

# St Pius X RC Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109252
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bristol, City of
<b>Inspection number</b>	288326
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Lewis

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

---

<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 on roll</b>	
School	107
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mary Regan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anthony Halloran
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Gatehouse Avenue Withywood Bristol BS13 9AB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01173 772165
<b>Fax number</b>	01173 772166

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	288326

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. Many of their families face social and economic challenges and half of pupils qualify for free school meals. Most children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding well below the levels expected for their age. There are four classes: one is solely for reception children and there are three mixed-age classes for older pupils. The school has suffered from significant and continuous staff upheaval over an extended period. Prior to the appointment of the current headteacher, in September 2006, the school was led for four years by a series of acting headteachers.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Pius X provides a satisfactory education. It has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and knows what needs to be done to improve what it currently offers. The headteacher has successfully led the school forward this year following a long period of staffing upheaval, which had resulted in low standards and unsatisfactory progress by pupils year on year. Initiatives introduced by the headteacher are already having a positive effect on several aspects of the school's work. Most importantly, pupils' achievement is now satisfactory, with children in the Reception class making a good start because of the good provision for them. Standards remain below average, but there has been improvement, particularly in English. Standards remain too low in mathematics and science and throughout the school more able pupils do not do well enough.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as is illustrated by their improved attendance and behaviour. They develop a satisfactory understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and are developing their skills in taking responsibility for themselves and others. Improving the relationships with parents has been one of the new headteacher's key priorities during his first year and the result of this is that the great majority of parents are very supportive of the school, one commenting: 'I wouldn't choose any other school in this area – my child has learnt so much already and really enjoys being in school.'

Weaknesses in teaching have been effectively tackled and teaching is now satisfactory. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory, but teachers' planning does not always provide enough challenge for the more able pupils. The satisfactory curriculum is enriched by a good range of well attended after-school activities and visits. The school provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for pupils and now has satisfactory systems for the analysis of data to check the progress of individuals. There are developing and improving partnerships with outside agencies which support pupils' development effectively. The school has successfully weathered the significant difficulties of recent years and has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children make good progress in their first year at school because the teaching and provision are good. There is a good balance between adult-initiated activities and activities that children tackle independently. The recently improved outdoor area is being fully utilised to provide children with a wide range of interesting and exciting activities.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in mathematics by improving pupils' problem-solving strategies and in science by improving the opportunities for regular, practical investigative work.
- Ensure that more able pupils throughout the school are consistently challenged to reach their potential.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Children start school in Reception with language and number skills well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in their first year because of good teaching and support but, in spite of this, standards are still below average by the time pupils enter Year 1. Pupils now make satisfactory progress as they move through the rest of the school. They have not moved fast enough to catch up and standards are below average in national tests and assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6. To some extent this is due to historic disruptions in teaching and leadership which led to gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. This continues to have a negative effect on pupils' learning, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Another contributory factor to the low standards is the disruption that half of the current Year 6 pupils faced because they joined the school relatively recently. The relatively few pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age is another reason for the low standards. This is because more able pupils are not consistently challenged. The large group of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make steady progress, but do not reach the standards expected for their age.

As a consequence of improved behaviour management strategies, better use of data to set targets and more careful monitoring of individual pupils, standards are improving, particularly in English.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

The strong, caring relationships in the school underpin a supportive environment in which pupils develop positive attitudes towards their learning. Behaviour is now satisfactory because successful whole school strategies ensure that pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. The 'playground promise' system is particularly successful in supporting them to play well together. Pupils understand the factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle, especially the need to eat healthy foods. Attendance is steadily improving due to stringent procedures and pupils' improved understanding of the importance of coming to school regularly. Pupils respond particularly well to the competitive aspect of the weekly attendance shield. Pupils say that isolated incidents of bullying are quickly dealt with, so that they feel safe at school. The spiritual development of pupils is good and this is enhanced successfully by the reflection areas in each classroom. Pupils have sound opportunities to contribute to the life of the school through the newly formed school council and through school consultations, for example, by contributing to the new teaching and learning policy. Pupils currently have limited opportunities to develop a better understanding of the world of work. As a result of their satisfactory personal development and improving standards in key skills, pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Classroom routines are made clear and regularly reinforced, which ensures learning takes place in a well structured environment in which all pupils can contribute. In most cases, classroom organisation is good and pupils are managed well. As a result, relationships and behaviour are

