

# St Pancras Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124785
<b>Local Authority</b>	SUFFOLK
<b>Inspection number</b>	293114
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Blakelock

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 on roll</b>	192
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Father R Frost
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Barker
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 April 2002
<b>School address</b>	Stratford Road Ipswich Suffolk IP1 6EF
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 742074
<b>Fax number</b>	

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average and growing school which is popular and over-subscribed. It serves urban and rural areas in and around the town. Children start here with levels of knowledge and skills which are below those expected nationally. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average although a below average proportion has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the number for which English is an additional language are lower than that found nationally but a growing number of pupils from East European countries are joining the school. The number of pupils joining and leaving the school at other than the usual times is above average. A building programme has resulted in improved provision for learning. The school has achieved Investor in People status and was awarded 'Activemark' in 2006.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Inspectors confirm the school's judgement that this is a good school. It is a view which is shared by parents. They tell of a school with 'a devoted headteacher, where all pupils are encouraged to achieve their best and in which their individual talents are noticed and supported.' The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, provides good value for money and demonstrates good capacity to improve further.

It is the good leadership and management of the school and particularly that of the headteacher that are pivotal in driving the school forward. Planning for the future, which involves staff and governors, focuses clearly on the priority needs of the school which knows itself well. The good progress that the school is making is strengthened by the teamwork of staff and their support for each other. However, middle managers do not know effectively about the progress that pupils are making which would enable them to raise standards further in their subject areas. Governors are effective partners in the school because they question its work rigorously.

Every action taken by the school is underpinned by the teachings of the Catholic faith. In this happy school, Christian love, care and respect shine throughout the school day and are seen in pupils' care and consideration towards each other. This contributes to their outstanding spiritual development. Their personal development is good. They enjoy school because the learning opportunities that they are given are broad. They know that they have an important role to play, through the school council and other leadership and responsibility roles, in the future shaping of the school. They are also secure here because of the good pastoral care that is in place. This includes detailed procedures to ensure that they are safe and protected. The school works well in partnership with outside agencies to support those who have particular concerns or issues. Pupils' care, guidance and support are sound. The academic guidance they are given is presently satisfactory because many pupils are unclear about the levels at which they are working and teachers' marking of their work does not often tell them how to improve.

All pupils are making good progress. In 2006 the school was in the top 10% nationally for progress and in the top 2% for science. Although children start here with standards that are below average, an exciting range of learning activities means that they make effective and rapid progress in the Foundation Stage. Good progress continues through Key Stage 1 and 2 so that pupils left Year 6 in 2006 with standards that were average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Pupils are reaching challenging targets. Achievement is effective because teaching and learning are good. Teachers' careful planning and their good knowledge of their subjects lead to pupils' positive attitudes to learning. They are benefiting from the improved provision for information and communications technology (ICT) which is enabling them to develop new competences and learn in different ways. They are well supported by effective teaching assistants. The curriculum is satisfactory but it is good in the Foundation Stage partly because the new building and outdoor area are offering wider learning experiences. Teachers through the school are increasingly organising lessons across subjects so that learning is becoming more meaningful and creative. Pupils say that a really good addition to the day is the varied range of after school clubs and activities which help them to discover new skills and talents.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' marking of work always tells pupils the levels at which they are working and how to move on to the next level in their learning.

