

# St Louis Roman Catholic Primary

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124768
<b>Local Authority</b>	SUFFOLK LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	315049
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Speakman

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	185
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr John Morrill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Teresa Selvey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Fordham Road Newmarket Suffolk CB8 7AA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01638 662719
<b>Fax number</b>	01638 660572

---

<b>Age group</b>	3–9
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 November 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	315049

---

© 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 average size school takes predominantly Catholic children from a wide area. The number of pupils taking free school meals is below average. Pupils come from a diverse range of backgrounds. There is an increasing number with English as an additional language. Many come from Eastern European families. Attainment on entry is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There has been a high turnover of staff in the last year, including a new headteacher, acting headteacher and two new class teachers.

## 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 where pupils achieve well. It gives good value for money. The school successfully places a very high priority on caring for pupils and creating a supportive environment. Consequently, pupils' personal development is outstanding. They develop and learn effectively. Pupils certainly enjoy school greatly. Pupils say 'The school is always there to support us.' while others say 'St. Louis is just like one big happy family.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and personal development is outstanding. Behaviour in lessons and at break times is excellent and pupils feel safe from any form of intimidating behaviour. Older pupils have jobs that help the school run smoothly. Pupils who work as playground befrienders are valued by those they help. Pupils know how to eat healthily and take part in the good opportunities to stay physically fit. They are prepared well for the next stages of their education.

The school has been through a difficult period. Standards at the end of Year 4 dropped. Although they were in line with national averages they were not as good as the school would have liked. In the past, pupils at Year 3 made insufficient progress but managed to make up some lost ground in Year 4. The governors and previous headteacher worked to remedy this situation. On appointment, the current headteacher took further decisive action, appointed new staff and allocated them to classes where their skills and expertise could be used to best effect. This has been successful. Pupils now achieve well overall and standards at Year 4 are once again above age-related expectations. Progress is generally good but is still somewhat uneven because the quality of teaching and learning varies from outstanding to satisfactory. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 4. The school is rightly working to ensure that progress is more even throughout the school.

The headteacher has made a good start at leading the school. In the short time that she has been in post, she has won the confidence of the staff, pupils and parents. They all speak highly of her. She has worked effectively with the senior leadership team, subject leaders and governors, quickly identifying the main areas to improve in order to take the school forward. Areas for improvement, together with appropriate actions, are documented in a good quality school improvement plan. This is guiding the school's work well. However, the plan is for the current year only and does not project far enough into the future. Leaders and managers are not therefore able to prioritise important aspects of the schools' long term development. Nevertheless, school self-evaluation is good. It takes into account the views of all staff and governors and forms the basis of school improvement. The effectiveness of its self-evaluation is demonstrated through staff reorganisation and in the restoration of above-average standards at Year 4. The school therefore has a good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children get a good start in the Foundation Stage and progress well because the provision is good. Staff use thorough on-going assessment to plan a good range of learning opportunities that are well matched to children's needs. They have a secure understanding of how young children learn and teaching is good. There is a good balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed learning experiences and staff use all space, including the outdoor area, to children's benefit. There is a clear progression in the style of teaching and learning between the Nursery and Reception, moving from learning primarily through play to introducing formal learning, which prepares children well for Key Stage 1.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good in all classes so that pupils make good, steady progress as they move through the school.
- Extend the time-scale of the school improvement plan so that it gives more long-term guidance for school leaders as they move the school into the next stages of its development.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. When they arrive, most children's attainment is typical for their age, but there is a growing number with little or no English so overall their attainment in communication, language and literacy is below that expected. Children progress well, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in language development. By the end of Reception they are exceeding national expectations. Many comfortably tackle Year 1 work. Standards at Key Stage 1 are above average. Latest teacher assessments show a drop in reading and mathematics, but writing standards remained above average. This represents good progress as a larger than usual number of pupils joined the school part way through the key stage, most with little or no English. Attainment at the end of Year 4 is above that expected for their age. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language make good progress.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say 'learning is fun'. Attendance is satisfactory; it is not good because a number of families take holidays in term time. Social skills are developed very well through a wide range of sporting, musical and other extracurricular activities. Pupils develop a very strong moral code and a willingness to care for and help others. Special curriculum days and internationally themed weeks ensure pupils have a good understanding of other cultures. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities. They willingly organise successful fund-raising activities, which benefit local and international communities. School council representatives take their responsibilities seriously and influence what happens in school. Pupils are polite, friendly and their behaviour is excellent. Pupils eat healthy foods and take regular exercise. Good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills, combined with pupils' excellent work ethic and ability to work co-operatively, form a good foundation for their future education.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching and learning is good overall, although there is still some variation in its quality. Strong relationships with pupils, sensitive management of behaviour, and high expectations mean that pupils have extremely positive approaches to learning. Lessons generally run smoothly because they are interesting and well presented. As a result, pupils' attention is held and they enjoy learning and taking part. The quality of marking varies. Some is useful to pupils as it points out what they do well and what they need to improve. In contrast, some untidy pieces of work and mistakes are accepted uncritically. The school recognises the need to ensure that good practice

