

# Anson Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101495
<b>Local Authority</b>	Brent
<b>Inspection number</b>	335732
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Canham

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Isabel Collins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jeff Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Anson Road London NW2 4AB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils, and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, governing body minutes and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the 154 questionnaires received from parents, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the extent to which the school is tackling variations in learning and is accelerating achievement, particularly for the most able pupils
- how successfully the school promotes pupils' experience and appreciation of cultures and faiths other than their own in this country and beyond
- the influence of the collective leadership, including that of the governing body, on the school's direction and performance.

## Information about the school

The school is culturally diverse. Just over 90% of the pupils represent minority ethnic groups, almost three quarters speak English as an additional language, and over 20% are at the early stages of learning English. Thirty-five languages are spoken and, after English, Urdu is the main language, followed by Arabic, Punjabi and Gujarati. The proportion of pupils who arrive at, or leave, the school at other than the expected times is above that found in most other schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, but is particularly high in some year groups where proportions are between 40% and 50%.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into one of two Nursery classes. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in classes which contain more than one age group.

Among its awards the school has national Healthy School status, the Activemark and the Information and Communication Technology Mark.

There is after-school care provision within the school, but this is not managed by the governors and was not inspected.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school with many outstanding features. One of these features is the nurturing environment, which places a high priority on celebrating the rich cultural diversity of pupils and their families. The close attention given to enhancing pupils' self-esteem and in developing their confidence is reflected in the above average levels of achievement over several years. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. One parent's comments sum up the views of many, 'I take great pride in the wonderful manners and positive attitude my children exude....due to the wonderful community developed at Anson.'

Outstanding, collective leadership has been the key factor in setting high expectations and driving improvement. Resourceful and innovative, it is reflected in the commitment shown by staff and governors, who work with fervour and determination to gain the best provision and outcomes for all pupils and their families. Governors and school leaders have a clear and united vision informed by their accurate evaluation of where the school is now and of the improvements needed. Consequently, the school is well placed to move forward.

Children start school with a narrow range of skills and low levels of knowledge and understanding in several key aspects, including communication. Improvements are such that standards for the majority of pupils have been lifted by Year 6 to broadly average levels. In 2009, standards for pupils in Year 6 rose substantially, although writing remains a relative weakness, reflecting the limitations in pupils' vocabulary that are present throughout the school. The school is aware of the need to give pupils more opportunities to write for different purposes and to use a wider vocabulary from the time they join the school. The overall picture of the school's standards is skewed by the lower standards reached by the significant numbers of pupils who join the school between Years 3 and 6. Despite the very good progress made by these pupils, the large gaps in learning caused by disruptions to their schooling are difficult to fill.

The school knows that the quality of teaching and learning is at the heart of improved performance. The collective leadership's quest for high quality teaching is evident in the continual review of classroom practice based upon close monitoring and the innovative approach to information and communication technology. Consequently, pupils are progressing well in lessons that, typically, are lively, interesting, and well paced. Pupils' good personal outcomes can be seen in their exceptionally good behaviour, interest and enjoyment of learning. They have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe. Clubs, projects and performance activities are popular and provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their confidence and creative and performance skills.

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While the school has very good links with outside agencies, local schools and the community, it recognises the need to provide pupils with more opportunities to appreciate and value people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of the country. The school also acknowledges the need to include elements of community cohesion when planning for cross-curricular themes and subjects.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise attainment in English, and particularly writing, by:
- giving pupils more opportunities to write for different purpose from the time they join the school
- extending pupils' language and vocabulary to give their writing greater breadth and liveliness.
- Extend the school's strategy for community cohesion by:
- creating more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value people from a wide variety of backgrounds and communities nationally
- ensuring that community cohesion is included in planning for cross-curricular themes and subjects.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

