

# St Anne Line Catholic Infant School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	115160
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	338522
Inspection dates	14-15 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Miller

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

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Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Hill
Headteacher	Angela Russell
Date of previous school inspection	2-3 July 2008
School address	Wickhay Basildon Essex SS15 5AF
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and undertook other general observations of classes, displays and pupils' work. They held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, the school council, and met with parents at the start of the school day. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including policies, self-evaluation and development planning, monitoring files, safeguarding documentation, governors' minutes and reports, and information for parents, including the school's website. Inspectors received and analysed 50 parental and 10 staff questionnaires.

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

- the ways in which the school promotes the achievement of its diverse groups: those who have difficulty with their learning, are from ethnic minority groups, or are higher attaining pupils
- the improvement in the curriculum to make it more appropriate for the pupils and its impact on their learning and achievement
- the development of its target setting and assessment systems, in order to improve further the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school
- pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as a continuing strength of the school.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized infant school serving the Lee Chapel North and surrounding areas of Basildon. The percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those for whom English is an additional language, is well above average. Overall, the proportion of pupils who require additional help with their learning is below average, but the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Active Mark, and is part of the Basildon Sports Partnership. Non-maintained Nursery provision, which is reported on separately, is provided at the school by the St Anne Line Catholic Nursery.

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

St Anne Line Catholic Infant is a good school. Attainment on entry to Reception is below the level expected nationally for the children's ages. Subsequently, the school enables its pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Self-evaluation is good, and has resulted in relevant and well considered improvement planning. It is not a school to rest on its laurels. Staff have worked very hard in recent years to enable pupils to reach higher standards by the end of Reception and Year 2. The school appreciates well the challenge it has set itself in ensuring these gains in attainment and learning by Reception children do not plateau but accelerate further throughout Key Stage 1. It is aiming to achieve this through additional improvements in its provision for potentially higher attaining and gifted and/or talented pupils. The school's secure track record of good improvement, in terms of both its provision and outcomes, confirms its good capacity to further its ambition to become outstanding.

Good progress has been made since the last inspection on developing and implementing improved tracking systems and developing links between subjects to make learning more meaningful. These are proving effective in raising achievement and in pupils' enjoyment in learning. However, the school is the first to recognise there is more to do. Some inconsistencies remain in the levels of challenge offered to potentially higher attaining pupils. Staff and governors are currently active in discussing and preparing plans to resolve this issue, including improving school facilities, support for those pupils with particular gifts and/or talents, and additional opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology. This already forms part of the school's strategies for further curriculum development. Daily and weekly lesson planning for key elements such as literacy, numeracy and science are good. However, when planning cross-curriculum themes and topics some foundation subjects do not always receive due priority across all classes. The school is aware of this and has already prioritised monitoring and support by senior and middle leaders to redress the balance.

The school has some crucial and significant strengths. The care, support and guidance it provides for its pupils are outstanding, and systems for safeguarding pupils are exemplary. It is a school which lives up to the high standards it sets itself in its Mission Statement. This includes always aiming for the best, nurturing skills and talents, encouraging and respecting each other, and a real focus on equality. As a result, pupils' personal, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development, is excellent.

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

- Build further on the improved standards being gained by children at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and ensure attainment improves further throughout Key Stage 1, by:
  - raising further the levels of challenge for pupils through the school's on-going curriculum development
  - ensuring increased consistency in teachers' daily and weekly planning, particularly for the foundation subjects
  - ensuring continued support and monitoring by senior and middle leaders to enable these improvements to become embedded fully.
- Finalise and implement the plans being developed by teachers and governors to provide additional support for gifted, talented and higher attaining pupils by:
  - providing more dedicated areas and facilities for use by small groups of pupils and support staff
  - ensuring that increasing levels of enrichment and enhancement work, including information and communication technology use, for gifted and talented pupils form part of curriculum and lesson planning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Standards in both writing and reading have improved significantly over recent years. These improvements are now being consolidated. The embedding of these key skills is aiding the achievement of pupils for whom English is not their first language. Such pupils receive good support to enable them to make good progress in relation to their stage of language development. In 2009, the school met, and in most cases exceeded, its suitably robust targets for pupils' attainment. Year 2 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attained standards above those gained by similar groups nationally. Other pupils gained above average standards overall and in reading and writing. Standards are at the high end of average in mathematics, and pupils perform equally well in their science related work. Although very early in the school year, evidence of pupils' work in lessons, and school tracking for current pupils, shows they are placed well to achieve further success. However, whilst the school is successful in enabling its pupils to gain above average levels by the end of Year 2, there has been a more limited focus on enabling pupils to gain even higher levels. The school has recognised this, and is now turning its attention to improve further the performance of potentially higher attaining pupils, and those with particular gifts and/or talents.

