

# St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118764
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	339298
<b>Inspection dates</b>	25–26 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Chadwick

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>	Nursery
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	245
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Maureen Francis
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Letts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Dane Park Road Ramsgate Kent CT11 7LS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Three quarters of the inspection time was spent looking at learning and 15 lessons were observed, with nine teachers seen. Inspectors observed an assembly and held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities, two governors and a local authority officer. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies and records of pupils' learning and progress, they examined 60 completed questionnaires from parents.

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

- children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, progress through Nursery and Reception and standards at the end of Reception
- pupils' current attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2 and learning and progress in all classes in reading, writing and mathematics
- the extent to which teaching and assessment consistently meet the needs of girls and boys, including the more able and the more vulnerable
- how effectively leaders and managers at all levels check the quality of the school's work and use the information for future improvements.

## Information about the school

This school, average in size, serves a mixed area that includes the local community and Catholic parishes further afield. Approximately one third of pupils come from Catholic families. Most children are of White British heritage, although the proportion of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds is larger than in most schools, with the majority originating from Eastern Europe. An above average proportion speak English as an additional language and are also at early stages of learning English. The proportion with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities is high, although the number with a statement for their special educational needs is average. These pupils' difficulties are mainly speech, literacy, numeracy and emotional and behavioural.

The school manages Nursery education for children aged three to four; this forms part of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision and is located within the infant building on the school's site. After attending the Nursery they join the Early Years Foundation Stage Reception class. The school also provides breakfast and after school clubs for Reception to Year 6 children.

The school has gained several awards, including Healthy Schools, Sportsmark and Eco Schools.

**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

This is a good and improving school. Strong leadership by the headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, has been the key factor in driving improvements forward. Senior leaders and governors have worked hard, with success, to improve pupils' attainment and to ensure pupils leave the school well prepared for their lives ahead. Pupils thrive and feel safe because the school really nurtures its pupils and gives them a well-rounded education. Excellent relationships and a strong Catholic ethos help to promote pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. As a result, pupils behave well and are keen to learn. Parents are very pleased with their children's progress and value the way the school looks after them and its friendly atmosphere. Parents agree that the headteacher and staff are caring and understanding. One parent echoed the views of many saying, 'You could wish for no better.'

Pupils' achievement is good. Children begin school with skill levels which are well below those expected for this age, and good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 lifts their attainment to average in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 2. Attainment has been rising as pupils join Year 3 and this means that pupils are now far better prepared for their junior education than was the case a few years ago. Pupils make good progress between Years 3 and 6 and this currently leads to average attainment in English, mathematics and science for Year 6.

Actions taken to improve the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics are having a good impact on raising attainment in this subject. However, there is still more to do to increase the proportion reaching the nationally expected level in mathematics so they match the school's higher attainment in English. In science, fewer pupils reach especially high levels in their skills. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply mathematics during investigative work in science and, for more capable pupils, to use more advanced mathematics. This is preventing standards rising more quickly. A small minority of lower-attaining pupils do not always attend as regularly as they should and this prevents their attainment from rising more rapidly.

Attainment is rising because teaching is often good. However, it is not yet consistently good because, occasionally, during whole-class teaching, lesson introductions are too hard for lower-attaining pupils or too easy for more capable pupils. At times pupils spend too long passively following whole-class introductions so there is little time to apply the skills they have been taught. The good curriculum is particularly strong in music, sport and enriching after school activities. Breakfast and after school clubs support working parents very well and give pupils a really caring, purposeful and happy start and end to the school day. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community

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The school's leaders have made good progress in tackling the issues for improvement identified at the last inspection because their self-evaluation is accurate and this leads to effective development plans and actions to improve. Better systems for checking on the school's work, for example methodically evaluating data, the quality of teaching and the progress of different groups, have led to rising attainment. This combined with the ambition of staff at all levels and accurate self-evaluation, means that the school has a good capacity to improve further

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

- Raise the proportions reaching average standards in mathematics and higher levels in science by:
  - taking further steps to accelerate progress
  - improving opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics in science through practical investigative work
  - ensuring more capable pupils are given harder mathematical tasks in science.
- Improve the consistency of good teaching by:
  - using assessment more effectively to ensure lesson introductions consistently meet the needs of lower-and higher-attaining pupils
  - ensuring lesson introductions are not so long so pupils take a more active part in their learning.
- Accelerate the progress in the basics of some lower-attaining pupils by improving their attendance.