much improved and most pupils behave well in lessons and listen carefully to teachers. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that pupils who need extra help are given it. Teaching is consistently good in the Reception class. In spite of recent improvements in the quality of teaching it is no better than satisfactory in other classes. This is because work planned to meet the needs of different groups of pupils does not always ensure that more able pupils are challenged as well as they could be. In all year groups pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own progress against clear criteria and, as a result, are beginning to take more responsibility for their own learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is broad and balanced. There is an appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science, and a determination to improve standards in these areas by improving planning. The Foundation Stage curriculum meets the needs of children well. Recent changes to planning have improved the provision of work to match the abilities of most pupils within the mixed-age classes. The level of challenge provided for the more able pupils is still not high enough. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills particularly, but not exclusively, in mathematics and science. A good range of extra-curricular clubs enhances the curriculum and the 'Reward club' and 'Study Buddies' are popular with pupils and add to their enjoyment of the curriculum. French has recently been introduced to Years 3 and 4 and 'reading partners' from local industry make a good contribution to pupils' learning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides good personal support for its pupils. Induction procedures are very helpful in helping new pupils quickly adjust to life in school. Reception children observed on their first full day of school were confident and were already beginning to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. The learning mentor plays a key role in supporting pupils with their behaviour, as does the 'Families and Schools Together' worker. Sound links are in place with external agencies to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's procedures to protect children are clear and secure. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving. A new assessment and tracking system enables the school to check the progress of individual pupils on a termly basis, and the school is making better use of tracking systems to set targets and to plan intervention strategies for those slipping behind. Although there are signs that this is beginning to lead to improvements in progress, it is still in its very early stages of implementation. Pupils know and understand their personal targets and this is helping them to understand ways that they might improve their work and the next steps in their learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has worked hard and successfully to develop a common sense of purpose amongst staff and the more stable staffing and leadership situation has enabled the school to move forward with improvements in planning, assessment and the curriculum. The school development plan accurately prioritises the important areas for development. One of the most significant changes is the improvement in how the school tracks individual pupils' academic progress. This has led to an improvement in the speed with which intervention strategies, such

as those designed to support pupils making less than expected progress, are employed. The focus on core subjects is beginning to raise standards but there is still more to do to get them to average levels. Core subject co-ordinators are developing a secure overview of the standards of teaching in their subjects and are demonstrating an appropriate sense of urgency in introducing initiatives to overcome any weaknesses in their subjects. The school is keen to promote equality of opportunity for pupils. It is rightly proud of its reputation as a very inclusive school and is successful in welcoming and supporting pupils joining the school midway through their primary education. It has been more successful in supporting lower-attaining pupils and those with learning and/or behaviour difficulties than in providing appropriate challenge for more capable pupils. The governing body provides satisfactory support for the school and meets legal and other obligations.

**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](http://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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

17 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Pius X Roman Catholic Primary School, Withywood, BS13 9AB

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit.

St Pius X is a satisfactory school. You are making steady progress, but not doing as well as other children of your age. We were very pleased to learn that your behaviour has improved to satisfactory and that your attendance is improving. You told us that there are many things to do and enjoy. We know that you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do. This is because your headteacher and staff are pulling together to help you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure you understand how to look after yourselves. They know what needs to be done to make the school better. As a result the teaching and the work planned for you are now satisfactory and good in the Reception class where children get off to a quick start.

We have asked your school to do some things to make it better:

- Plan more investigations and problem solving activities in mathematics and science.
- Make sure that children who find learning easy have harder work.

We are confident that, with your help, the school will improve still further.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis Lead inspector

17 September 2007

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Pius X Roman Catholic Primary School, Withywood, BS13 9AB**

I would like to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school. My colleague and I very much enjoyed our visit.

St Pius X is a satisfactory school. You are making steady progress, but not doing as well as other children of your age. We were very pleased to learn that your behaviour has improved to satisfactory and that your attendance is improving. You told us that there are many things to do and enjoy. We know that you work hard and try to succeed in all that you do. This is because your headteacher and staff are pulling together to help you to learn and enjoy your lessons. They make sure you understand how to look after yourselves. They know what needs to be done to make the school better. As a result the teaching and the work planned for you are now satisfactory and good in the Reception class where children get off to a quick start.

We have asked your school to do some things to make it better:

- Plan more investigations and problem solving activities in mathematics and science.
- Make sure that children who find learning easy have harder work.

We are confident that, with your help, the school will improve still further.

I wish you well in your future education.

Yours sincerely

Clive Lewis  
Lead inspector