Pupils' behaviour is welcoming and positive, and they have good attitudes towards their learning and lessons. Occasional misbehaviour is often the result of over-enthusiasm on the part of a very few pupils. Pupils say, and the very large majority of their parents/carers agree, that they feel safe in school at all times. This is because the ethos of the school promotes excellently the principles of responsibility and tolerance. The multicultural nature of the school results in pupils having a very

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good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils value and are proud of their school community. Their overall spiritual, moral, social and multicultural development is outstanding. This is a significant strength of the school and one which was recognised not only at the last inspection, but also by their latest Diocesan report. Pupils have strong and purposeful working relationships with their teachers and their peers. Right from Reception, pupils show they understand the importance of hygiene and healthy lifestyles. Playtimes are very active, and exercise equipment is used extensively. Much enjoyment is had by all. However, although attendance is average, this figure is affected adversely by a small number of families who take extended holidays. Nevertheless, the high standard of pupils' personal development, and the above average standards they reach by the end of Year 2, means that pupils are prepared well for their next phase of education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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	1
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 <sup>1</sup>	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

### How effective is the provision?

The curriculum provides relevant and stimulating opportunities for learning, and the teaching engages and motivates pupils well. Weekly and individual lesson planning for the key areas, such as literacy and numeracy, is often very good. However, there is less consistency in planning within year groups for some other, foundation subjects such as art and design, or for higher attaining pupils. Nevertheless, there is good use of resources to support a wide range of imaginative tasks in lessons. The improved assessment procedures are used effectively to guide lesson planning and introduce suitable challenge for most groups of pupils. Questioning is used effectively to help pupils explain their learning. Those pupils who find learning difficult are catered for

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<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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particularly well, and given good, additional support by a thoroughly professional group of teaching assistants. Individual plans for supporting pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities are practical working documents which are used well by staff to support pupils' progress. There are good links with a range of agencies to support and sustain pupils' learning and development. This was seen in practical action during the inspection as the particular needs of pupils new to the school were being assessed by a visiting specialist in cooperation with school staff. Parents and carers spoken with attested to the value of the school's links with families.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

## How effective are leadership and management?

The equally good leadership, management and governance underpin effectively the ethos and success of the school. A strong sense of community is engendered by the school's leaders at all levels. Good monitoring of the school's life and work, provide it with a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Leaders, at all levels, have high expectations of themselves, and increasing expectations of the pupils. There is systematic evaluation of the school's performance and this is reviewed regularly, and effectively, by all governors and the leadership team. Governors make good use of their personal and professional expertise in support of the school. The governing body understands the vital importance of safeguarding children and all have been involved in child protection training. Governors are pro-active in working with the school, well-informed, and able to work effectively with and alongside the staff in order to secure improvement. Policies and procedures to ensure equality of opportunity and tackle any potential discrimination are applied well. There is a richness in the school's cultural diversity. Community cohesion is promoted well. Consequently, pupils have a good understanding of the contributions they can make as very young citizens. The school's development planning and its Diocesan report confirm community cohesion as an established, but continuously developing focus for the school. The large majority of parents feel well-informed about the school from personal and newsletter contact. However, not all the information on the school's website is fully up-to-date. Discussions with staff show an often infectious keenness and enthusiasm to ensure the best for the pupils. The staff questionnaire showed that all staff feel pride in being a member of the school and are actively involved in what the school is trying to achieve. This reflects the good teamwork within the school and, along with parents/carers, staff feel the school is led and managed well.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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	1
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