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

Pupils enjoy learning, as seen in an outstanding mathematics lesson where pupils solved problems using fractions. The teacher's strong subject knowledge, confidence and enjoyment in teaching mathematics shone through and enthused the pupils. Added to this, the extremely good use of a range of teaching styles enabled pupils to learn through listening and watching as well as solving problems for themselves. This meant pupils could apply skills for themselves. However, there is not yet enough of this very high quality learning in the school as a whole.

Improvements to mathematics teaching are also ensuring both girls and boys achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are given good support. Small group work for vulnerable pupils in English and mathematics, including those who speak English as an additional language, contributes to pupils' good achievement. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are helped very well and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils' overall attendance is average and improving but, despite strong procedures for improving attendance, a small minority of lower-attaining pupils do not attend as regularly as they should, and this restricts their attainment.

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Pupils develop a pride in their school and themselves and are very polite and well mannered. This makes their school a happy and welcoming place. Their value and respect for different cultures contributes to their cultural development. Reflecting the school's Healthy Schools and Sportsmark awards, pupils show they understand how to lead healthy lifestyles and take-up of sporting activities is high. The extent to which they apply their basic skills and regularly attend school prepares them soundly for the future. Very worthwhile projects such as pupils running a school savings bank and managing budgets contribute well to their economic understanding and show how well they contribute to the community. This is also evident in their eco projects, by acting as sports leaders and through their charity work.

*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: 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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>1</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>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Excellent relationships between adults and their good management of pupils provide pupils with secure places for learning. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress, including the performance of different groups, have been overhauled and are now good. Most staff are clear about what pupils should learn in

<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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each year and, as a result, lessons often provide activities which match pupils' needs and sustain their concentration. Lessons are often well matched to pupils' needs during group work and teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs at such times. Teachers' careful planning ensures work usually builds on pupils' previous learning. However, there are instances when assessment is not used as effectively for meeting the wide range of pupils' abilities during lesson introductions, especially for lower-attaining and more capable pupils. There are occasions though when the teachers spend too long on instruction and pupils do not play an active enough part in the lesson.

The curriculum is complemented by a wide range of worthwhile outside visits. Strong partnerships with other schools also enrich pupils' educational experiences and their social development. Good standards of care and support and close collaboration between teachers and other adults enable the individual needs of pupils to be met. Concerns about individuals or groups are responded to quickly through a range of intervention programmes, including support from external agencies, and these make a significant contribution to pupils' good progress and emotional well-being. The support for families through a range of agencies is embedded and parents and carers are often involved in their children's education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy has provided clear direction since the last inspection. They work well together in leading the school to better outcomes and they communicate their vision clearly to staff. Support provided by the local authority for improving mathematics has been welcomed and well managed by the school. Strengths in the quality of education seen during the last inspection have been sustained while more account has been taken of pupils' attainment.

Governors are an asset and are well led by the Chair. They have been restructured and have a good focus on improving achievement. They meet regularly, work hard and have thorough systems for monitoring the impact of the school's work and outcomes for pupils. Leaders at all levels have undertaken monitoring of teaching and learning, giving the school an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of its provision. School leaders have developed a robust tracking system so that the progress of classes and groups of pupils against their individual and collective challenging targets can be

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assessed. This is already making a difference and, together with the school's strong focus on inclusion, enables the school to secure equal opportunities and tackle discrimination.

