

St Anne's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108386
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	337063
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Kate Pringle

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Consterdine
Headteacher	Miss Kathryn Leonard
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Off Pickering Green Harlow Green Gateshead NE9 7HX
Telephone number	0191 4334053
Fax number	0191 4334054
Email address	stannes@gateshead.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were observed taught by nine teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, assessment information, policies and procedures, school development plans and updates of pupils' progress. Views of stakeholders in the school were also considered through questionnaires from 30 parents and carers, and 74 pupils.

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

- how effectively teachers use assessment to plan for differing activities, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, in order to raise standards
- how well basic skills and information and communication technology contribute to learning across subjects
- how effectively all leaders and managers challenge the school towards successful improvement.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than average. Pupils are mainly White British with few pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of educational needs. Pre-school provision is provided on the school site by a private provider and will be inspected separately.

The school holds the following awards: Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools, ECO school, Financial Management Systems in Schools (FMSiS) and Impetus (human rights).

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 in which the needs of individual pupils are central to its ethos. Good relationships with parents and carers, and with other partners, support all aspects of school life. Many parents comment on the 'happy and safe environment' where staff, 'take the time to listen and support you'. This level of care, and the consistently good guidance given to pupils, ensures that they feel safe. Pupils are aware of the feelings of others and understand right and wrong. As a result, their behaviour is good.

From entry to Reception, where most children enter with skills below those expected for their age, pupils leave Year 6 with above average attainment. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress. Progress slows in Years 1 and 2, especially in writing, before accelerating again during Key Stage 2 to end with improved standards by the end of Year 6. Overall the quality of teaching is good but is inconsistent, resulting in uneven progress for pupils. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not share individual targets with pupils regularly or link these targets sufficiently well to daily tasks in order to accelerate pupils' progress. Marking does not focus well enough upon how well pupils are meeting their targets, nor does it inform them about how they can improve further.

Pupils' academic and personal development are effectively supported through well developed links with parents and carers, and with other partners. The needs of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are vulnerable or who speak English as an additional language are very well met, enabling them to make good progress. Overall, pupils' achievement is good and the school provides good value for money.

The enthusiastic staff have a deep commitment to their school and share the vision of the headteacher and her senior leaders to provide good quality experiences for their pupils, in order to improve their all-round capabilities. Self-evaluation is accurate and focused actions for development have resulted in a number of successes including: improved personal outcomes for pupils by Year 6, a creative curriculum, increased standards in writing for most pupils and greater responsibilities for staff. Other strategies, for example, to use assessment effectively to improve pupils' progress, are showing early signs of success. As a result, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the pace of progress in Key Stage 1, especially in writing, in order to raise standards.

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- Improve the consistency of the use of assessment across the school to meet the quality of the best practice, by:
 - planning tasks to meet the needs of individual pupils
 - using marking more effectively so that pupils know when they have met their targets and identify the next steps in their learning.

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

Pupils enjoy school. They are well motivated and have good attitudes to learning in lessons, where they try to achieve their best. A willingness to participate is reflected in their enthusiasm to learn through new experiences. For example, the increasing opportunities for pupils to work together engaging in practical and investigative activities stimulate their interest and provide good opportunities to apply their communication and basic skills across a wide range of subjects. Pupils have an understanding of their individual targets, but there are insufficient opportunities for them to focus on these on a daily basis in the more satisfactory lessons.

Overall, pupils achieve well and enjoy learning. However, because progress is inconsistent, standards can fluctuate. Attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly average, demonstrating pupils' satisfactory progress from entry to Year 1. Standards in writing, despite demonstrating some improvement, remain lower than those in reading and mathematics. The improvement shown by Year 6 in 2009 has been maintained, with an increased proportion of pupils achieving average levels in English due to improvements in writing. The difference in the attainment between boys and girls is narrowing across the school, with little difference when they leave Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who speak English as an additional language, make similar good progress to their peers.

Pupils learn to respect and value others, which helps them to grow in confidence. They feel safe in school, as there is little bullying or racism. They learn how to deal with risks well, through a programme, which includes cycling proficiency, e-safety and emergency situations. A number of opportunities help pupils to keep healthy, through good provision for physical activity and engagement in healthy eating and gardening activities. Pupils enjoy engaging with their friends in school through their school council and playground 'friends'. They support charities and local groups and are very active in their work to preserve the environment. They have a growing understanding of people from other cultures and backgrounds. The large majority of pupils enjoy school and attendance is average overall. This, together with their above average basic skills means that pupils are well prepared for the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ 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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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships and a positive ethos actively promote pupils' attitudes to learning. Teachers are knowledgeable and use their skills well to model new learning supported by the effective use of interactive white boards. Termly assessments record the attainment of pupils and their progress made over time. However, the use of this information to meet the differing needs of pupils on a daily basis, is not used consistently enough. This means that progress slows in some classes. In the best lessons, teachers match tasks well to pupils' individual abilities and feedback to pupils is based firmly on how well they have achieved against their individual targets and what they need to do next.

