

# St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Ipswich

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124785           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Suffolk          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 340654           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 18–19 March 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Nichola Perry    |

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> | 204                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                   |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Father Russell Frost                 |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr Stephen Barker                    |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 27 March 2007                        |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Stratford Road<br>Ipswich<br>Suffolk |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01473 742074                         |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01473 742074                         |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | ad.st.pancras.p@talk21.com           |

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|--------------------------|------------------|
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eight teachers were observed in 10 sessions. Meetings were held with the headteacher, the 'every child matters' leader, subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors looked at pupils' work and displays, and at documentation, including the school development plan, the self-evaluation form, assessments, records of pupils' progress, teachers' planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements. The inspectors scrutinised 96 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether the teaching of mathematics is robust enough to ensure standards are higher by the time pupils leave the school and less erratic year on year
- the effectiveness of the school's use of feedback to pupils so as to increase their rate of progress across Years 3 to 6
- what the school is doing to improve the attainment of girls, and how effectively leaders monitor their progress and attainment
- how well the school's leadership is working to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of life in the wider world, beyond that in the United Kingdom.

## Information about the school

This is a popular, smaller than average, but expanding, primary school. The majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. A few are from minority ethnic groups but none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is almost twice the national average. Significant numbers of families in the area experience social needs. Numbers of pupils joining or leaving the school part way through the taught year have increased significantly in recent years. Pupils have access to breakfast and after-school clubs run by the school. There is also a parents' and toddlers group held at the school.

The school has experienced significant staffing disruption during the last two years, so that the headteacher was teaching full time for a complete academic year and part time into last year. The school has been awarded Investors in People status, Activemark and Healthy Schools status. Most recently, it has gained the Sing-Up Gold 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?**

**2**

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

**2**

### Main findings

St Pancras is a good school. It has some outstanding features, including the quality of care, guidance and support which is a real strength so that all groups of pupils are really valued and treated as individuals. Behaviour is good and sometimes excellent and attendance has risen significantly. Relationships are outstanding. Pupils are extremely polite and get on well with each other. They are very thoughtful towards others who are different from themselves, or less fortunate, and make a significant contribution to the school and local communities. Pupils demonstrate excellent appreciation of how to keep safe and how to adopt a healthy lifestyle, recognising the need for a balanced diet and plenty of exercise. The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, is inspirational in galvanising the entire school community to strive to improve all aspects of pupils' personal and emotional development and their learning. Governors are well informed, effectively led and provide good support and challenge to the school. Excellent relationships exist between the school and its parents and carers. One parent's comments summarised the consensus when saying, 'There is not another school in the whole of Ipswich that I would prefer my child to attend.'

Pupils' of all abilities enjoy school and demonstrate really positive attitudes to learning. They achieve well, and sometimes very well, from their below average starting points. They make good progress, especially when engaged in practical activities, because teaching is effective. In-class support contributes well to pupils' good learning. Attainment is average overall in Year 6, although there is clear evidence that standards are rising. Planning is good and underpinned by clear learning objectives so that pupils know what skills they are expected to learn. Although marking in some classes is inconsistent, ongoing feedback in lessons is now very effective in motivating pupils to try their best, informing them how well they are doing and how to improve. Assessment is used satisfactorily and ensures activities are well matched to pupils' learning needs. However, although assessment information is plentiful, it is not maintained in a format which helps all class teachers to set targets which ensure better than expected progress every year. It is clear from looking at pupils' work that teachers' grasp of National Curriculum levels, and how these can be used to raise expectations of what pupils in specific age groups can achieve, is inconsistent.

The good curriculum provides extremely well for pupils personal development. Self-confidence is exceptionally well developed and pupils from an early age are very keen to share their ideas and views because they know what they have to say is highly valued. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because it is given high priority throughout the school. Spirituality is excellent and can be seen in the pride pupils have in their school and the pleasure they take in their own, and others',

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achievements.

Senior leaders and governors successfully drive improvements because self-evaluation is effective and development planning supports identified priorities well. The good improvements since the previous inspection include: a significant decrease in persistent absenteeism, which has been an ongoing issue for the school; a curriculum which now offers pupils a modern foreign language, many more opportunities to apply their basic skills in mathematics, and a greater emphasis on practical activities to ensure high levels of motivation. Together with improving rates of progress in mathematics, this demonstrates that the school is well placed to improve further.