There are clear signs that the school's determined efforts and well-informed support are making a substantial difference, resulting in pupils' good, and sometimes exceptionally good, progress. Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen in their enthusiasm and involvement in English, mathematics and Spanish, is characteristic of lessons and indicates the good pace of learning across the school. Pupils work exceptionally well in small groups and independently of the teacher, and take great pride in getting the tasks right.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with low levels of attainment, especially in key aspects of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and in knowledge of the world. Whilst all children progress well from this point, attainment remains well below average on entry to Year 1. Standards at the end of Year 2, as indicated by the results of national tests and assessments, have varied since 2006 but have remained well below national averages. However, results in 2009 show a substantial improvement. By the end of Year 6, the standards of the large majority of pupils are broadly average. However, those reached by the significant proportion of pupils who arrive at the school part way through the key stage do not reach nationally expected levels. Despite the rapid progress made by these pupils, they are unable to make up sufficient ground because the gaps in learning are too large. Again, standards in 2009 show substantial improvement with increased proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in all subjects, with particular strengths in reading and mathematics. However, writing remains a relative weakness. The school exceeded its challenging, but realistic, targets for both English and mathematics in 2008 and 2009, indicating pupils' good, and sometimes exceptionally good, progress. There are no significant differences

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between the achievement of different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Friendship is something pupils cherish about their school. Pupils say they love coming to school and thrive in the highly supportive and caring environment. They report no bullying and show exceptionally good levels of understanding about personal safety and the need for security when using the internet. There is also much enjoyment of music, physical activities and art and positive responses to literature. All these qualities contribute to the harmonious school community and make it the 'family that celebrates a diversity of cultures' described by one governor.

Pupils' thoughtful behaviour is an outstanding factor in their successful learning. Pupils are considerate towards each other and are well aware of dangers in and out of school. They readily take on responsibilities to help the school run smoothly. The school council provides very good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and develop leadership qualities. Helped by the school's innovative projects to encourage enterprise, such as those involving information and communication technology, pupils' personal skills are developing into important assets for future life.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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## How effective is the provision?

The wide range of displays and use of technology give an insight into the richness and diversity of the curriculum. The curriculum provides a careful balance between basic skills in literacy and numeracy and the development of pupils' performance and creative skills in subjects such as physical education, music and art. The teaching of Spanish adds a further positive dimension. The curriculum also takes good account of the wide range of ability and mixed age classes. Nevertheless, the curriculum is being reviewed and the school is aware of the need to give greater prominence to writing and to the development of pupils' vocabulary.

The curriculum is underpinned by the innovative use of information and communication technology, which enhances learning and gives pupils access to a range of resources, including personal computers. Pupils' experiences are greatly enriched by many trips locally and beyond, including a residential trip to Madrid, and by a strong programme of personal, social and health education. However, the school recognises the need to develop links nationally and include elements of community cohesion in teachers' planning

The strengths of teaching lie in the attention given to individual pupils and the refined tasks that provide the right levels of challenge within mixed-ability classes. These characteristics are enhanced by the collaborative approach taken by teachers and their assistants who work effectively within teams and provide well-targeted support. Topics, such as those that encourage creativity and imaginative writing, successfully capture pupils' interest and hold their attention. Consequently, pupils willingly become involved in their learning. Assessment information is used well to identify appropriate levels of approach. Although, occasionally, long introductions do not take sufficient account of pupils' different starting points earlier enough. Pupils know their targets and they are happy that they can ask for help when they need it. Marking is supportive and usually tells pupils what they need to do to improve.

The exceptional support for pupils' personal development and pastoral care is recognised and highly valued by parents. 'I find Anson incredibly supportive and accommodating,' one parent commented. 'Every child is valued as an individual.' Attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected, not just in opportunities for physical activity, but also in the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are drawn up for the school's vulnerable pupils, covering a broad range of personal and learning needs. Individual achievement is very effectively managed through comprehensive and rigorous tracking of attainment and progress. Evaluations lead to focused intervention, either individually or in small groups, which skilfully reinforce pupils' literacy skills and build confidence.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<p><b>The quality of teaching</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>
<p>Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<p>2</p>

<p><b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms</p>	
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

With very strong support from governors, the headteacher has established a school that radiates a passion for, and commitment to, developing each pupil's self-esteem and raising standards. The school promotes equality and tackles any form of discrimination exceptionally well. Systems are extremely well embedded and challenging targets are set for all aspects of the school's work. As a result, pupils make good, or very good, progress and attainment is improving. Staff and governors have a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Staff feel very well supported and are highly committed to the school. Their high expectations of where they want their pupils to be by the end of each year demonstrate good capacity for moving on.