The improvements in planning to link subjects are providing a more relevant and interesting curriculum for pupils, with greater opportunities to engage in practical and collaborative activities. Pupils are encouraged to use new laptops and notebooks, which increase their opportunities to learn across other subjects, using skills in reading and writing. There are particular strengths in art, where the quality of work is high across the school. A considerable range of additional activities contributes to the acquisition of skills and a healthy lifestyle. Visits and visitors to the school increase pupils' insight into the wider world as they talk enthusiastically of new and exciting experiences, such as considering the impact of climate change.

The pastoral care is a real strength of the school. However, due to the variation in progress across the school, guidance for pupils is not consistent. Detailed knowledge, understanding and support for pupils and their families breaks down barriers to learning, and this is well acknowledged by parents and carers. One parent, spoke of the, 'very

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supportive' nature of the school where staff, 'take the time to listen and support you in times of crisis'. Individual learning programmes, together with appropriate interventions, are used very effectively to address the needs of those with specific needs. Strategies to improve attendance are proving successful, with reducing levels of persistent absenteeism, despite a small number of families who are not fully cooperative with the school. Partnerships with agencies and other partners are very successful because of the good levels of communication and this assures high quality intervention and support for transition at all stages.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The clear vision of the headteacher and senior leaders is shared by all staff, and promotes a strong sense of common purpose. Leaders have a good sense of strengths and securely target areas for development. Well-devolved responsibilities are driving improvements in teaching and learning owing to the quality of monitoring and evaluation. Accurate tracking of pupils' attainment ensures that target setting is challenging but realistic. High quality teamwork contributes greatly to the success of the school to support its inclusive nature.

Safeguarding is undertaken well. Well-embedded procedures and checks reduce risk and provide a safe and healthy environment. In addition, a well-structured curriculum promotes pupils' confidence in their individual responsibility to keep themselves safe. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They have a real commitment to the school that goes beyond support as they actively involve themselves to learn and understand developments. This in turn promotes higher levels of questioning of school leaders, which helps to drive improvement.

The very well-established links with parents and carers, and with other partners, contribute much to the strong relationships within the school. Equal opportunities are promoted well and the positive and friendly nature of the school enables pupils to work well together and make good progress. Contributions within the local community and the developing links locally and globally, enable pupils to develop a good understanding of diversity.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter with skills below those expected for their age, often with weaker language skills. The warm and welcoming atmosphere enables them to settle quickly and confidently. This is recognised by parents and carers who commend the setting for the care of their children. They greatly appreciate the opportunity they have to engage in their children's learning. For example, they contribute their own personal episodes of first-hand experiences through the widely appreciated 'WOW' books. Very positive relationships result in very good behaviour, as children share and help each other through their work and play work together.

Improvements to the outside area, together with well-organised approaches to learning, help to engage children's curiosity and their desire to learn. Well-presented tasks provide opportunities, both inside and out to explore and investigate their individual interests. By stimulating their interests, children have common talking points. This contributes much to their good listening and speaking skills and positively influences their emerging skills in reading and writing, especially for boys.

Leadership is strong and has a good understanding of the strengths of the setting. Where particular needs have been identified, appropriate actions have resulted in improvements that impact well on outcomes for children. For example, regular and systematic assessment procedures are now used with developing accuracy. This helps to better inform planning activities for individual children and is raising standards. Policies and procedures are consistently applied which contribute to the security of the setting and to children's welfare.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers, who responded to the questionnaire, are extremely positive about the school and hold the headteacher and her staff in high regard. They greatly appreciate the care and consideration given to their children and are confident that any concerns are listened to and acted upon appropriately. The very few concerns raised were fully investigated with no serious issues found. Overall the number of responses was relatively low.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anne's Catholic 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 191 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	16	53	14	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	57	13	43	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	47	16	53	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	50	14	47	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	50	12	40	2	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	50	15	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	60	12	40	0	0	0	0
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)	12	40	12	40	1	3	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	47	13	43	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	50	11	37	3	10	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	43	14	47	1	3	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	14	47	14	47	2	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	53	13	43	1	3	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



30 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne's Catholic Primary School, Gateshead, NE9 7HX

Thank you for the lovely welcome you gave to inspectors when we visited your school recently. Yours is a good school and you obviously enjoy the many activities your teachers provide for you. Your behaviour is good and you understand very well how to keep yourselves safe and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. In lessons, most of you listen well and try very hard to please your teachers by completing the tasks they set you. We were very impressed with your art work and the dedication you are showing to learn to play the violin and other instruments. We could see that the new laptops and notebooks are helping you to have better opportunities to learn across other subjects as you use, particularly, your skills in reading and writing. You also show increasing confidence in those lessons where you are asked to 'find things out' as you problem solve and discuss things together.

We know that your teachers have a lot planned to give you even more exciting opportunities. But, we feel there are some things they could do to help you to achieve even better than you do now. We would like your teachers to:

- help pupils in Key Stage 1 to progress more quickly, especially in writing
- make sure that every teacher helps all of you to use your individual learning targets more regularly by planning challenging tasks matched to your different abilities
- also, when they mark your work to tell you what you have done well and what you need to do to make your work even better.

We hope that you will help your teachers in every way and wish you ever success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Kate Pringle

Lead Inspector

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