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

- Improve assessment procedures by:
  - establishing regular meetings with the assessment leader where pupils' current attainment levels are agreed and new targets are set which promote faster progress
  - ensuring all teachers' knowledge and understanding of National Curriculum levels is raised to that of the best so that levelled work is consistent across the school
  - devising a system which records pupils' levels of attainment each term so that teachers can quickly identify any underachievement
  - ensuring that marking consistently informs pupils about what to do next in order to raise the standard of their work.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils of all abilities make good progress. Assessment information and work seen during the inspection show that attainment in the current Year 6 is on track to be at least average in all three subjects due to very high expectations and outstanding teaching. In Year 5, consistently good teaching is also leading to an improving trend, indicating sustained improvement. In lessons, no difference was noted between any group's performance. The school has worked extremely hard and successfully to address the issue of girls' underachievement in mathematics. This has been halted as a result of a strong whole school emphasis on improving attainment in mathematics, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and focused interventions to help those who find learning difficult. Standards by the end of Year 2 are average overall with reading just above average. Assessment information and work seen during the inspection show that the school is on track to maintain these standards, although in Year 1 pupils are already making better than expected progress. In lessons, effective provision helps pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. There is especially good provision to ensure that the high numbers of pupils arriving part way through the taught year make good progress.

Pupils behave well, form excellent relationships with adults, and learn to value everyone

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effectively because they are highly valued themselves. Pupils are very knowledgeable about foods which are good for them and extremely aware of how to be safe because safe ways of working are embedded in teaching across the school. Pupils contribute to the community extremely well. They love looking after younger pupils in the playground and are always ready to arbitrate in difficult situations. Involvement in the community allotment involves pupils well in developing their enterprise awareness through meetings with the local planning group as well as growing their own produce. The school council is effective in suggesting improvements to the school and selects a range of national and international charities to support each year. The good progress pupils make in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and their well developed personal skills mean they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

Pupils achieve well across all aspects of learning and development because they receive consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching. Teachers employ imaginative

<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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teaching styles to motivate pupils and use questioning very astutely to support or challenge them. In one very effective lesson, the teacher demonstrated excellent understanding of how young children, and in particular boys, are motivated to learn. Creative use of the interactive whiteboard, good emphasis on basic writing skills and appropriate scientific language, strong focus on speaking and listening along with excellent active learning helped develop pupils' thinking and investigative skills. Teachers use assessment well on a day-to-day basis to ensure planned lessons match individual needs so as to build effectively on previous learning.

The improved curriculum focuses strongly on basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT and is helping pupils learn effectively. Particularly good emphasis on speaking and listening and on opportunities for play and drama is contributing strongly to pupils' very good personal development. Good opportunities exist for developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative skills. Delightful art work around the school is of a good standard. Pupils speak knowledgeably about religions, faiths and cultures different from their own, both within the United Kingdom and in the wider world. Excellent use of the all-weather facility ensures pupils have many opportunities to practise their physical education skills. Particularly good use is made of external provision to enhance that provided by the school. A wide range of additional activities, many of which are focused on sports and music, enrich the curriculum well. Excellent use is made of the local and wider communities to extend pupils' learning, such as the visit by Years 5 and 6 to the Science Museum in London.

Pupils' pastoral needs are met exceptionally well from the day they start school. Induction is effective, but particularly so for those who enter the school part way through the taught year. The contribution made by the 'every child matters' leader is exemplary. As a result, behaviour across the school is consistently at least good and attendance, including for those who were persistently absent, has improved dramatically. His expert input with individuals and groups of pupils helps them very effectively to deepen their knowledge of how to manage their own behaviour and handle difficult situations. Work with pupils, whose circumstances make them vulnerable, and their families is extremely effective and deeply embedded into the work of the school. Since taking over management of the breakfast and after-school clubs these have flourished. The former encouraging pupils to attend school, the latter offering help with homework which has helped many pupils to improve their work. Along with the parents' & toddlers group, also run at the school, this means parents and carers can access support whenever necessary to help them support their children's social, emotional and learning needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

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|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b> | <b>1</b> |
|--|----------|

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is dedicated to ensuring all pupils develop their full potential in all aspects of their social, emotional and academic development. He has created an environment where pupils can thrive. All staff and governors share his vision and strive unrelentingly for excellence. Although recent significant staffing issues reduced the effect of developments, impact on the school was minimised due to the commitment of the headteacher and remaining staff. Development planning focuses unerringly on breaking down barriers to learning and pupils' progress is carefully tracked so that all have equal opportunities to learn and achieve. Subject leaders, some of whom are new to the role since the previous inspection, work well together. They are developing good knowledge of their subjects, although their knowledge of assessment is still not fully developed. Rigorous monitoring of teaching ensures that none is less than good.

