

Anson CofE (A) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124379
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	328122
Inspection date	5 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	102
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	Tom Parrott
Headteacher	Sally-Ann Sinclair
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Main Road Great Haywood Stafford ST18 0SU
Telephone number	01889 881200
Fax number	01889 881200

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of strategies to raise standards in writing
- whether pupils' progress is consistent throughout Key Stage 2
- the effectiveness of plans to promote community cohesion
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn and develop.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, scrutiny of pupils' writing books and classroom observations. Discussions were held with staff, pupils and the chair of governors, and parents' questionnaires were scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors 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

In this much smaller than average primary school, almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There are four mixed-year group classes and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside Year 1 pupils. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection, including the headteacher. Three of the four members of the teaching staff were appointed in September 2008.

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 because it provides a good quality of education and care for its pupils. One parent was correct when she wrote, 'This school is a very happy and caring place for my son to learn.' Pupils also say they enjoy school because their days are filled with interesting activities. Even so, attendance is only broadly average, as a small minority of parents take their children on holiday during term time despite the school's efforts to dissuade them. The good curriculum is a key contributory factor to pupils' enjoyment. Learning French, the good range of enrichment activities, including visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities, and the emphasis on creativity, including music, all effectively promote pupils' love of learning.

As a result of good teaching, pupils make good progress throughout Years 1 to 6. Careful questioning, for example, contributes to this because it directs pupils' thinking. Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils well, and learning activities are carefully structured to meet the range of pupils' needs. Information and communication technology (ICT) resources are used well to support independent work. There is also a good balance between teaching the whole class and providing opportunities for pupils to work in small groups or individually. All adults have high expectations of pupils and provide them with good levels of support and encouragement.

The number of pupils taking national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in any one year is small and therefore results can fluctuate according to the make-up of the group. Nevertheless, an analysis of results over time indicates standards are usually above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. In the past, progress in Years 3 to 6 has been uneven but current assessment information and the standards seen in pupils' work show that progress is now more even and pupils' achievement is good. Over time, writing has been the weaker subject and the school has recently implemented a range of useful strategies to improve writing standards. One such strategy is the use of developmental marking, so pupils are clear about the good aspects of their writing and what is necessary to improve it further. This good practice is not consistent, however, as teachers do not always use this type of marking in subjects other than English. This means they miss opportunities to help pupils consolidate their understanding of how to improve their writing skills. Provision and children's progress is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Christian values underpin the school's work. Care, guidance and support are good because staff know and support the academic, social and emotional needs of every child. As one pupil typically said, 'Our teachers are kind, and they will always talk things through with you if you are worried or concerned.' Procedures for ensuring the safeguarding and well-being of pupils are securely in place. Assessment systems, including those for tracking pupils' progress, are good, and appropriate interventions ensure weaknesses are rectified quickly. As a result, pupils who find learning difficult make good progress. Pupils are confident and able to work well independently. They are sensitive to each other's needs and know right from wrong. Behaviour is exemplary and pupils say bullying is rare. They feel very safe in school. They fully understand the importance of eating healthily and taking plenty of exercise. The acquisition of the Healthy School Award shows the school's commitment to this aspect of pupils' development. Older pupils willingly undertake responsibility by helping to care for the younger ones, for example at lunchtime, and the school council representatives ensure pupils have a strong voice in school's development. Pupils are well placed to make the most of the next stage of their education because they attain

above average standards, and their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good.

The good leadership of the headteacher, coupled with her vision for the future, results in clear direction to the school's work. Staff are supportive and all are clearly working together to ensure the best provision for each child in the school. Governance is good. The majority of parents and carers are appreciative of the school's work, but a small minority would like more opportunities to share their views and make suggestions about school improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. For example, it identifies that some aspects of promoting pupils' understanding of community cohesion need developing. There are good links with the local community, including the church, and with other local primary schools. However, pupils' understanding of different cultures within the national and international communities is less well developed. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and the more recent subject survey, when an inadequate curriculum and resource issues in ICT were identified. This evidence shows the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are typical for their age, although this can vary considerably year on year. They make satisfactory progress and reach average levels of attainment by the start of Year 1. Good attention is paid to promoting children's welfare and, as a result, children feel secure and well looked after by the caring staff. This helps them to settle smoothly into school routines. They know what they should eat to stay healthy and that exercise is good for you. They enjoy their activities and their behaviour is good. They show caring attitudes towards each other and their personal development and well-being are good. Teaching is satisfactory and adults provide children with an appropriate balance of teacher-led activities and those chosen by the children themselves. However, although opportunities for indoor learning are good, those for learning in the outdoor environment are not as extensive. The new leader of this key stage has already identified this as an area for development. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure marking consistently shows pupils the good features of their writing and how they can improve it in all subjects.
- Extend the opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to learn in the outdoor environment.
- Develop pupils' understanding of national and international communities.

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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

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

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/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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
The attendance of learners	3
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?	2

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	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

6 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Anson C of E (A) Primary School, Great Hayward, Stafford ST18 0SU

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you and seeing some of your lessons. Your school is a good school, with many good things going on, just as you described. Good teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons. As a result, you do well in English, mathematics and in science, and the standards you reach in these subjects by the time you leave in Year 6 are above those found in most schools. Well done!

We like the way you enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. You told us that your teachers are good at explaining things and as I visited every classroom I could see they tried hard to make lessons fun and interesting. Some of you told me how much you enjoyed the curriculum. I was amazed when you told me you had written to the former President of the United States of America – Mr George Bush!! You were keen to tell us that the school also keeps you safe and looks after you very well. It is very pleasing to know that you take plenty of exercise and eat a healthy diet. Your behaviour is also excellent, especially in the way you value learning. We think that this, alongside your good basic skills, will help to prepare you well for your next school and future lives.

Your good headteacher, governors and staff want to make your school even better and so we have made the following suggestions.

- As your writing skills are not as good as your reading skills, we have asked that when teachers mark your written work they should always make sure you know why work is good and how to make it even better.
- We think those of you in the Early Years Foundation Stage should have more opportunities to learn in the outdoor environment.
- Although you do lots of work in the school and the local community, we would like you to know more about other communities in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Thank you again for being so polite and friendly when we visited, and your parents and carers should be proud of you. Keep on working hard for your teachers and all of you try hard to come to school regularly.

Yours faithfully

Lois Furness

Lead inspector