

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Costessey

Inspection report

Unique reference number	121130
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	380173
Inspection dates	23–24 February 2012
Lead inspector	Michael Sutherland-Harper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gerard Watt
Headteacher	Adrian La Chapelle
Date of previous school inspection	14 June 2007
School address	Westend Old Costessey Norwich NR8 5AG
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Additional inspector

Paul Bartlett

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 18 lessons taught by eight teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, the school's development and improvement plan, assessment data, monitoring and evaluation records, arrangements for safeguarding, and a range of policies and procedures. Inspectors listened to pupils read. The inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires from pupils and staff and 109 parents and carers.

Information about the school

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School is an average size primary school serving the village of Old Costessey on the western outskirts of Norwich. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school meets the government's current floor standards for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are below the national average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average but rising. Nursery children attend in the morning with additional wrap-around care offered in the afternoon. The school holds the Investor in People and Healthy Schools awards.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- St. Augustine’s Catholic Primary School is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because best practice in teaching and learning is at an early stage of being shared across the school. Progress in mathematics is slightly better than in English but the gap is closing rapidly.
- All groups of pupils make good progress across all key stages. The curriculum enables pupils to engage well with learning but some opportunities to improve writing skills, through the exciting topics, are missed. Pupils take an active part in lessons but are not always able to lead learning and give feedback about what they have found out and how they reached conclusions.
- Teaching is good overall and meets the needs of all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language. Some teaching is outstanding, especially where challenge is continuous. Teachers’ thorough planning and careful assessment help pupils understand how to move forward.
- Pupils are well behaved. They get on well with each other and with adults. Pupils have high expectations of behaviour. They are always ready to help and support their peers in and out of lessons. They feel safe and parents and carers agree. Effective safeguarding procedures are accompanied by regular, updated staff training. Very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school.
- The headteacher, senior team, staff and governing body are focused on improving the school and work effectively together to that end. The roles of middle managers in leading teaching have been refined and expectations made clear to all staff. Rigorous tracking and monitoring procedures are accompanied by close analysis of assessment data and ensure accountability. The experienced governing body provides a good level of challenge and support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that attainment rises further across the school by July 2013 by:

- increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching to 25% or higher
 - adding a greater degree of challenge for the more able
 - developing opportunities for teachers to share best practice in taking learning forward.
- Increase pupils' involvement with their learning by:
- affording more opportunities for pupils to take the lead in lessons
 - taking full advantage of the writing opportunities afforded by the new curriculum.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is above average. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age, especially in language and communication. They settle quickly and make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time children enter Year 1, outcomes are in line with national expectations and sometimes above them, particularly in physical development and use of numbers. Children have positive relationships with adults and with each other. Teachers have good understanding and clearly defined expectations of every child. Skills of matching sounds and letters are carefully taught to ensure good progress and are incorporated into everyday tasks. Additional interventions and one-to-one sessions are set up wherever necessary. Pupils develop into confident readers who reach good standards by the end of Year 2; their records are carefully maintained. Both boys and girls are fully fluent readers by the end of Year 6 and able to discuss the content and context of their chosen book. Mathematical skills are effectively developed through well-timed practical work and booster and support sessions. The school has focused successfully on raising skills in English to the same level as those in mathematics and has closed the gap, but opportunities provided by its new curriculum to further engage pupils with writing skills are sometimes missed. Disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers due to targeted support and high expectations. Progress rates are rising in all areas and are now consistently good across Key Stages 1 and 2 with improving results at the end of each key stage.

Learning in lessons is good; pupils enjoy school and respond well. Group and independent work are carefully balanced but the challenge offered for the more able is inconsistent in pushing them towards the highest levels. Where lessons are teacher dominated, pupils do not have opportunities to lead learning, present their work and explain how they reached their conclusions. Pupils have good access to information and communication technology. They know their targets, which are displayed either in their books or on classroom walls. The very large majority of parents and carers feel their children are making good progress and that the school helps them support their learning. Nearly all pupils say they learn a lot in lessons and are helped to make progress.

