

# St Edmund's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103440
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	336083
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Tolley

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	187
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Theresa Paszkowski
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Mary O'Friel
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Rosebery Street Springhill Birmingham
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons were observed, all teachers were seen and meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's analysis of pupils' progress, improvement plans and 37 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils, particularly that of more able pupils, to ascertain whether teaching is challenging enough
- the effectiveness of middle leaders and managers in driving improvement
- the impact of the creative curriculum on raising standards and on improving pupils' attitudes towards learning.

## Information about the school

St Edmund's Catholic Primary school is smaller than average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over a quarter are of Black Caribbean origin. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is well above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is average. The school has some difficulties recruiting staff and, at the time of the inspection, is in the process of appointing an additional senior teacher. The headteacher oversees the work of both St Edmund's and its sister school, St Patrick's. The school runs a breakfast and after school club for its pupils. It has achieved the Activemark award.

**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 Edmund's is a satisfactory school. It is improving rapidly and has some good features. Good care and support are at the heart of the school. The school works very effectively in partnership with parents and carers and with a range of outside agencies to remove barriers to learning and to support pupils in their learning. Pupils are confident and express their views clearly. They respect and care for each other and reflect on their own actions as well as moral and ethical issues. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and typically say, 'My teachers help me a lot'.

Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make good progress from often very low starting points. They enter Year 1 with standards below those expected for their age but are confident learners, well equipped to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum. During Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make satisfactory progress. In 2009 their attainment at the end of year 6 was slightly but not significantly below average in English and mathematics, although was lower than average in science.

Teaching is satisfactory overall. There are instances of good and outstanding teaching but this is not yet consistent across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress as a result of the well focused support they receive in lessons. Other pupils make satisfactory progress. Assessment information is not always used as effectively as it might be in lesson planning to ensure that pupils, particularly middle and higher attainers, are effectively and consistently challenged to achieve their best. Pupils' progress is closely tracked so that any difficulties can rapidly be identified and appropriate support given where necessary. Nonetheless, pupils themselves are not always aware of their targets and do not always know how they can improve their work. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to do well. When given the opportunity to explore ideas for themselves and work collaboratively with others to solve problems, they organise themselves well and make good progress, but opportunities are often missed for them to do this.

The curriculum is satisfactory and teachers are beginning to use this imaginatively to capture pupils' interest and to enable them to practise their basic skills in different contexts. This, however, is at the very early stages of development. The science curriculum does not ensure pupils develop their knowledge and skills progressively in this subject. The school recognises the need to review this. Pupils benefit from a good range of activities at the breakfast and after school clubs. This is effective in improving their attendance and punctuality as well as in promoting positive attitudes towards their learning and their enjoyment of school.

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Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and provides very clear direction. She is strongly supported by the deputy and staff. They are beginning to work effectively as a team to evaluate their work and strive for improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on robust procedures which track pupils' progress and monitor provision. All staff are fully involved in these processes and so have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. Standards in English and mathematics have improved rapidly over the past year and issues from the last inspection have been tackled successfully. As a result, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

- Raise standards in science by ensuring the curriculum enables pupils to develop their skills as scientists in a continuous and structured way.
- Improve pupils' progress by:
  - using assessment information more effectively in lesson planning to meet more closely the needs of pupils of differing ability, particularly middle and higher attaining pupils
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to explore ideas for themselves and work collaboratively to solve problems
  - ensuring pupils have a good understanding about how to improve their work and are fully involved in evaluating and planning their own progress.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Standards by the end of Year 6 in 2009 were slightly but not significantly below average in English and mathematics and are improving strongly as a result of the effective action taken by the school. This represents satisfactory progress from pupils' starting points. Attainment in reading and mathematics is now broadly average while attainment in writing is well below average but improving rapidly. Attainment in science is well below average and progress in this area is too slow because pupils do not get enough opportunity to develop their scientific skills effectively. Pupils make the best progress when they can explore ideas for themselves and work with others to solve problems. In a Year 6 English lesson, for instance, pupils worked effectively in small groups to identify the common features of instructions from a variety of sources. They organised themselves well and were keen to share their ideas about how best to present their findings to others.

Pupils are usually well behaved in lessons. In the playground, their behaviour can occasionally be boisterous but pupils respond promptly when adults check this. Pupils have good relationships with adults in the school. They are eager to participate in class

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discussions and listen carefully to adults.

Pupils say they feel safe and know who they can go to with problems. They are confident that issues, such as rare cases of bullying or poor behaviour, are dealt with effectively. They make healthy eating choices at break times and enjoy regular exercise. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community, for example through the school choir. They play an important role in improving their school as house captains, prefects and mediators. They have been particularly successful in improving facilities in the playground. Pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom and engage well with children from a variety of cultures and backgrounds in school.

*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>3</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>2</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

There are instances of good and outstanding practice but the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school and leads to some uneven progress. Teachers usually present new ideas clearly. They and teaching assistants use questioning to good effect to support and challenge pupils both in whole-class discussions and during class work.

<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.

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In some lessons, the pace slows and pupils become restless when teacher-led activities are too lengthy. Assessment information is used effectively to provide appropriate support for individuals and small groups in lessons. As a result of this, together with skilful support from teaching assistants, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. However, this information is not always used effectively to support or challenge other pupils so their progress is slower because they find work too easy or too difficult. Although pupils usually receive useful feedback in class, pupils are not always sure about how to improve their work because guidance in marking is not always clear enough. There are instances of pupils beginning to evaluate their own work, but this is at the very early stages of development and it is not consistent across the school.

