

St Anne's on Sea St Thomas' Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119552
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327068
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Andree Kettle

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	226
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Peter Law-Jones
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Maughan
Date of previous school inspection	5 April 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	St Thomas Road St Annes Lytham St Annes Lancashire FY8 1JN
Telephone number	01253 722022
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Anne's on Sea St Thomas' Church of England Primary School is an average sized school where most pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average and the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. There have been a significant number of new appointments to the teaching staff since the last inspection. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award and is awaiting the Activemark assessment. The school provides education for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is a private nursery on-site, which was inspected and reported upon separately by Ofsted.

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 with some outstanding features, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils' personal development and well-being and their care, guidance and support. The school is highly inclusive, taking excellent care of pupils' physical, emotional and learning needs. As a result, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress. The standards reached by pupils at all key stages are above average and rising.

Pupils say that lessons are fun and their excellent enjoyment of school is demonstrated through their outstanding attitudes to learning and their above average attendance. In their responses to the inspection questionnaire, parents are supportive of the headteacher and staff and comment on the good progress that their children make. Pupils' behaviour is excellent both in lessons and around school. Pupils have pride in their school as demonstrated by members of the school council who are responsible for showing visitors (and inspectors) around the school. Pupils show good spiritual, moral and social development. Their good spiritual development results from the many opportunities for reflection, including during assembly and from the curriculum with its strong emphasis on Christian values. Prayers are said regularly during the school day and there are strong links with the local church.

The curriculum is good with elements of outstanding provision, such as the extensive range of extra-curricular clubs and the many educational visits out of school. For example, there are clubs for multi-skills, badminton, tennis, tri-golf, drama, healthy eating and first aid. The provision for music is a strength of the school; all children in Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. Pupils visit farms, the zoo, the theatre and museums. Opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to learn about other cultures in the UK, Europe and in the wider world are under-developed.

The care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. The staff are very caring and highly committed to pupils' welfare. There are excellent partnerships between the school and other professionals and agencies, such as the school nurse, the family centre and the educational psychologist. These are very effective in supporting pupils, as are the excellent links with the local secondary school which ensure that there is a smooth transition from primary to secondary education for the Year 6 pupils. Academic guidance is excellent with well-planned systems in place. These are used very well to check that pupils make good progress as they move through the school.

The school has focused closely this year on improving the quality of teaching and learning, as previously this was not consistently good. School leaders recognise through their self-evaluation that this work needs to continue as they try to improve outcomes for pupils further. The above average standards reached by pupils are the result of effective teaching which provides activities that are well matched to their learning needs. Lessons are lively and interesting, resulting in high levels of enthusiasm shown by pupils. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) very well to enhance learning. For example, during the inspection pupils in one class were learning about creating and writing their own 'voice-overs'. They were able to understand the nature and purpose of different styles of 'voice-over' after watching three short DVD clips.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The governors and the school's leadership team set a clear direction for the school and have a strong vision which is understood well by all staff. School leaders at all levels are involved in improving the school through effective

monitoring and data analysis. The school's leadership team ensures that equality of opportunity is excellent for all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those identified as being able and/or talented. An example of this was seen in an assembly where a group of children led the rest of the school in using sign language to sign a hymn while they were singing. The school has made a number of very effective improvements since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Outstanding provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children achieve very well. The children enter school with a level of skills and knowledge which is broadly typical for their age. As a result of a structured and stimulating environment, along with well planned learning that is carefully matched to their needs, all children make at least good progress. Many children exceed the levels expected nationally by the end of the Reception Year.

All staff provide outstanding levels of care in a safe environment. The welfare of children is promoted extremely well. A strongly committed team ensure that policies and procedures are implemented with high levels of consistency. Parents are encouraged to take part in their children's education, for example through the 'Better Reading Partnership' programme. Outstanding relationships create a supportive environment in which children feel safe to explore and they develop excellent personal and social skills. The children show high levels of independence and sustain concentration well. They behave very well, responding to the clear guidance and encouragement from the staff, and show consideration for each other's feelings and needs. They work and play together cooperatively and share very well. Topics, such as the Gingerbread Man topic, are well planned and capture the children's imagination and interest.

A strong feature of teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is the skilful use of questioning to develop problem solving skills in the children. As a result, they are keen to work together and talk about their learning. The children extended their problem solving skills when they thought their teacher's gingerbread man had been stolen and started independently looking for clues as to his whereabouts. This created much excitement in the classroom. Children initiate learning for themselves too; for example a group of children were observed making models and creating stories around them as they worked. An enthusiastic, knowledgeable manager provides outstanding leadership guiding the strong staff team exceptionally well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teaching is improved further so that all is consistently good or outstanding.
- Improve pupils' cultural understanding of the UK community, Europe and the wider world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

From broadly typical starting points, pupils make good progress as they move up the school and reach above average standards by the time they leave. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and reach standards that are above average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 at Key Stage 1 is above average in reading and writing and is significantly above average in mathematics. This percentage has increased in reading, writing and mathematics since the last inspection.