Quality of teaching

The very large majority of parents and carers believe their children are well taught. The inspection corroborates this view; teaching is good and some is outstanding. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher's high quality questioning skills reinforced previous learning and, together with the wide range of resources used, enabled pupils to make outstanding progress. Where teaching is best, brisk pace and closely-timed activities challenge all pupils, including the more able, but best practice is at present inconsistently shared with all staff to raise all teaching to the very highest levels. Pupils work well with each other, are readily supported by adults and are clear about their next steps. However, teachers do not always take opportunities to extend and improve writing skills as they were in a Year 1 lesson. The teacher used the topic of a fantasy world to engage pupils with choosing the right words and describing the setting. The sense of wonder created helped to reinforce their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers provide good opportunities, clearly set out, for pupils to delve into their imagination. They use independent and group exploration of topics effectively to lead them into new experiences they want to express in writing. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and make good use of new technologies to promote learning. Teachers plan lessons carefully to ensure that support staff are well deployed. They know the needs of the groups they supervise and work with them at a brisk pace. Teachers use questioning well to check pupil understanding and ensure that all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and girls, make similar progress. Class work is consolidated effectively in plenary sessions.

Teachers' marking is thorough across all subjects; they use encouraging comments and pointers to show pupils where to take their work next. They make good use of a variety of short, sharp tasks and opportunities for self-assessment. Pupils are sometimes asked to report back on what they have learned and how they got there but this element of challenge, especially for the more able, is inconsistently developed.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are very well behaved. All staff and pupils share clear expectations of behaviour from each other. Pupils welcome visitors to the school, such as those from charities they support, demonstrating care for others. Pupils stress that there is no bullying of any form in the school. They say that any problems are rapidly resolved because there is always an adult to whom they can turn for support and guidance. Pupils have equal opportunities to progress with learning because all adults manage behaviour well. One-to-one and booster sessions encourage good behaviour by supporting the growth of pupil confidence. Weekly praise assemblies afford chances to celebrate best behaviour. The very large majority of parents and carers believe that the school deals effectively with all types of bullying and that there is good behaviour in all lessons. They are almost unanimous in believing that behaviour is good at the school. The school council is determined to ensure that pupils work together to demonstrate the best possible behaviour, whether in supporting each other or in raising funds for a range of charities. Pupils are punctual in arriving at school and lessons and their above average attendance contributes to the good progress they make as they move through the school. Pupils have a clear understanding of risk to themselves and others, including e-safety. They are keenly

aware of how to stay fit, safe and healthy, including via sessions on road safety and first aid. Effective arrangements are in place to meet the needs of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Transition arrangements are carefully made.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, staff and governing body are determined that the school should be a continually improving learning environment, a place where people work together but are appreciated as individuals. This integrated approach is leading to rising standards. All staff, including support staff, help to shape the direction of the school. Staff and governors are involved in assembling the school's comprehensive development and improvement plan. Pupil progress is a central focus of regular staff meetings based on detailed, secure analysis of pupil data. Increased roles for middle managers in monitoring and evaluating progress rates mean that any remaining gaps are rapidly closing. Staff are clear about their responsibility to drive improvement forward and either lead training or report back on courses attended. The school has good capacity to improve because teaching is good, expectations are clearly defined and responsibilities have been distributed. The headteacher and governing body ensure that staff and governors have regularly refreshed training in effective safeguarding procedures. Governors are also trained in safer recruitment. The experienced governors know the school well; they make regular visits to monitor and evaluate progress. They provide a good level of challenge and support. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, are rigorous in ensuring equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination of any kind.

The school has recently implemented a new broad and well balanced curriculum model with a strong emphasis on all aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' enthusiasm for their topic work and their sense of wonder is celebrated in high quality displays of pupils' work around the school. The curriculum affords many links to a variety of subjects and the school is increasingly using these to extend pupils' skills and close any remaining gaps in learning. The school has an open door policy; work to improve links with all parents and carers is ongoing. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are very supportive of each other. They relish opportunities to learn about other people and cultures as in an excellent assembly which highlighted how it would feel to have leprosy for a member of their age group. Such work makes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development a strength of the school.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 February 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Costessey, Norwich, NR8 5AG

I am writing to thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently and to tell you the result of your school's inspection. Thank you also for talking to us and for filling in the pupil questionnaires.

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School provides you with a good education. Here are some of the things that your school does well.

- You feel safe and happy in school and know that there is always an adult who will help to sort out any problems.
- You are well taught and the curriculum helps you to enjoy learning.
- Your behaviour is good because you look after each other and are always prepared to help in school.

The headteacher, staff and governing body want your school to continue improving. To help them, we have asked them to take the following steps:

- make more of the teaching in the school outstanding and share teachers' best ways of helping you learn
- add extra challenge for more able pupils and provide added or new opportunities for all of you to take a lead in lessons by reporting back on what you have learned
- use the variety of topics in your curriculum to encourage better writing skills.

The inspectors believe that your willingness to work hard and try your best at all times will help the school to improve. You can help by always being ready to say more in class about the work you have done and by looking for further information about what you are learning.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sutherland-Harper
Lead inspector

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