The school's emphasis on the development of core skills in literacy and numeracy is raising standards across the school. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching, for example, in sports and music. Pupils' experience is enriched by a variety of visitors and visits. The school is working towards a creative curriculum to provide better opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across a range of subjects and to engage their interest more effectively. This is at a very early stage of development, it is too early to see its impact and there remain gaps in the science curriculum. Pupils' experience is enriched through the school's work with the Malachi Trust and the Welsh National Opera as well as the opportunity to engage in musical activities and learn an instrument. There is also a good range of extra-curricular and sporting activities which are well attended by all groups. Links with high schools ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to the next stage in their education and well thought out induction procedures ensure that they settle quickly when they begin school. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies as well as parents and carers to remove barriers to learning. Clearly targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvement in their attitudes, behaviour, achievement and relationships. The introduction of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme successfully increases pupils' confidence, self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning.

*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's accurate analysis of the school's effectiveness and her very clear direction are driving improvement. Because middle leaders play a full part in school

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self-evaluation activities, they know what has to be done to improve the school and are developing their role in the process. The focus for the past year has rightly been on tracking individual progress to ensure equal opportunities and eliminate underachievement and in this the school has been successful. Attendance has also improved and is now broadly average. The school has yet to focus its efforts on driving similar improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, however, so that there remains considerable variation in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The school works hard to inform parents and carers and to involve them in their children's learning, for example through newsletters and parents' evenings. Governors are supportive, becoming increasingly involved in the work of the school and are well placed to develop their role as critical friends. Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and are clear about their responsibilities. Pupils too have a good understanding about how to stay safe, Although safeguarding procedures are robust, policies are new and are not yet fully embedded into the work of the school. The school's work with parents and carers, partner institutions and the local community is satisfactorily promoting community cohesion.

*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>2</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children settle very quickly in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. They enter the Nursery with skills that are often exceptionally low compared to those expected for their age. They get off to a good start because of the expertise of the staff and the very effective use of the good facilities. By the end of Reception the majority are still working



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towards the skills expected for their age. The progress they make, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of the world and their communication skills is good. Children explore and learn effectively through planned activities indoors and outside. They work and play together well and take turns. They are well behaved and willingly take responsibility, for example, in clearing away. Speaking, listening and thinking skills are developed effectively as a result of skilful questioning by the teachers and teaching assistants and every opportunity is taken to engage children in conversation and to reinforce basic reading and number. Well planned activities, such as action songs, role play and games, which children clearly enjoy, enable them to make good progress in developing their skills. Teachers and teaching assistants are particularly skilful in enabling children to take the lead in activities and moving their learning on.

Leadership and management are good. Children are cared for very well. Workshops for parents are popular and help them to support their children's learning. Effective assessment procedures are used to measure and track children's progress. Although there is good liaison between teachers, transition between the Nursery and Reception classes is made more difficult because these areas are not adjacent to one another so that it is not possible to share facilities. Similarly it is difficult to share and spread the outstanding practice which exists in the Early Years Foundation Stage because the classes are at a distance from each other.

*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:	
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 vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire had very positive views of the school. A small minority expressed concern about the way the school dealt with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to support this. Pupils are confident that poor behaviour is dealt with effectively and respond promptly to checks by teachers in the playground. Overall the views of the parents reflect the findings of the inspectors.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Edmund's Catholic 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. The inspection team received 37 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 187 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	73	9	24	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	62	13	35	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	25	68	11	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	23	62	12	32	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	22	59	15	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	57	15	41	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	51	18	49	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)	16	43	14	38	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	19	51	13	35	3	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	59	11	30	4	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	41	20	54	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	20	54	17	46	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	73	9	24	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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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 pupil's 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.**



Thursday 25 March 2010

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Edmund's Catholic Primary School, Birmingham, B18 7PA

On behalf of all the inspectors, I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. The inspection team really enjoyed reading your comments and talking to you all. They listened very carefully to what you had to say. Yours is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. Some things are good. Teachers and adults in your school look after you well and younger children in the Nursery and Reception get off to a good start. You play an important role in improving your school, for instance, through the school council and mediators in the playground. We were really impressed by the work done by the school council in improving the playground. They've done an excellent job in planning and ordering all the new equipment and you clearly enjoy using it. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and particularly like the range of clubs and other activities on offer. You feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to.

Teaching is satisfactory and it is helping you to catch up and to achieve as you should. We noticed that in some lessons you made better progress than in others so we have asked the school to make sure all the lessons are as good as the best. We also noticed that some of you find tasks too easy so we have asked teachers to make sure you have more of a challenge so that you can achieve your best. In lessons we noticed how well you get on when you have the chance to explore ideas for yourselves and work together to solve problems. We have asked the school to give you more opportunities to learn through activities like these.

The headteacher and staff are working very hard to make your school better. They have been successful in improving your work in English and mathematics. We think you can do better in science too so we have asked the school to make sure you have regular opportunities to do investigations in science so you can become good scientists. You can help the school by continuing to work hard and by coming to school regularly. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Tolley

Lead inspector

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