

# St Pius X RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109252
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	356510
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jenny Batelen

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	125
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marion Patrick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Halloran
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Gatehouse Avenue Withywood, Bristol Bristol BS13 9AB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed eight lessons and seven teaching staff. They held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors also spoke to parents and carers as pupils were arriving at school. They observed the school's work, and looked at documents including the school development plan, safeguarding and welfare arrangements and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires from staff, pupils and 88 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well pupils are helped to be good learners and make progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The consistency of the quality of teaching and learning and how the information about pupils is used to promote positive outcomes for all.
- How the leadership and management of the school enable staff and pupils to do their best.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. It serves the southern side of Bristol. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with 16% from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average at 62%. A higher than average number of pupils join and leave the school at different stages throughout the year. The proportion of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average and these include a range of moderate learning needs. There are six classes, with one mixed-age class for pupils in Years 3 and 4. The school has achieved Healthy School Status and the Bristol Standard for Early Years Education. The breakfast club is managed by the governors.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Pius X Roman Catholic Primary is a satisfactory school. The school has a strong Catholic ethos which underpins the care given to all pupils, enabling them to feel very safe with some saying that school is 'like a second home'. Pupils behave well, and are welcoming and polite. They are keen to talk about what they are doing, how much they enjoy school and the activities they can be involved in. Parents and carers value the approachability of all staff and the support given to their children and also to the whole family. 'My children are very happy at St Pius' and 'This school does not just teach, they respect and take time to know people' are representative of the many positive comments from parents and carers.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have a very secure start to school. The thorough induction procedures mean that children are happy and confident in the bright and attractive learning environment. Progress for most pupils throughout the school is satisfactory but those with special educational needs and/or disabilities often make good progress because of the well-targeted interventions. The language-rich environment supports this progress although progress for some pupils is hindered by their poor attendance and/or punctuality and overall attendance rates are low. Attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there is variation. In the better lessons pupils work hard at tasks that challenge them, are actively involved throughout the lesson and are helped to assess how well they have done. Hands-on, practical activities engage pupils in their learning. Staff and pupils have worked together to identify what makes a good learner and pupils value this as it helps them in their lessons. Where learning is less successful, pupils often sit for too long listening to their teacher and they are not always helped to understand how to improve their work. The school's focus on using marking to help pupils understand how well they have done, whether they have met the learning objective and how they can improve, is not yet used consistently across the school.

Leaders and managers work together to evaluate the school's effectiveness and have an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. There are clear priorities for improvement, rightly focused on raising standards, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils' progress is tracked and this is used to identify and put in place appropriate interventions. The senior leaders in the school have had many challenges to face in the past few years, but developments in key areas have been made. The school recognises that there is more to be done and are now beginning to focus more sharply on key priorities; for example, they are aware of the need to involve parents and carers more in their children's learning. Governors are developing their skills and provide effective support. They are beginning to provide more challenge. In this small school, all staff have responsibilities and are

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developing as effective leaders within a team. As a result the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Increase attainment and rates of progress, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - ensuring consistently good teaching across the school, so that all pupils are actively engaged at all times in lessons
  - using marking to focus pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Involve parents and carers more in their children's learning by:
  - encouraging pupils' prompt and regular attendance
  - providing further opportunities for parents and carers to engage with and understand how to support their children in school.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Achievement for most pupils is satisfactory. They start school with skill levels well below those expected for their age, particularly in speech and language and in calculation. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is just below average and on a rising trend. Pupils are able to make satisfactory progress in their lessons because they understand their work and are keen to do well. This was particularly apparent in a good Year 2 lesson where pupils successfully used a 'steps to success' framework to support their problem-solving in mathematics. Progress for different groups of pupils is similar. Progress for pupils who join the school at times other than at the start of a key stage is often good, as their needs are understood and met.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They also understand how to act safely when using modern technology and are confident of the help they will receive from all adults in the school if they have concerns or worries. They play well together across the age groups with the older pupils devising games to involve the younger ones. They say that they have no concerns about bullying and have a good understanding of the school behaviour policy, supported by the 'Playground Promise'. Pupils know how to keep healthy through what they eat and regularly engage in physical exercise, reflected in their Healthy Schools Status. They have a thorough understanding of the dangers of the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

Pupils are able to contribute to the life of the school. The democratically elected school council has been involved in decisions regarding tree planting for increased shade in the playground and in the designing of a memorial garden. Increasingly, the council is being encouraged to take the initiative in decision making. Pupils make a strong contribution to their local community, particularly through the church and through links with residents in local sheltered housing. Pupils confidently use information and communication technology and are developing the ability to apply their basic skills of literacy and numeracy in a range of contexts. Although attendance is low, there is good evidence of how the school has worked with individuals and families to improve attendance and punctuality and consequently the progress made by those pupils. The breakfast club contributes to

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improved attendance and punctuality for some pupils, while ensuring a healthy start to the day.