is implemented consistently across the school. Matching of work to pupils' needs is usually good and it is clear that teachers generally consider pupils' prior attainment when planning lessons. In a few lessons, there is scope to use assessment data more robustly when planning activities. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to support pupils who need extra support, so that they progress as well as others in their class.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is broad, balanced and interesting. It fully meets statutory requirements and pupils have the chance to learn French. A very good range of visits and visitors adds interest to pupils' learning. In addition, activity days and weeks such as 'India Day' and 'Magic Carpet Week' are much enjoyed by pupils and make a strong contribution to their cultural awareness. A large number of pupils attend an interesting range of after school clubs. The school is sensibly planning to review the curriculum with a view to introducing a more cross-curricular approach to add further interest and meaning to learning. Personal, social and health education is planned well. It ensures pupils are aware of health and safety issues and makes a strong contribution to the development of their moral and social skills.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The welfare of the pupils is central to the work of the school and the pastoral support provided is excellent. A very caring and supportive Catholic ethos results in happy, well-motivated pupils who clearly love their school. Safeguarding procedures are secure and regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are robust. The support provided for vulnerable pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language is good. As a result, they make good progress. The school has recognised the need to improve further the recording of progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans. Effective links with a wide range of external agencies ensures that support is matched well to individual needs. Very effective induction procedures ensure a smooth transition into middle school and pupils feel they are helped to make informed choices.

Pupils know their learning targets and most are given good feedback that lets them know how well they are doing. Although attendance levels are about average, the school is working to reduce the number of families taking holidays in term time. There has been a 1% improvement this year.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides strong and focused leadership. In the short time she has been in post, she has quickly created a strong feeling of teamwork. Staff share a common purpose of promoting both the academic and personal development of all pupils. Performance is monitored well. Teaching and learning are carefully checked. There is an established programme of assessments to monitor standards and achievement and the headteacher has started recording data in a more organised way. This enables her and other staff to track individual and group progress effectively. Recording systems are under review. Indications are that the revisions will

provide an even more useful profile of all pupils' progress. The governors fulfil their commitments well. They have recognised that they need to develop their formal monitoring role and arrangements are in hand to do this by establishing a new committee with this responsibility. They have managed significant changes at senior level well and have achieved change with minimal disruption to the school.

**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).**



## 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?	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?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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 the 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

<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	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 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**

21 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Louis RC Primary School, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7AA

We really enjoyed the time we spent in your school and would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We particularly enjoyed the opportunities we had to talk with you in lessons and at other times during the two days. You go to a good school. We are pleased to see that you appreciate what teachers and other adults in school are doing to give you a good start. It was clear from what you said about your school that you enjoy being there very much. We could also tell this from the excellent behaviour we saw throughout our time with you. The way in which you look after each other, speak kindly about other children and contribute to life in school is very pleasing. All this helps you to settle in quickly and feel safe.

Your headteacher has not been with you very long, but she and the teachers have made a good start at working together to make your good school even better. Many good things have already been done this year but there are still some things to do. I have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make sure that all your lessons are good or better so that you can all do even better. You can play your part too by continuing to cooperate and behave as well as you do. I have also asked your headteacher to make sure that the plan which is written to help guide the improvements to the school is for three or more years not just one year.

Thank you again for making us feel so welcome.

We wish all of you well for the future.

David Speakman

Lead inspector