- Focus the role of middle managers firmly on school assessment information so that they have full knowledge of achievement in their subjects and are therefore able to lead staff in raising standards.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well. The standards they attain overall are average by the end of Year 6 and above average in science. Inspection evidence shows that all pupils, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities, make good progress and in 2006 the school was in the top 10% nationally. Significant factors in this are the high expectations of staff and consistently good teaching. This is evidenced in the outstanding progress made in science. Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of knowledge and skills which are below those found nationally, especially in literacy. They make good progress which continues through Key Stage 1 and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In Year 6 in 2006 pupils reached standards which were in line with the national average. From the starting points of these pupils, which were below average, their results demonstrate good progress. Results of pupils working at higher levels show a rising trend in both key stages. The school has set challenging targets for 2007 which they are confident will be achieved.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good, including their social, moral and cultural development. Their spiritual development is outstanding in a school where Christian values are the basis of all learning. Attendance levels are good. Behaviour is good in lessons and delightful at break-times, when pupils play extremely well together. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, enjoy their physical education lessons and sports and know how to eat healthily. They really appreciate the new outdoor play area which can be used in all weather conditions. Although relatively new, the school council is having a significant influence. An example of this is when it decided to ban 'play fighting' to prevent children from being worried. Pupils are involved well in the wider community by raising money or donating gifts. They are effectively developing skills for their future lives by working cooperatively and looking after each other. Pupils are beginning to assess their own work but this is at an early stage of development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good. Teachers' planning is detailed and is based on their good subject knowledge and assessments of what pupils have previously learned. They have high expectations of pupils so that work, for example, is always neat and well presented. From the Foundation Stage pupils are helped to work independently and in groups. Pupils with particular needs are supported sensitively, enabling them to get the best from lessons. Marking is carried out promptly and accurately. While it often encourages pupils, it does not often offer clear statements about what they have achieved in relation to the objectives of the lesson, or what they should do to improve further. Nevertheless, teachers and assistants work actively alongside pupils, challenging them well.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum across the school is satisfactory because it meets the needs of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the more able. The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is good, with carefully planned use of the new classroom and outside space providing a stimulating resource for the youngest pupils. A strong sense of culture and values successfully promote pupils' personal development as well as specific teaching. The school has rightly placed great emphasis on supporting pupils' learning in English and mathematics, focusing the development of core skills in these subjects. A developing area is the grouping together of subjects to allow for more creative learning. The number of computers has been increased significantly and these are used well to improve pupils' skills. Visits to places of interest are used regularly to enhance learning. A wide range of extra-curricular activities that are well attended adds further to what is taught.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. The day-to-day pastoral care offered by the staff is of a high quality and supported by good relationships. There are procedures in place for protecting and safeguarding pupils and for developing effective relationships with outside agencies. Good preparation for pupils joining the school, including those from other countries, ensures that these groups can settle well to learning. Pupils feel safe and effectively cared for, confident that they can talk with adults if they have any concerns. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory. The school analyses overall performance data thoroughly, but this is not used consistently to drive further progress. The provision and use of targets for improvement varies between classes. In addition, the quality of teachers' verbal feedback to pupils is not consistent, so pupils do not always know what they have to do next to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, well supported by his senior management team, provides particularly strong leadership. His vision and steely determination to drive forward improvement, supported by great teamwork from staff, are significant factors in the good quality education provided here. The school's work is strengthened by the extremely high expectations that it has of itself, despite several temporary staffing absences and its accurate understanding of its strengths and areas to improve. Self-evaluation is used well and very careful planning for the future is in place. This includes professional development of staff which is linked closely to sustaining and building on the good progress that pupils are making. Middle managers are building up their roles although their knowledge of the levels at which pupils are working in their subject areas is not detailed enough for them to drive improvement. Governance is strong. Governors understand the school well and challenge it effectively because they are very involved in its work and progress.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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
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	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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>	2
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 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, 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**

29 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Stratford Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 6EF

Thank you for making Mr Herbert and me so welcome when we visited you recently. We were very pleased to meet you and to have the opportunity to talk to so many of you about your school. Congratulations on your drama presentation during mass. It was superb because it showed your good acting skills and your understanding of the meaning of Easter.

Your school is a good school. Your parents think so, too. It is a happy school and you enjoy being here. You work hard and make good progress in your learning. Mr Barker leads the school very well. He and the staff have high expectations of your behaviour and it was good to see how well you look after and care for each other. You told us that the school council is just one of the ways that the school is helping you to take responsibility and become leaders. You like learning through ICT and enjoy the growing number of clubs and activities that take place outside lessons.

We know that your school can be even better. The teachers are going to make sure that from now on you always know the levels at which you are working. When they mark your books they will include what you have to do to improve your work. We have also asked teachers in charge of subjects to make sure that they have all the information about the progress that you are making in their subject so that they can check that you are making as much progress as you should be.

I send you our best wishes for the future.

Lynne Blakelock

Lead inspector