

Report of the Denominational (Section 48) Inspection of
Inspection was carried out under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

St Pancras Catholic Primary School

DFE No: 935 3341

URN: 124785

For Catholic Diocese of East Anglia



Chair of Governors: Fr Russell Frost

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Barker

Denominational Inspector: Mrs Rosemary Barker

Date of Inspection: 8th November 2010

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DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL

St Pancras Catholic School is a one form entry primary school for pupils from 4 to 11 years. There are 213 pupils on roll, 60% of whom are Catholic, with a further 12.7% from other Christian denominations. The school is located in a residential area of north-west Ipswich and serves the parish of St. Mary Magdalen. It is maintained by Suffolk Education Authority. The school receives pupils from a mixed range of socio-economic backgrounds. Around 24% of pupils have special educational needs with five pupils having a statement to support these needs. A small number of pupils have English as an additional language. Over 10% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, slightly above the county average.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

Grade: 2

St Pancras School is a very good Catholic school with some outstanding features. The extremely strong Catholic identity is visible and real in the everyday life of the school. The committed leadership of the headteacher and governing body (which includes the Parish Priest) is instrumental in promoting a strong spiritual purpose and developing the Catholic ethos. Prayer and worship are of central importance in the school's life. Staff are committed to the very high profile given to religious education.

Relationships within the school are very good and reflect Christian respect and concern for others. Staff create an environment where pupils are respected, listened to and where learning is fun. Pupils are very proud of the school "Everyone cares and loves" they explained. The pupils' personal, spiritual and moral development is outstanding and this is reflected in their behaviour and positive attitudes. They could articulate the vision to "Make the world a better place". Pupils make good progress in RE (religious education).

The self evaluation of the school is accurate and comprehensive. The headteacher has a good overall view of the school's strengths and development needs. The school is united and focussed in its aim to provide the best possible Catholic education for its pupils. All staff are committed to the success of the school. Development issues from the last inspection have been fully addressed and the school has continued to improve.

The school is highly valued within the local community and a strong partnership between school, parents and parish supports the growth of shared Catholic vision. The school has a very good capacity to improve.

What the school needs to do to improve further?

Implement the planned assessment system of 'Milestones' which is linked to National Levels of Attainment

- to record progress
- to inform future planning;
- Evaluating and moderating the system through regular monitoring.

Empower pupils in their leadership of worship by

- Developing age appropriate planning opportunities for liturgy
- Formalise this planning within the 'Milestones' attainment/assessment system.

PUPILS. How good are outcomes for pupils, taking account of variations between different groups. Grade 1

The Catholic life of the school is of outstanding benefit to the pupils. Pupils are happy and enjoy their *“good school”*. Behaviour is good and pupils are fully aware of school expectations for this and commit willingly to the demands made on them by the Catholicity of the school. They show respect to adults and to each other and recognise that *“everyone cares and loves each other”* and *“teachers are kind and generous”*. There is a strong sense of school community and family. They enjoy sharing and celebrating each others’ achievement, clearly seen when the whole school applauded the youngest pupils arriving and leaving the assembly hall, acknowledging their success in attending a full assembly so early in the school year. Pupils know that their views are important. The school council gives them a formal voice to share ideas, comment on initiatives and raise concerns. In addition, they appreciate that all their teachers always listen to them. *“If you have a problem they help you and sort it out.”* Pupils accept responsibilities in class and around the school. They undertake duties sensibly and efficiently. Older pupils organise and run a playground buddies scheme promoting positive interactions between pupils.

The prayer life of the school is real and tangible and contributes significantly to pupils’ spiritual and moral development. The October Rosary display, where each bead related to pupil’s personal prayer, and the November Book of Remembrance, where pupils share with the whole school their memories of deceased family and friends present a living faith that is real and meaningful to the pupils. Pupils value prayer and are equally aware that their prayers are valued. They often write prayers for personal intentions at home and bring them to school. Supported by the regular celebration of Mass within the school community, pupils also know and use traditional prayers respectfully. All classes write their own bidding prayers for services. Pupils participated fully in singing at assembly and showed a reverence which reflected the school philosophy that their singing and Christian actions are also forms of prayer.

All pupils make good progress in religious literacy during their time in the school. The majority of pupils achieve age appropriate levels of attainment and some achieve higher. Work was well presented. Pupils responded to questioning with enthusiasm and engaged with their learning. They both asked and answered questions which deepened their understanding. They demonstrated secure knowledge of the topic being discussed. Pupils like Religious Education (RE) most when able to illustrate their work. They particularly like learning about Jesus and listening to Bible stories.

LEADERS AND MANAGERS. How effective are leaders and managers in developing the Catholic life of the school? Grade 2

The headteacher’s commitment and vision for the Catholic life of the school is empowering for the whole school community. The emphasis placed on pupils’ spiritual, moral and social growth is a strength of the school. Relationships with families and parish are outstanding. The Parish Priest is closely involved with the school, celebrating Mass weekly, either for the whole school or class/key stage groups, both on the school premises and in the parish church. The half-termly Sunday Mass led by pupils further strengthens school and parish links.