There are good procedures for ensuring the safety of pupils and school leaders ensure that staff receive effective guidance to enable them to identify issues that would raise concerns about pupils' well-being. Community cohesion is good. The school successfully reaches out to the local and global communities and encourages pupils to understand and value people's differences, beliefs and lifestyles. The school is in the process of appropriately extending provision by creating links with different communities in the United Kingdom.

*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: 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>2</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>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The childcare for children aged between three and four years old in the Nursery fully complies with registration requirements. Staff are well trained and qualified and they cater well for children's individual learning needs. Throughout the Nursery and Reception there is a strong focus on developing children's curiosity, observation, speaking skills and practical enquiry. A good range of toys, equipment and play resources awaken children's interests. Children are very happy and are making good progress in their learning and development. There is a strong emphasis on care and safeguarding.

Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the good induction processes. Parents really appreciate this. About a third of the children entering



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Reception have not attended the Nursery. Children's overall skills, knowledge and understanding on entry are well below the expected levels because of weaknesses in their speaking and listening skills and personal development. Children make good progress throughout Nursery and Reception as a result of good teaching and learning. By the end of Reception most children reach the expected levels for their age except in reading and writing where standards are still below average. Overall progress is good, with excellent gains in their personal development. The promotion of children's welfare and safety is good.

There is a strong focus on improving language, literacy and numeracy skills through the provision of a broad, practical and interesting curriculum. New arrangements for teaching letters and sounds (phonics) in Reception are having a good impact on children's early literacy skills. Adults plan a wide range of worthwhile and stimulating learning activities indoors, although the design of the school building prevents children from having easy direct access to the outdoor activities. Adults strike a good balance between more formal, adult-led activities and those children select for themselves. Role play is particularly well developed and both boys and girls love playing together in 'The Palace'. Children in Reception are able to join the breakfast and after school clubs in the summer term.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. The new assessment of individual attainment and progress is very thorough in Reception, and Nursery and Reception staff are working together to implement a uniform tracking system to help promote continuity in experiences and robust self-evaluation.

*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**

Parents are very positive about the school; they think it is well led and provides a very happy and nurturing environment where their children make good progress. A small minority of concerns centred around the behaviour of a few pupils and the inconsistency of teaching quality. The inspection team finds that teaching is mainly good, although a small amount of satisfactory teaching could be better. The inspection team finds behaviour is good and occasionally excellent. Pupils are well managed and this helps them to learn.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Ethelbert'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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	72	14	23	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	68	19	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	47	30	50	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	58	21	35	2	3	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	38	63	17	28	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	57	24	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	62	23	38	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)	34	57	21	35	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	60	23	38	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	53	22	37	5	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	48	29	48	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	67	19	32	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	70	17	28	1	2	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.**



26 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School, Ramsgate CT11 7LS

Thank you so much for helping us learn about your school. We really enjoyed finding out about how much you like school and learning about the interesting things you do. First, you need to know your school is good one where you make good progress. Here are some of the many things your school does well:

- You make good progress and, by the time you leave, you reach the levels expected for your age in English, mathematics and science.
- Those of you in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start.
- You help to make your school such a special place because you are very polite, proud of your school and behave well.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and enjoy sport. You know you should not eat too many sweets and cakes.
- You have many interesting learning opportunities, including visits, visitors and clubs, and some particularly good ones in sport and music.
- Your headteacher leads you all well and all the staff think very carefully about what is best for you.
- Staff take good care of you. You get extra help if you need it so you can learn new things as quickly as possible.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve:

- Make sure that more of you do as well in mathematics as you do in English and that those of you who are more capable reach even higher standards in science.
- Make sure that, during lesson introductions, your work is never too easy or hard, and that lesson introductions do not go on too long.
- Improve attendance for the few of you who do not attend as regularly as you should so that you can do better at school.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and continue to work hard in all you do. Well done for doing so much for the community, please keep this up!

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector

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