Governors know the school well and are effectively involved in planning for the future. They ensure that all safeguarding and child protection procedures and training meet requirements fully and that systematic records of staffing checks are maintained.

Leadership ensures excellent and wide-reaching links within the local community. Pupils show good understanding of the multicultural nature of the United Kingdom. They learn about diversity through involvement in a wide range of celebrations from other faiths, such as Eid and Diwali, as well as those within their own culture. Pupils' awareness of the wider world is still developing. Links have been established in Cambodia but these are at an early stage of development.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 2        |
| <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>2</b> |
| <b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>  | <b>1</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>2</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>2</b> |



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children achieve well and get off to a very good start in the Reception class. Parents are delighted with what the school offers their children and the progress they make. Children enter school with knowledge and understanding below expected levels, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good, and often very good, progress and reach broadly average standards on entry to Year 1. The curriculum ensures basic skills are developed effectively. Consistently good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching uses a range of teaching styles, including strong emphasis on practical activities. These provide good opportunities for making decisions about their own learning and developing their thinking and imaginative skills. Good balance exists between adult-led activities and those children choose themselves. Excellent focus on speaking and listening and role play ensures that children rapidly develop good social skills and become confident in expressing themselves. Adults use questions astutely to engage children without limiting their creativity. Behaviour is good because expectations are high, although more attention needs to be given to helping children not to call out inappropriately.

Leadership is effective and demonstrates clear understanding of how young children learn. Assessment is accurate and ensures that adults have very thorough knowledge of each child's stages of development. This leads to learning activities which focus well on individual needs and interests so that progress is rapid. Personal development is excellent because adults support children's welfare consistently well and this provides a strong base for their future learning.

*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

Just over half of the parents returned a questionnaire. Analysis shows high levels of satisfaction with what the school provides for their children. There was total unanimity regarding the effective leadership of the school, the good teaching, that their children are safe and taught how to develop healthy lifestyles. The overwhelming majority are positive about all other aspects of the school and inspection findings support parents' views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Ipswich 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly Agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 68             | 71 | 27    | 28 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 80             | 83 | 16    | 17 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 67             | 70 | 25    | 26 | 4        | 4 | 0                 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 66             | 69 | 26    | 27 | 2        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 69             | 72 | 27    | 28 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 58             | 60 | 35    | 36 | 3        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 54             | 59 | 38    | 41 | 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) | 45             | 48 | 46    | 49 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 56             | 58 | 38    | 40 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 57             | 61 | 32    | 34 | 5        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 48             | 51 | 45    | 47 | 1        | 1 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 75             | 78 | 21    | 22 | 0        | 0 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 76             | 80 | 19    | 20 | 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.**



22 March 2010

Dear Pupils

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

Mr Kingston and I really enjoyed watching you working and playing and talking to lots of you during our recent visit to your school. Thank you very much for helping us find out about your school. You go to a good school which is a really happy and friendly place. We were so pleased that more of you now attend school regularly. There are lots of good things about your school.

You all try hard and make good progress in your work.

You thoroughly enjoy school and behave well.

Your headteacher and senior teachers have very good ideas about how to improve your school.

All the adults care about you and support you extremely well. They listen to you so that you feel very safe in school.

Your school gets on really well with your parents and other people who can help you learn.

We have asked your headteacher and the other teachers to look at how they can make things even better. The most important things are:

- to make sure they set you some special targets so that you make even more progress
- to write down how well you are doing each term so that they can keep checking on this
- to help all the teachers understand how you can improve more quickly
- to make sure that when the teachers mark your work they all tell you how you can improve.

You can help by continuing to come to school every day, listening carefully to your teachers and enjoying all the super things that you are learning at St Pancras.

Yours sincerely

Nichola Perry

Lead Inspector

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