



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Beeston

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108021
Local authority Leeds
Inspection number 288000
Inspection dates 14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector Mr Ronald Cohen

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Barkly Road Beeston Leeds LS11 7JS
School category	Voluntary aided	Telephone number	0113 2141700
Age range of pupils	4–11	Fax number	0113 2772633
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair of governors	Mr Liam Thompson
Number on roll	213	Headteacher	Mrs M Laverty
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	March 2001		

Age group	Inspection date(s)	Inspection no.
4–11	14–15 March 2007	288000

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Anthony's Catholic Primary is a smaller than average school in South Leeds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little higher than the national average. A larger than average proportion of pupils belong to minority ethnic groups and increasing numbers of pupils for whom English is not their first language, enter the school at different years, including Year 6. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average.

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 in which pupils make good progress both academically and socially.

Children in Reception make good progress from their below average starting points. The high emphasis given to developing effective learning habits through independent and teacher-led activities results in most children reaching the standards expected by the time they start Year 1. Throughout Years 1 to 6, good teaching continues. However, the outstanding features seen in some lessons, particularly the use of assessment to aid pupils' learning, are not fully replicated across the school. Nevertheless, overall good teaching and a stimulating curriculum excite pupils, who consequently work hard. They generally take care to present their work well, although their writing is not as well developed as it could be. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national averages although standards in English, and particularly in writing, are not as high as those in mathematics. Standards in science are above average. Overall, pupils make good progress as they go through school. This is due to several interdependent factors. For example, all people associated with the school value highly its faith aspirations. These underpin its quality as a community in which all adults and pupils care for each other, so that pupils feel very secure and happy, and are eager to come to school. Pupils enjoy good relationships with the staff and say they like their teachers and the way they help them to learn. Pupils consequently have positive attitudes to learning and their attendance is above average.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good and is another key factor in their good academic and social achievement. This is because it leads to their good behaviour and increasing maturity as they go through the school. Pupils work together well in pairs and teams and develop good social skills, enthusiastically carrying out a range of responsibilities well. Their collections for a range of charities reflect their care and concern for others. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to eat healthily and take frequent exercise. The careful attention given to providing pupils with the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, while developing their personal attributes, prepares them well for the next stage in their education.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is a good role model and has successfully created a very effective team approach within the staff. They share a strong commitment to raising standards by providing pupils with a rich diet of experiences to ensure that they enjoy learning. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are thorough and well organised, and consequently the school has an accurate view of areas needing development. Very good links

with other partners, agencies and schools greatly enhance the learning opportunities for pupils. Governors are involved and provide good support and challenge.

Finances are well managed and the school provides good value for money. This, along with the effective steps taken to promote improvement since the previous inspection, demonstrates that it has a good capacity to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standards of writing throughout the school.
- Ensure that assessment is used consistently well to inform planning for teaching and learning.
- Replicate the best features of outstanding teaching throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below those expected for their age. They quickly develop an enthusiasm for learning and make good progress because they are presented with a rich variety of well organised activities. There are particular strengths in personal, social and emotional development, where many children exceed the goals expected. The good start in Reception is built upon well, resulting in broadly average standards by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, the relative weakness in writing is offset by the strength in science, and standards are average overall. From a below average starting point, this represents good achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because the support they are given meets their needs effectively. A dip in pupils' performance in 2006 was because of an unusually high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the year group. In addition, there were a significant number who had recently joined the school, including many pupils whose first language is not English, and a few pupils with challenging behaviour. The impact of a recent whole-school focus on improving writing is starting to pay dividends, although this is not yet seen in national test results. However, school data and inspection evidence indicate that pupils are now performing at least at national averages in all subjects and the school is on course to meet its new and demanding targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade:2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as is their understanding of healthy lifestyle choices. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils show kindness, care and consideration towards their fellow pupils and work together harmoniously. The school council represents its fellow pupils well and has worked hard with staff to improve playtimes with new equipment and organised games. Pupils willingly take on roles and responsibilities such as membership of the 'friendship squad' and the 'lunchtime fun crew'; they perform these duties with pride. Pupils feel safe at school and are well prepared to cope with risks, for example of drugs or smoking, which they may face out of school. Parents appreciate the 'family feel' of the school and are confident that their children are well cared for and safe. The heavily laden shelf of sporting trophies in the school entrance is a testament to the range of sporting activity enjoyed by the pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attendance is above average. Pupils' awareness of global issues is raised through a range of fundraising events for charities and multicultural activities such as the recent International Week where each class focused on the culture of different countries and shared their learning with the rest of the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade:2

Good quality teaching and learning leads to pupils making good progress throughout the school. However, lessons range in quality from satisfactory to outstanding. In most lessons, teachers plan the activities well and clearly explain at the outset what is to be learned. Their good class management skills ensure that classes are well ordered so that pupils learn in a calm but stimulating atmosphere. Clear explanations and effective questioning ensure that pupils know what they have to do. Pupils respond well to opportunities to discuss issues with their talking partners and in groups. Teachers use interactive whiteboards skilfully to make learning interesting and motivate pupils. Teaching assistants work well with teachers and effectively support pupils with additional learning needs who, as a result, make good progress. However, in some relatively less effective lessons, the more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the pace of the lesson is not rapid enough to continually engage the pupils.

