

St Anne's RC Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 106257 |
| Local Authority | Tameside |
| Inspection number | 309074 |
| Inspection date | 23 April 2008 |
| Reporting inspector | Peter Jones |

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 | 3-11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 218 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Fr James Clarke |
| Headteacher | Mrs Gaffney |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 March 2004 |
| School address | Clarendon Road Audenshaw Manchester M34 5QA |
| Telephone number | 0161 370 8698 |
| Fax number | 0161 371 1964 |

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Age group | 3-11 |
| Inspection date | 23 April 2008 |
| Inspection number | 309074 |

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; teaching and learning; leadership and management; personal development and well-being and care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, parents' questionnaires, scrutiny of pupils' work and of assessment data and other documents. In addition, discussions were held with pupils, members of the governing body and key staff. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector 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

This is an average sized primary school serving a residential community of varied social and economic backgrounds. The majority of pupils are of White British origin although the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, many of whom speak English as an additional language, is steadily increasing. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are average. The school has Healthy School status, and holds the Activemark and Tameside Inclusion awards.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has some outstanding features. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. Her energy and vision have inspired staff, parents and pupils. She is well supported by her enthusiastic and dedicated staff and an effective governing body. The school is responding well to meet the needs of the growing numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school's strategic planning is clearly focused on improving standards and achievement. To this end, it has introduced a comprehensive programme of staff training and development that has improved the quality of teaching and learning. The school has improved the range and quality of its buildings and resources considerably since the last inspection. This has helped raise the school's profile and has contributed to the increased confidence and pride of the whole school community. Increased involvement and effectiveness of staff in checking and evaluating the school's work is contributing to improving achievement. The school's leadership has improved the way it analyses data about pupils' performance. However, the systems are not yet refined enough to provide a sufficiently detailed overview of pupils' progress as they move through the school. The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate overall, although it has overestimated its progress in some areas. It has made good rather than outstanding progress since the last inspection. In view of its current performance, it shows good rather than outstanding capacity for future improvement.

Within its aims, St Anne's seeks 'to help every person here to achieve his or her best in work and in play'. The school is succeeding in its ambitions. The outstanding personal development of its pupils is central to its improved performance. The school has a calm and caring atmosphere in which pupils feel secure and valued. Parents say, 'The patient, professional manner of the staff permeates the whole school,' and, 'Learning seems to be fun, not a chore'. Pupils really enjoy school. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now consistently in line with national averages. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the many interesting activities the school provides for them. They are proud of their school and appreciative of its work. The comment that, 'Everyone is included here, our school is so welcoming,' was typical of many made by pupils during the inspection. Behaviour and relationships are excellent and pupils say they feel safe from bullying and discrimination. There is tolerance and respect for different faiths and cultures that are celebrated in lessons, assemblies and displays. Pupils are made very aware of the importance of taking regular exercise and leading a healthy lifestyle. The Activemark award and Healthy School status are endorsements of the school's progress in these areas. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility so that they contribute to the community from an early age. Their work in the school and eco councils and as peer supporters in the playground has helped improve school facilities and contributes to the atmosphere of harmony and goodwill. There are strong links with a school in Ghana that further increase pupils' knowledge and awareness of other cultures and lifestyles. Pupils show their awareness of the needs of others through a strong tradition of fundraising for charities. Pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and to take part in dance and drama to develop their creative and artistic abilities. The school successfully strives to make sure that pupils have the skills they will need to succeed in later life.

The good teaching that pupils receive means that they achieve well. They reach average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress given their low starting points in the Foundation Stage. Standards are beginning to improve further, particularly in writing, following an intensive whole-school drive in this area.

Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with their classmates as a result of the effective teaching and support they receive.

Teachers plan lessons well and have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. There are many opportunities in lessons for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. Increased links are being made between subjects across the curriculum so that pupils find learning more interesting and relevant. Good use is made of the school's very good computer resources and interactive whiteboards to engage and stimulate pupils. Rewards are used effectively to increase motivation and there is a strong sense of pupils and staff learning together. The school is particularly effective in improving the progress of pupils with lower and average abilities. There is a varied and well organised programme of lessons for groups and individuals that helps them to improve their basic skills quickly. The work of the school's highly skilled teaching assistants is crucial to its success in this area. In contrast, the school's higher ability pupils do not always have sufficient time or opportunities to progress as far or as quickly as they are capable.

Pupils benefit from outstanding care, guidance and support. They are extremely well cared for and say they know that they can turn to adults for advice and support. They display consideration, politeness and respect to each other as a result of the example set to them by staff. Parents appreciate the school's before and after-school care facilities and the open and welcoming attitudes of staff. The school makes excellent use of the expert help available to it. The learning mentor has forged strong links between home and school and the resulting partnership has helped improve pupils' learning. Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. The academic guidance that pupils receive is of high quality and contributes much to their good achievement. Teachers mark work conscientiously and give clear advice so that pupils understand how they can improve further. Pupils' progress towards challenging targets is regularly assessed and they are becoming increasingly involved in this process.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age in most areas. Skills are often well below expected levels in language and communication, mathematical development and in personal, social and emotional development. Pupils make a good start to their learning. When pupils begin Year 1, they have made good progress to reach below average standards. The impressive improvement they make in their personal and social skills is a very significant factor in their good achievement as they move through the school. Children benefit from the carefully planned, balanced and stimulating curriculum, and the good teaching and support they receive from skilled and dedicated staff. Individual needs are quickly identified and provided for. Staff have improved their effectiveness in teaching children who speak English as an additional language. Children really enjoy the many practical and creative activities provided for them to develop a range of skills. By the time children reach the Reception class they are cooperating well and making informed choices, and many are confident enough to work independently. Their physical development is enhanced by good use of the outdoor play facilities and the many opportunities to exercise and develop coordination skills. The Foundation Stage is well led and managed, and all staff collaborate well in planning and reviewing teaching and learning, and in recording children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for the higher ability pupils to develop their skills in order to raise their achievement further.
- Refine the school's data analysis systems to provide more information on the progress of pupils as they move through the school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Achievement and standards

| | |
|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 |

Personal development and well-being

| | |
|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 1 |
| The attendance of learners | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 |
| 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 the learners' needs? | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 |

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 1 |
| 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 |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of St Anne's RC Primary School, Manchester, M34 5QA

I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when I visited your school recently. I would like to share with you what I found out.

Your school provides you with a good standard of education. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons enjoyable. They give you really good help and advice about how to improve. Your behaviour is excellent and you work hard in lessons and make good progress as a result. Your school keeps you safe and happy and gives you the chance to help others and take responsibility. I was impressed with the close links you have made with a school in Ghana, and with your fundraising for school and charity. Your school council has helped to make more improvements to your well equipped playground. The eco council carries out really worthwhile work in energy saving and recycling. You enjoy your lessons and taking part in the clubs and activities that your school provides for you.

I would like you to do even better with your work and so I have suggested two things that will help. I would like your teachers to make sure that those of you who are capable of reaching the highest levels have the chance to improve your skills as much as possible in lessons. Also, I would like your school to have a clearer picture of how well you are making progress in your work. You can help by always trying your best and thinking about how you can improve even more. Everyone at St Anne's really cares about you and wants you to do as well as you can.