Governors work very closely with the school and are determined to strengthen the school's growing reputation. At the same time they readily challenge the effectiveness of the school's developments. Their strategic involvement and the school's well-embedded management structures ensure that policies are systematically reviewed and resources are closely targeted at educational need. Attention to pupils' safety is integral to the school's work and safeguarding procedures are firmly established. Local services and agencies are used particularly well to enhance the well-being of vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Community cohesion is strongly promoted within the school and in the local area. Links and partnerships with other schools nearby, outside agencies and local businesses are extensive and show a keen understanding of local needs and challenges. The school has also developed links with schools in Spain and Africa.

However, the school knows it must do more to help pupils understand about people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of Great Britain. Parents are given very good opportunities to give views on the school, and benefit from regular newsletters and access to the school's website.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

In both Nursery and Reception classes, staff work closely together and with parents. Detailed planning takes good account of the low starting points and wide ability range. Well-planned, themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on reading, speaking, listening, writing, and number skills. Adults move seamlessly in and out of activities, responding to individuals or taking part in larger group activities. In keeping with rest of the school, attention to the welfare and safety of children is very strong. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who are more vulnerable, is good. New experiences clearly fascinate but, despite their confidence, some children struggle to express their ideas clearly. Children respond well to singing, which is used particularly well to encourage participation and help them gain confidence. Children, including those at the early stage of learning English, make very good progress in all areas of learning.

The school makes effective use of the indoor and outside areas which provide a creative learning environment. Adults give closely targeted support to both teacher-initiated activities and those which children choose for themselves. Good leadership and management ensure that children's needs are identified early and welfare arrangements are strong. Children are cherished and nurtured from the very start. As a result, they settle quickly and are eager to learn. Children listen attentively and play together well using a wide range of stimulating activities, although their use of language is often very limited.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Almost all parent questionnaires were positive, and many of the written comments

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expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included remarks about their children's enjoyment of school, the warm and welcoming environment, the very caring atmosphere, and the richness of the community.

A very small minority of parents recorded concerns over several issues, including the school's support for their child's learning. These concerns were not reflected in the very large majority of parents' comments and the inspection found no evidence to support them.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Anson Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 154 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 350 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	72	43	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	95	62	56	36	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	75	49	74	48	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	45	77	50	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	88	57	65	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	48	71	46	8	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	49	72	47	4	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	57	37	85	55	3	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	60	39	87	57	3	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	78	51	68	44	2	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	61	40	79	51	2	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	85	55	63	41	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	94	61	59	38	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



7 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Anson Primary School, London NW2 4AB

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school and thank you for making us feel so very welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Yours is a good school with many outstanding features. It is also a school where you want to be, make lots of friends, and enjoy taking part in the many interesting and exciting activities. Anson is a school where staff and governors are working hard to make it even better. Just about all your parents are happy with the school. You behave exceptionally well and get on well with each other.

Here are some important things about your school.

- You make good, and sometimes very good, progress in lessons.
- You feel very safe and secure in school and enjoy your lessons.
- Those in charge of the school are making improvements that are helping you to make even faster progress.
- All staff take exceptionally good care of you, and make sure that you know what to do to keep safe.
- You have an impressive understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle and healthy eating.

This is what your school has been asked to do to make things even better.

- Help you to improve your writing by giving you more opportunities to write for different reasons using a wider range of words.
- Help you to understand more about people's backgrounds and communities in other parts of this country.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now.

Yours faithfully

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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