In the drive to improve pupils' progress, most teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan lessons that offer pupils more challenge and

ensure a good pace of learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress and mark their work carefully, giving them clear guidance as to how they can improve. As yet, however, this is not consistent throughout the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade:2

The good curriculum places an appropriate focus on literacy and numeracy without sacrificing the broader elements of learning. Themed weeks such as the annual Health Week add enrichment and interest. Concerts, visitors and visits out of school add to the pupils' learning and their understanding of the world. A recent residential visit to a local activities centre, greatly enjoyed by Year 6, helped to develop pupils' self-esteem and broaden the curriculum with the practical application of skills learned in the classroom. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities, and links with partner schools add to these opportunities. Good provision in the Reception class for indoor and outdoor learning helps to create a stimulating learning environment. The school is working to extend and improve its curriculum planning by linking subjects and themes together and planning in a more thematic way. For example, in Year 3, pupils study French as a link to aspects of multicultural studies. In doing this, pupils build on the good practice already established at Key Stage 1.

Care, guidance and support

Grade:2

The school is a caring community and the health and safety of pupils have a high priority. This is recognised by parents, who believe their children are well cared for and safe. The staff are highly committed and provide a supportive and encouraging environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and confident. The learning mentor plays a key role in supporting the progress of vulnerable pupils. Good support systems help pupils with limited English and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. All pupils, even the very youngest, know their targets and how to improve their work. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and action is taken when they experience difficulties with their work. However, more effective support could be provided in some lessons to ensure that the most able pupils achieve as well as possible. Parents say they feel involved in school life and are given the information they need to help their children at home. All statutory regulations for the care, protection, health and safety of the pupils are in place.

Leadership and management

Grade:2

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, sets clear direction for the work of the school. Together, they make a strong team, which enjoys the support and the cooperation of the whole staff. There is a sharp focus on improving pupils' learning, progress and standards. This is set alongside the firm commitment to ensuring the highest levels of care and personal development. The headteacher has led the school positively through a challenging period, including the allocation of new management roles and an increasing number of pupils joining and leaving the school part way through their primary education. Furthermore, changing year group sizes mean that there is a continual challenge of organising pupils into manageable class sizes, while keeping within the constraints of the budget. She has coped with these challenges effectively and efficiently. Her understated assessment of some of the school's features, as set out in the school's self-evaluation documents, reflects her modesty rather than her real knowledge and understanding of her school. Governance is good. Governors ask the right questions to hold the school to account for its performance and check regularly for themselves how well it is doing. Monitoring and evaluation are thorough and rigorous. Any dips in performance are quickly identified and action is taken to remedy them. Strong links with the local community and other schools successfully enhance the learning opportunities presented to pupils.

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision (where applicable)	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The <i>standards</i> ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make <i>progress</i> , 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

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.

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?	2

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed, including the adequacy of staff, to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School, Beeston
Barkly Road
Beeston
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS11 7JS

16 March 2007

Dear Children

Following our visit to your school we would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We are thrilled to hear that you like your school so very much and you find your lessons interesting. We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school and that teaching is good. Your teachers are good at asking you to explain your ideas as this helps you to understand much more about your work. All staff take very good care of you and we are glad you feel safe in school and always have someone to talk to if you have a problem. Your behaviour and manners are very good and you should be really proud of yourselves because of this. We are amazed about how much you know about keeping healthy and taking care of yourselves.

You are very lucky to have such good Reception classes where we think you get a good start to your learning. This sets you up well, so by the time you leave school in Year 6, you are good at mathematics and science. Your English is coming on nicely but to get it up to the level of your other subjects, we have asked the headteacher and the teachers to continue to concentrate on this, especially on your writing. Although you are making good progress we think that in some classes, some of you could do better with your work. Your headteacher also thinks this. She is helping teachers to plan activities that make you all think hard and has asked teachers to expect some of you to learn a little bit faster. This will improve your learning even more. We have also asked her to make sure that all your teachers are clear about how they check up on how well you are learning and use this information to help you do even better.

Another good thing about your school is the many visits, visitors and after-school activities that you have. We think this makes the curriculum much more interesting. We also think that the way the school is decorated with all your good work is a real encouragement for you to continue to try your best.

Once again, thank you for your help and good luck for your future.

Ronald Cohen
Lead Inspector