

St Anne Line Catholic Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115156
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	326138
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Drew

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Josephine Campbell
Headteacher	Mr Martin Larrett
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2006
School address	Wickhay Basildon Essex SS15 5AF
Telephone number	01268 470444
Fax number	01268 524710

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and serves suburbs on the south side of Basildon. The majority of pupils are baptised Catholics. Most are White British, with a growing minority from a range of other ethnic groups. About 30% of pupils speak English as an additional language and 18% are at an early stage of acquiring English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average, involving a range of behavioural, learning and emotional issues. On balance attainment on entry to the school is below average. The school holds many awards, including the Sports Activemark, Basics Skills Chartermark IV, Investors in People and the Healthy School Award. Some day-to-day leadership of the school currently lies with the deputy headteacher while the headteacher has an executive role here and at another nearby school.

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. It has some outstanding features and a good capacity for further improvement, as demonstrated by recent improvements in standards.

Pupils make good academic progress. They are good learners, teaching is effective and their work is closely monitored. As a result, pupils progress from lower than average attainment on entering the school and reach average standards overall by the end of Year 6. In English, standards are above average and there have been some recent improvements in both mathematics and science. The school does well to ensure that the growing proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Targets are adequate but do not fully match the high quality of pupils' attitudes to learning and currently promote good rather than outstanding progress.

For some time the school's ethos has been such that pupils feel extremely safe and highly valued, leading to outstanding personal development and extremely positive attitudes and behaviour. Excellent spiritual, moral and social development closely reflects the school's ethos and principles. Pupils have been introduced to a wide variety of minority ethnic cultures in the United Kingdom and abroad, ensuring good cultural development and helping community cohesion. Pupils show an excellent grasp of how to follow healthy lifestyles and a keen desire to contribute to the community. They do this in school, within the local area and further a-field through charitable giving.

Much of the school's success comes from teaching that, lesson by lesson, provides a clear model of how to be mature and how to learn well. The majority of teaching and learning is good or better, with lively pace and an excellent relationship between staff and pupils that helps progress stay strong. A small minority of lessons are outstanding, promoting real enjoyment, heavy involvement of pupils throughout and very challenging work for all abilities. A minority of lessons are satisfactory. These ensure adequate progress but have phases which lack the lively, stimulating features of the rest of the lesson. Teaching assistants contribute well in many lessons, but in a significant minority their scope for taking initiative is limited.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. They ensure that the school translates its written and spoken commitment to pupils into reality. Policies and practices safeguard, challenge and support pupils and show them how to develop. All of this is done with great consistency and to a very high standard. All statutory requirements for safeguarding and care are fully met. Very effective arrangements give parents good involvement in supporting their children. External agencies are used well to support individual pupils and their families. Pupils say they enjoy school a great deal and their conduct and high attendance levels support this. Monitoring of academic progress is now good and leads to rapid action where fresh needs are revealed.

The enjoyment and confidence of pupils, as well as their good academic progress, owe much to the good curriculum. While the identification of skills and scope for creativity are still being developed, the breadth of opportunities already on offer is excellent. Extra-curricular provision is a strength of the school, especially sport, where participation and success levels are remarkable.

Parents are right to express overwhelmingly positive views about the school, which makes great efforts to keep them well informed. It strengthens local community cohesion by acting as a focus for religious services, playing an important part in the local Deanery's activities and setting up initiatives for specific groups. These include a liaison worker with the Philippine community and the 'Developing Dads in Education' project. These features stem from good leadership at

the school. Senior leaders and managers are confident and keen to work well with others. They are good at monitoring and evaluating their own performance. This has guided them to change provision and strengthen subject leadership. Together with the current enhancement of the role of the deputy headteacher this has increased the capacity for further improvement. Governors know their school well and promote it effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Set higher Key Stage 2 targets for the immediate future, so that pupils and staff are working towards standards significantly above national averages in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure consistency in making the best possible use of teaching assistants, by maximising their involvement in the planning and delivery of all aspects of learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and this is matched by good, sometimes outstanding, progress in lessons. As a result, pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 6, with results in English being above average in 2008. Mathematics and writing standards have improved noticeably in the last two years and current standards in Year 6 science also show improvement. All these gains stem from good analysis of previous performance, improved monitoring of pupils' work and greater emphasis in lessons on specific aspects of the subjects, such as investigational skills in science. All pupil groups make broadly similar progress. The targets for this year and the near future currently foster better than expected progress, but they are not high enough to stimulate the outstanding gains that the school rightly seeks.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They fully appreciate attending this school and are proud to adopt its values. They thoroughly enjoy school, and consequently attendance is well above average. One pupil said, 'It puts a smile on your face' and another commented, 'We trust our teachers so it's OK to tell if we have a problem.' Pupils clearly feel safe, secure and very well looked after. In an ethos of mutual respect they know that their efforts, ideas and opinions are valued and celebrated. They demonstrate a keen sense of responsibility, making a considerable contribution to the school and wider communities, for example, through their involvement in devising the 'St Anne Line Way.' This summary of the Saint's personal qualities and how these can shape everyday behaviour is prominent around the school and in pupil's thinking. The impact of this is clearly evident in the exceptional behaviour and attitudes to learning seen throughout the school. Standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as outstanding personal development provide a good basis for future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Some teaching is inspirational and these outstanding lessons are characterised by the teachers' love of their subject and highly positive relationships with pupils. Great pace, a good range of interesting activities and ready use of humour are key

