. While pupils exceeded their expected targets in English and science, they did not in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils from a wide range of cultures is outstanding. There is a highly developed sense of inclusion which all pupils respect. Strong links with the church and

a number of schools across Europe, together with a rich and diverse range of themed weeks, mean that pupils have a very good understanding of their own faith, as well as other faiths and cultures. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. The school works hard to improve pupils' confidence and belief in their own abilities. Specially designed activities enable pupils to build their self-esteem and make positive contributions to their personal development. Pupils understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe. The popularity of the healthy choices in the canteen shows this, as does the excellent uptake of sports and other activities. Behaviour throughout the school is outstanding. Pupils are polite and caring towards one another. They are welcoming towards visitors by smiling, holding doors open and saying 'Hello'. They enjoy coming to school because some say that, 'All lessons are fun.' The active school council plays an important part in the life of the school and pupils speak proudly of their responsibilities, such as being a prefect or a buddy to the younger ones. Pupils are regarded as ambassadors in the community. They show great awareness of the needs of others, which is demonstrated by their generous fundraising activities. For example, they take responsibility for organising a jumble sale that raises funds to hold a party for the senior citizens in the community. By the time they leave the school, pupils have developed good skills and attitudes needed to help secure their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. The pace and challenge of most lessons are good, especially where work is closely matched to the abilities of the pupils, who see a purpose to their learning. Starter activities are used well to engage pupils and help reinforce learning. Teachers make good use of questioning techniques and strategies to ensure that everyone is involved in learning. Resources, such as interactive whiteboards, are used effectively to support teaching, although there are only a few examples where these are used during the main part of lessons to enhance learning opportunities. Relationships in lessons are very good. Pupils know that their contribution to lessons is valued. As a result, they are more confident and keen to learn. Skilled teaching assistants make a valuable contribution by giving support to groups and individual pupils during activity times, for example to those children whose first language is not English. Marking in English is good because it consistently gives pupils clear guidance on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve. However, this is less evident in mathematics, where pupils' misunderstandings are not always identified and useful advice on how to improve is not given.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding because it takes full account of pupils' needs, their cultural heritages and the community served by the school. The basic skills of English, mathematics and science are promoted very well. There is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, including musical, dramatic and sporting activities and participation by pupils is high. There is an excellent range of educational visits, including residential visits, which enrich the experiences of pupils and contribute very well to their personal development. The use of visitors, such as a company that provides very exciting science workshops, brings the curriculum to life and stimulates pupils' interest. There is an opportunity for pupils to learn Spanish. The development of this is reinforced by the use of clearly visible bilingual labels, throughout the school, on

instructions and displays. This is further enhanced by the partnership link with schools in Spain and Germany, which provide an exciting additional dimension to the curriculum. The use of information and communication technology throughout the school is good. Pupils are also developing as competent users of recording and digital technology, as part of an innovative radio project.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school is outstanding in its support for pupils and particularly in its care for vulnerable pupils. Learning mentors are very good at providing guidance and counselling. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English benefit from clearly written individual plans, which guide their learning and help them achieve well. Parents value the high priority the school gives to the level of support provided for pupils. Pupils feel safe because expectations regarding behaviour and relationships are clear. Transition arrangements within the school and onto secondary education are thorough and very effective. Excellent links with a wide range of support agencies, such as social services and Asylum Link ensure that the most appropriate support for individual pupils is quick and effective. The outstanding communications with parents allow those children who are new to the school, including those from other countries, to be welcomed into the inclusive school community. The school meets the current government requirements for safeguarding pupils. Target setting and tracking of pupils' progress is thorough. Pupils and teachers are clear about the next steps of learning. Attendance is monitored carefully and the school is active in promoting this through a range of initiatives, for example by providing a breakfast club, which is very well attended.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money. The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, has a very clear vision of how the school can best serve its community. Equality is actively promoted and discrimination eliminated. This is because the school ensures that all groups of pupils are able to participate in, and benefit from, the wide range of opportunities it provides for them. There is a strong sense of common purpose amongst the staff, who work as a team to bring about change. Regular monitoring and good evaluation of progress against the school improvement plan allows the school to set more challenging targets for future attainment, particularly in mathematics. The school's outstanding contribution to community cohesion is evident in its support for parents, the parish and its international links. This has had a significant impact on pupils' understanding of those outside the school community. Governors are developing their understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development as part of the self-evaluation process. They provide good challenge and support. The school has successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection and under the purposeful leadership of the headteacher has good capacity for further improvement.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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 learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for welcoming us to your school for its recent inspection. You were all very helpful and we really enjoyed talking to you. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning.

We think St Anne's is a good school and some things are outstanding. We were impressed with your positive attitudes to learning, the way you care for one another and the way you carry out your responsibilities with pride. We were also very pleased to see the range of out-of-school activities you have. We were impressed by the opportunities you have to learn more about the world outside your community, for example through the links you have with schools in Spain and Germany. You told us how you enjoy coming to school and that you know how healthy eating and exercise can be good for you. You are also very aware of people less fortunate than yourselves and of the different ways you can help them.

You have a headteacher and staff who work very hard to make yours such a good school and who have your well-being at the heart of all they do.

To help make it even better, we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to ensure that the marking of your work in mathematics helps you understand how to reach higher standards. Thank you for being so helpful. We hope you will carry on enjoying school and helping your teachers make St Anne's an even better place to be.

Best wishes for the future.