Good leadership, management and good teaching is contributing significantly to the good effectiveness and increasing success of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Reception staff work very closely with the Nursery in order to raise attainment and prepare children for the transfer between settings. Children enter the Reception class with levels of attainment in the key areas of learning which are below that expected nationally. They make good progress, and standards at the end of the Reception year have been rising steadily in recent years. In 2009, children made particularly good gains in communication, language and literacy, their mathematical development and their personal and social skills. Reception classes are making good use of the improved outdoor facilities available to them to promote children's physical and creative development. When children transfer to Year 1, their standards are now close to those expected to support National Curriculum work. This improvement has been possible not only because of good teamwork between staff, but also through accurate and improving systems of assessment. This is helping the school to narrow the gap between boys and girls across all areas of learning. The work of the Reception staff is also instrumental in establishing the high level of multicultural and multi-faith harmony which exists throughout the school.

*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



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The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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## Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents/carers are very supportive of the school, its work and leadership. A few parents/carers feel their children could make better progress, and that they wished for more support in helping their children make good progress, and meet individual pupils' needs. Inspectors support the school's plans to do even better in this respect, and this is reflected in the main points for further improvement. A very small minority of parents/carers feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour; inspectors disagree.

Inspectors took the opportunity, at the start of the first day, to meet with parents, and carers at the school gate. Parents'/carers' response to the school was universally positive, and this is reflected in the questionnaire returns. All additional questionnaires received after the deadline for publication were entirely supportive of the school. Parents and carers praise the school for the approachability of staff and the ways in which their children are supported. The parents/carers of the children just starting in the Reception class are particularly pleased with the level of contact from the school and the way their children are being enabled to settle during their first few days. The parents/carers of older children are particularly complementary about the way the school supports those who find learning difficult. As one said, 'We are thrilled with the school.'

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Anne Line Catholic Infant 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 180 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	79%	9	17%	1	2%	1	2%
The school keeps my child safe	37	71%	13	25%	2	4%	0	0%
The school informs me about my child’s progress	28	54%	16	31%	4	8%	2	4%
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	54%	16	31%	3	6%	3	6%
The teaching is good at this school	34	65%	12	23%	5	10%	0	0%
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	28	54%	15	29%	7	13%	0	0%
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	58%	17	33%	2	4%	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)	25	48%	15	29%	3	6%	1	2%
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	54%	16	31%	5	10%	1	2%
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	44%	19	37%	5	10%	2	4%
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	46%	20	38%	3	6%	2	4%
The school is led and managed effectively	32	62%	14	27%	3	6%	2	4%
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	35	67%	12	23%	4	8%	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 all 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

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 pupils' 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.



16 September 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of St Anne Line Catholic Infant School, Basildon, SS15 5AF

We would like to thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and the friendly way you asked us questions. You played a big part in the success of the inspection. We agree with your teachers, and the great majority of your parents/carers, that yours is a good school.

These are the things we found are best about your school:

- the ways in which staff and other adults make sure you are safe in school
- you have good teachers who look after you well
- your school is led well by your headteacher and governors
- you are curious about life, and work and play together very well
- you show an important understanding of each other's faiths and beliefs
- those of you who need extra support with your learning make good progress
- you achieve well by the end of your time in Reception and Year 2.

These are the things that we have asked your school to do now.

- Help you to achieve even more through changes to the way your teachers plan your work and support each other.
- Provide additional help, opportunities and resources for those of you with gifts and talents, or who are doing very well in your work.

You can help by making sure you attend school as much as possible. We know that you enjoy school very much. You learnt during one of your assemblies, as you acted out the thoughts and feelings of young eagles learning to fly, that when we are at school, 'Nothing is beyond us'.

With all best wishes for your future

Michael Miller  
Lead Inspector

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