ingredients for success. They are also notable for the way pupils are encouraged to help themselves, composing the signs of success for each task, marking each other's work and discussing together where they had succeeded. Good lessons predominate and share many of these strengths, but generally offer pupils less scope for prolonged independent work. A significant minority of teaching and learning is satisfactory and in these lessons there is a tendency for teachers to spend too much time on introductions and instructions before allowing pupils to get on with things themselves. There are times when teaching assistants provide good support and here, teachers involve them fully, asking them, for instance, to nominate good work. This good practice is not a consistent feature. Occasionally, pupils' ability to act independently and work things out for themselves are stifled because they receive too much help.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils benefit from a well-balanced and interesting curriculum, enhanced by numerous clubs, activities and events, all helping to turn them into well-rounded young people. The formal curriculum is being reviewed to provide more specific teaching of skills in subjects and to ensure that the content of lessons is as exciting and creative as it possibly can be. Outside lessons, it is clear the school is an enthusiastic and often successful competitor in many sports events locally and nationally. Pupils reach high sporting standards, such as in gymnastics. Links with partner secondary schools are strong and offer extra opportunities, such as the Year 5 literacy project. Through the creative partnership with the infant school they develop a common approach to aspects of teaching and learning, for example very successful consistency in handwriting. Pupils who have a special gift or talent receive good encouragement in the form of a wide range of specially tailored opportunities to aid their development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding levels of care, guidance and support. All staff take excellent care of pupils to ensure that they are safe and happy and develop into mature and responsible young people who achieve well. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection are thorough and are understood and implemented by all staff. Pupils receive very clear guidance about staying healthy and their positive response is to be seen in the high proportion taking part in after-school sporting activities. Arrangements for assessing and tracking progress are very well established and the information is shared regularly with parents and pupils. As a result, and coupled with more immediate feedback in lessons and through marking, pupils have a very clear view of their current attainment and more importantly know precisely how to progress through the National Curriculum levels.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support. A strong inclusion team works well to provide individual support for those who find learning more difficult. The growing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language are very well supported. Staff are building up a good level of expertise to support these pupils through focused training. They are very sensitive to pupils' home situations and work at building relationships in order to identify and resolve any issues which may prevent them from learning as well as they could.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school has good leadership and management. Some aspects are outstanding. This is reflected in the good academic progress pupils make and their excellent personal development. A very clear lead is given by the headteacher, especially in setting the highest possible expectations of how pupils and staff should contribute to the school ethos. His example does much to create the mutual respect and enjoyment that characterise life in the school. The welcome and help given to pupils of all backgrounds and abilities is excellent. With good support from a strong deputy headteacher and effective subject leaders, the school has made important and effective recent changes. Self-evaluation is good and has paved the way for improved general teaching skills, better tracking of pupils' progress and more success in enhancing key aspects of English, mathematics and science teaching. This track record indicates a good capacity for further improvement. Targets for Key Stage 2 are adequately challenging and help secure good progress. They are not yet high enough to promote the excellent progress the school is aiming for. The governing body shows a very detailed knowledge of the school and provides good challenge and support. Their impact on the school's work is good. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion.

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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?	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/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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	2
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne Line Junior School, Basildon, SS15 5AF

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave my team of inspectors when we visited you recently.

You spoke highly of your school and so did your parents. We agree with you that it is a good school. Some of its work is outstanding.

We were most impressed with:

- your own outstanding behaviour and maturity
- the excellent way the school guides, supports and cares for you and the great range of opportunities it offers
- the school's good leadership, especially the headteacher's success in making the school such a friendly and happy place
- the good quality teaching and learning seen in many lessons, with some that was excellent
- the good quality of writing that many of you produce
- the way so many pupils join in sports activities and often do really well.

If the school is to improve even more it needs to:

- set higher targets for Key Stage 2 so that your aim is to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science each year
- involve teaching assistants more fully in helping you learn.

Best wishes for the rest of your time at St Anne Line.

Yours faithfully

Bob Drew

Lead inspector