The innovative appointment of an ECM (Every Child Matters) co-ordinator who is accessible to all is a resource which parents and pupils actively seek out and use. Nurture and development of the whole child within Catholic identity and ethos, *“Every Child is loved by God”*, is a philosophy displayed to all at the main school entrance.

A newly appointed religious education co-ordinator will be instrumental in drawing together and developing current practice in RE, monitoring lessons and building a whole school identity around classroom collective worship. RE is well resourced, and teachers are guided and supported well in delivery of the curriculum. The 'Milestones in RE' will effectively inform the School Development Plan.

Governors fulfil their statutory and canonical responsibilities. They possess a wide range of valuable skills, and are very supportive and well-informed about the work of the school. The annual parental survey sent out by governors has a high return rate showing that parents feel their voice is valued. Working with the new subject co-ordinator, governors plan to involve RE more fully in their monitoring role in school.

The school is a welcoming inclusive community which is high profile in the local area. Both extended family and parish family members visit the school and join pupils for special assemblies, liturgies and the celebration of Mass. The 'good morning' greeting seen offered to each family/pupil on arrival at school promotes a feeling of worth and has supported improved attendance. Before and after school clubs also impact on this and provide enrichment opportunities. Pupils show compassion for others through their charity work for Cafod and other national and local charities. Pupils took an active part in a local community litter picking initiative. The school is currently working to set up links with schools nationally and globally to give further breadth to the pupils understanding of other faiths and cultures.

PROVISION. How effective is the provision for Catholic education: Grade 2

Worship and prayer are integral in the day to day actions of the school community with weekly Mass confirming the value placed on the school's sacramental life. The Parish Priest makes a powerful contribution to all aspects of worship. Assemblies are well planned following the liturgical year. There is a weekly assembly reinforcing learning explored in the 'Here I Am' syllabus. Catholic traditions are celebrated, for example devotions to Our Lady in May and October with the opportunity to pray the rosary during lunchtime sessions in these months and the feast of All Souls in November when the Book of Remembrance is prominently placed to promote reflection and prayer. Worship makes an excellent contribution to the spiritual and moral development of pupils. An attractive prayer table in each classroom provides a further focus for prayer, reflection and learning. The quality religious artefacts, bibles, prayer books are enhanced by pupil's work and contributions to the display. The parish priest hears confessions in school during Advent and Lent.

The quality of religious education lessons seen was good and engaged pupils in well planned and purposeful tasks. The teachers had secure knowledge and teaching was supported by good visual presentations, role play re-enactments and practical activities. Scripture is used well to develop thinking and relevance for today. The majority of lessons used pace well to engage and motivate pupils. In pupil to pupil dialogue particularly, increased interest and motivation raised thoughtful questions and responses. There were high expectations of pupil behaviour and attitudes, and high quality written work.

Assessment takes place which ensures that full coverage of the syllabus across the classes is matched by the learning pupils' achieve. Positive marking in books is starting to include comments and questions leading to religious/spiritual growth. The school is introducing a system assessing attainment standards, 'Milestones', in all subjects including RE.

There is good coverage of the RE curriculum, using the 'Here I Am' programme with additional work on topical catholic issues and events such as the recent Papal visit. Children are encouraged to think more deeply about issues and challenged. High quality displays

throughout the school, to which pupils' often contribute, are well conceived to carry a meaningful religious message which encourages a personal and relevant response. Cross curricular links are evident in Literacy through poetry, re-telling of stories, and drama; ICT for quality presentation of work; and Art and Design. Other faiths are taught and festivals recognised.

The requirement of the Bishops' Conference are fulfilled with 10% of curriculum time in Key Stage One and 12% in Key Stage two used for religious education.

EAST ANGLIA DIOCESAN SCHOOLS' SERVICE



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Letter to pupils explaining the findings from the diocesan inspection.

12th November 2010

Dear Pupils

Diocesan Inspection of St Pancras Catholic Primary School, Ipswich

Thank you for making us so welcome at your school. Thank you to all those pupils who spoke to us especially the group from the School Council. We were very interested in your views of your school. We enjoyed being present with you in Rainbows, Year 2, Year 4, and Year 6 for part of your Religious Education lessons. We were pleased to see how well presented your work was in your RE books. It was a great privilege for us to be present for your assembly and hear the high standard of singing. Well done to everyone.

Here are some of the things we especially liked:

- The strong Catholic ethos of your school that provides many opportunities for prayer and worship.
- You are friendly and considerate to each other and are well cared for by your teachers.
- You are encouraged to think deeply in a calm quiet atmosphere.
- The school provides very good opportunities for you to develop personally, spiritually and morally.
- The enjoyable and interesting tasks that your teachers plan to aid your religious education learning.

We have asked your teachers and governors to consider giving you opportunities to plan the worship you so successfully lead in both school and church. We have also asked them to help you understand and be able to recognise your achievement and progress in RE using the targets in your 'Milestones'.

Thank you again for your help. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Rosemary Barker and Mrs Marion Betts

Diocesan Inspectors