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and reach standards in English, mathematics and science which are above average and rising. The provisional 2009 national test results in English, mathematics and science indicate standards that are well above average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is above the national average in mathematics and science. The school has identified previous differences in standards of attainment between boys and girls and has successfully reduced these differences at all key stages. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or difficulties are very well supported and make good progress in all key stages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of all pupils are outstanding. The highly committed staff team ensures that all pupils are taught to keep themselves safe and to understand the benefits of keeping themselves healthy. As a result, pupils embrace a healthy lifestyle wholeheartedly, taking full advantage of the many opportunities to take part in a range of sports. Pupils throughout the school thoroughly enjoy learning and show highly positive attitudes. By Year 6 they are confident and articulate and looking forward to the next stage in their education. They learn to express themselves clearly and sensitively because of very good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills. Attendance is good because pupils want to come to school. Behaviour is excellent and all pupils show respect and consideration for each other. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Their cultural development is less well developed because opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural diversity are limited. A school council has been established where pupils have the opportunity to suggest improvements to the school. The strong Christian ethos of the school encourages all pupils to make a personal contribution to the wider community. Pupils' positive response to this can be seen through the many fundraising activities that they undertake. The emphasis on developing basic skills throughout the school means that pupils are well prepared for secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some lessons observed during the inspection being judged as outstanding and a small minority judged as satisfactory. Pupils' learning throughout the school is enhanced by the good relationships formed with staff and teachers' high expectations. Staff use praise and encouragement effectively and pupils respond well by working hard. Activities are structured well and the level of challenge is carefully matched to pupils' learning needs. There is a brisk pace which ensures that pupils work quickly and complete a good amount of work in the time given. Activities are interesting and linked to well-planned, cross curricular topics which capture the pupils' imagination and interest. For example, pupils were observed using their ICT skills to undertake research on deforestation in the rainforests.

In the best lessons, highly effective questioning by teachers makes pupils reflect on their learning and further develops their understanding. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were asked to predict the next step of a complex pattern and 'talk partners' were used most effectively to help them to determine the properties of a sequence of fractions. In a literacy lesson, pupils in Key Stage 1 had extended discussions about the possessions in a bag and whom they might belong to. The teaching created a sense of intrigue and excitement and the pupils responded

with exemplary attitudes to learning and extremely high levels of motivation and concentration. In the less effective lessons, the pace is slower and learning objectives are too broad, so the progress made by pupils is not as great as in the good lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It meets statutory requirements, is broad, well-balanced and exciting, so all pupils enjoy learning. Careful thought is given to the way the curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils develop the skills which will equip them for life-long learning. Challenging, cross-curricular work ensures the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is a strong inclusive ethos and the school ensures that all pupils have equal access to activities. A good example of this is the way in which the school has taught most pupils to use sign language. The curriculum is enriched by the wide range of extra-curricular clubs, visitors to school, educational visits and an annual residential trip for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Music is a particular strength of the school and the band and choir perform regularly in school and at outside events, such as the Diocesan 'Big Day Out'. Visitors to school include theatre groups, artists, the fire service and the 'Life Education Bus' which contributes well to pupils' understanding of how to keep themselves safe as they grow up. The local area is used well, enabling the children in Reception to go on a beach walk and older pupils to visit a local supermarket as part of a topic on making bread. All pupils in Key Stage 2 learn to speak French which they say they enjoy very much.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for all pupils. The staff have a high level of commitment to ensuring that all pupils enjoy being in school and are kept safe at all times. Excellent attention is given to those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensuring that they make good progress. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support pupils and they contribute to the good progress pupils make. The school works closely with a range of outside agencies to ensure the well-being of all pupils. The many educational visits are well planned with due care taken regarding health and safety arrangements. All statutory safeguarding measures are in place. Excellent transition arrangements are in place when pupils move to a new class and when they transfer to secondary school. The school works well with parents and carers, encouraging them to take a central part in their children's education through programmes such as the 'Better Reading Partnership' programme.

Academic guidance and the tracking of pupils' attainment and progress are excellent. There is a comprehensive tracking process in place which senior leaders use very well to check on pupils' progress. Where pupils do not make expected progress, this is identified quickly and effective intervention is put into place. Consequently, all groups of pupils achieve well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior leaders provide dedicated leadership and maintain a strong, inclusive ethos based on Christian principles. This results in pupils' excellent personal development and well-being and standards of attainment that are

above average and rising. The school's leadership team and governors are committed to continuous school improvement and have carefully identified the school's strengths and areas for development. Data are well used to target improvement and assessment information is collected rigorously and monitored carefully to ensure that pupils make good progress. Strategies to bring about improvement have been put into place and there is evidence of impact. For example, the school has increased the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in mathematics and science. The school sets very challenging targets and pupils understand the specific targets that they work towards in lessons to help them take the next steps in their learning.

The school knows its context and makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Information is shared well with governors and governance is good. Governors know the strengths of the school well and have a clear understanding of the key priorities for the school to improve further. There are effective procedures in place to review and develop school policies. The governors are highly supportive and offer a good level of challenge. The school provides good value for money.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

2 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Anne's on Sea, St Thomas' Church of England Primary School, Lancashire, FY8 1JN.

Thank you very much for welcoming my colleague and me when we inspected your school recently. We were very impressed with your excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning and your great enjoyment of school which is reflected in your good attendance. You showed great willingness to talk to us and your views were very helpful. You told us that lessons are fun and that you particularly enjoy the many extra-curricular clubs that the school provides. You enjoy learning to speak French as well as the many educational visits out of school, especially the residential trip for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6. You get on well with the adults in school and with each other. Please thank your parents for replying to the inspection questionnaire and let them know that we have taken their views into account.

Your school provides you with a good education overall, with outstanding provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You make good progress and achieve above average standards as the result of good teaching and learning. Even good schools can improve, so we have asked your school to look at two things to make it even better.

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all of it is consistently good or better.
- Ensure that all of you develop a better understanding of the different cultures in the UK, Europe and the wider world.

You can help by continuing to show excellent attitudes to learning, working hard and supporting your teachers and headteacher by always trying to do your best. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Andrée Keddle

Lead inspector