Opportunities to play a range of musical instruments, be involved in drama, study works of art and to read and hear a range of classic stories increase pupils' understanding of art, music and literature. They are able to study faiths and cultures other than their own and have recently begun to develop an understanding of life for others in the United Kingdom and around the world through the links created with other St Pius schools. ♦

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, well-planned activities and effective questioning enable pupils to make good progress. They are enthusiastic and respond well to the teachers' passion for what they are teaching. Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils responded well to their teacher's enthusiasm for times tables practice and highlighting the common multiples in a session involving clapping and much fun! In less successful lessons, pupils sit for too long with insufficient challenge to their thinking. Marking in books does not always relate to the learning objective and opportunities are missed to celebrate good work and point to the next steps in learning. Some pupils understand their targets, but these are not referred to when books are marked. Other adults in the classroom are very effective in supporting pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All adults in the school

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are involved in ensuring that pupils feel valued, safe and secure and as a result strong relationships are a positive feature in enabling pupils to make progress. Well-established relationships with outside agencies ensure strong support for pupils who face challenging circumstances.

A broad range of experiences is provided to enhance the curriculum, particularly through the opportunities to work with professional footballers and work with the secondary school. Cross-curricular links and practical activities are sometimes apparent, but not consistently. Drama is used well in the classroom to develop pupils' understanding of their learning. Recently introduced enrichment days and gifted and talented workshops are beginning to encourage parents and carers to be involved in their children's learning. Science has been given a higher profile by the increased use of experiments and the recording of these in class 'Big Books'.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher is very committed to the school and to ensuring a safe and secure environment in which all pupils can flourish. He is well supported by equally committed staff and governors. The quality of teaching and learning is assessed using a range of methods, including coaching and observation. However, it is recognised that this needs to be more tightly focused and include training to give a deeper understanding of what constitutes good and outstanding teaching and learning.

Governors have a secure knowledge of the context of the school and this enables them to give effective support. They utilise their knowledge and skills for the benefit of the school. They now have a much better informed knowledge of the factors that affect school improvement and are more rigorous in challenging the leadership team. Targets set are appropriate and often challenging. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and parents and carers are given the opportunities to respond to policy development. The suitability of adults to work with pupils is taken very seriously and colour-coded badges inform all, including pupils, if the adult may work with pupils alone. Although the school is working hard to encourage parents and carers to become more involved in the life of the school there is scope for them to be supported in taking a more active role in their children's learning.

The leaders and managers have identified that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are currently making better progress than their peers, because of support given. Leaders are now working to ensure that all pupils can make equally good progress. Any identified discrimination is tackled appropriately. The school has an in-depth

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understanding of its social, economic and ethnic context and has recently put in place links with schools in contrasting localities, both in the United Kingdom and globally. As a result, pupils have begun to understand the differences and similarities between themselves and pupils around the world and want to make connections in a range of ways.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures a comprehensive induction process which enables children to make a safe and happy start to school. Parents and carers are encouraged to come into the classroom and to work with their children first thing in the morning. This gives the opportunity for the sharing of information and establishing relationships. Comments from parents and carers told of the 'brilliant school, teachers know everyone' and 'It makes my son happy, he loves coming'.

Children enter school with a range of skill levels, mostly well below those expected for their age. There is an emphasis on developing spoken language and an understanding of subject specific language. As a result, children make good progress and enter Key Stage 1 with below average skill levels. Progress in personal development is a strength, developing children's attitudes to learning. There is a strong transition process so that children are able to move on well through the school.

The adults' thorough understanding of the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that activities are planned that support children's learning and development as reflected in the award of the Bristol Standard. Good use is made of ongoing assessments to identify the next areas for development. 'Learning journals' chart children's progress, and parents and carers value the opportunity to contribute to these. All adults contribute to good learning and progress through skilled questioning and appropriate

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interventions. Good support from the senior leadership of the school enables improvements to be made.

Children engage in a range of activities, both adult-led and child-initiated. The theme of the gingerbread man was followed through in a range of activities. For example, children made their own puppets to retell the story as well as using commercially produced puppets, and the gingerbread man helped children to order and position numbers to 10 and 20, both inside and outside. The school recognises that their use of the outside area is currently limited by the weather and storage of equipment, but there are plans to improve access opportunities.

The children keep themselves healthy through a range of activities and eating healthy snacks and lunches. They know how to keep themselves safe and are involved with the whole school in fund-raising events.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	2
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 proportion of questionnaires returned is above average for similar sized primary schools. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. The returned questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive. Parents and carers praise the welcoming, supportive, caring and nurturing approach of the school and the approachability of the staff. They value the progress their children make. Overall, inspection evidence endorsed these views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Pius X 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.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	73	22	25	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	77	19	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	66	29	33	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	67	27	31	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	58	66	30	34	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	58	34	39	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	55	38	43	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)	42	48	41	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	49	56	38	43	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	60	29	33	4	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	53	37	42	4	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	60	68	25	28	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	63	72	25	28	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.

**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.**



17 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Pius X RC Primary School, Bristol BS13 9AB**

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you also to those of you who returned questionnaires about your school. We enjoyed joining in your lessons and talking to you. Here are some of the things we found out about your school.

- You behave well around school and look after each other well.
- You enjoy school and feel very safe, knowing that all the adults care a lot about you.
- You appreciate chances to improve your school and to help others in your community and the wider world.
- You feel that your teachers do a lot to help you with your work.

Your school is satisfactory overall and we have asked your headteacher and the governors to do certain things to make it better. These are:

- to help you make faster progress in all the subjects you learn by making sure you always have lots of things to think about
- marking your work so that you know exactly how well you have done and how to improve
- involving you in planning your work
- to work with your parents and carers so that you attend school as much as possible and always arrive on time.

You can help by making sure you continue to try your best in all lessons and come to school every day on time.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Batelen  
Lead inspector

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