

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112340
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	378469
Inspection dates	13–14 March 2012
Lead inspector	Naomi Taylor

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Glaister
Headteacher	Sheryl Slack
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2008
School address	Derwent Street Workington CA14 2DW
Telephone number	01900 325237
Fax number	01900 325099
Email address	office@st-patricks-pri.cumbria.sc.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor
Peter Evea

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed seven teachers and visited 19 lessons. Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's self-evaluation and development plans, local authority evaluations, records of pupils' attainment and progress, and pupils' work. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. The responses in 85 questionnaires from parents and carers, 192 pupils and 15 staff were also analysed.

Information about the school

St Patrick's is a smaller than average-size primary school. The vast majority of pupils is White British. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well-below average, as is the proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much lower than the national average, as is that of those who speak English as an additional language.

Since the previous inspection, there has been an increase in the number of pupils joining the school during Key Stages 1 and 2. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2011. There have been significant changes to membership of the governing body since the previous inspection. The school has Healthy Schools status and is part of a School Sports partnership. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Good leadership and management have brought about improvements in provision which have led to good achievement. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. This is not yet an outstanding school because the quality of teaching is no better than good overall, so leading to too few Year 2 pupils attaining levels in line with national expectations in English. Pupils, parents and carers are very positive about the school.
- The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well-planned, have good pace and teachers and teaching assistants use a range of activities to meet individual pupils' needs, both in the classroom and outdoors. This ensures that pupils are highly engaged in their learning. Sometimes, pupils are not always clear about the next steps to improve their work. Occasionally, opportunities are missed for pupils to engage in tasks without direct supervision and the pace of learning in lessons does not always stretch and challenge the more-able in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils behave extremely well. They show a high level of respect for each other and for adults. Those who join the school other than at the usual times are made to feel part of a strong school community. Pupils' academic and personal development receive equal importance and gives them confidence for the next stage in their education. While attendance is average it is improving, although slowly.
- The senior leadership team and staff have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Performance management is used well to lead and improve the quality of teaching and there are opportunities to share best practice. The governing body has developed its role and both supports and challenges the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further to increase attainment in English to be at least in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 by:
 - extending the opportunities for independent learning in Key Stage 1 and ensuring the pace of learning in lessons meets the needs of all pupils consistently, particularly the more-able
 - improving the understanding by pupils of how they can improve their work by detailed next steps in lessons and in workbooks.
- Improve attendance to above the national average by refining the school's strategies and developing further parent and carer involvement so that pupils benefit from uninterrupted learning and reach their full potential.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Evidence from lesson observations demonstrates that all pupils are fully engaged in learning and are making good progress. At whatever stage pupils join the school, they are assessed individually to ensure that the teaching and interventions match their particular needs. The school's good support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs leads to their good progress. Pupils show excitement and interest in their work. For example, in a Year 3 creative learning lesson, pupils were very keen to extend their understanding of the characteristics of types of food native to different countries. In small groups, they analysed the appearance, taste and texture of a range of breads, while developing their descriptive vocabulary and speaking, listening, and writing skills. Their positive attitudes and good behaviour made a significant contribution to accelerating their progress.

Children start school with skills and knowledge that are generally well below the levels expected for their age. Through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, children achieve well, reaching the national average by the end of Year 2 in mathematics. Currently, too few pupils achieve levels in line with the national expectation in English by the end of Year 2, although those who started St Patrick's at the Early Years Foundation Stage are on track to meet - and in some cases - exceed national expectations. There is evidence of good improvement for those who join the school at times other than the usual during Key Stage 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average overall. The school's recent actions to meet the needs of all pupils are having a positive impact in raising the achievement of all groups of pupils. Most parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress and this was evident during the inspection.

Key Stage 1 pupils who read to the inspectors were able to use their reading skills to break down and sound out difficult or unfamiliar words. They were then able to demonstrate an understanding of what they had read. The school has recently invested in many new books which are correctly matched to the needs of the pupils. The library is being relocated and refurbished with new stock. Attainment in reading

is below average by the end of Key Stage 1, although improving as a result of the impact of the school's focus on reading and opportunities across the curriculum to develop literacy skills. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in reading due to the impact of a whole-school approach to phonics (the sounds that letters make) taught by phase rather than age. They have a good understanding of the importance of reading both for their schoolwork and for their futures. Attainment in reading is above average by the time pupils leave school in Year 6.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good, a judgement endorsed by the extremely positive views of parents and carers. The headteacher and senior leadership team is focused on improving the quality of teaching. Staff have worked together to develop an effective, creative curriculum, which pupils find exciting. They told inspectors that lessons are now more fun and this helps them to learn more quickly. The teachers' planning and teaching contributes considerably to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development, demonstrated by the displays of pupils' work throughout the school.

Some lessons observed were outstanding: exceptionally well-planned, with rapid pace and using a variety of activities drawn from the planned curriculum, which fully engaged and enthused pupils. For example, in a Year 5 English lesson, pupils were highly motivated and working exceptionally well independently as they prepared for a debate. The teacher, cleverly, linked their performance the previous evening on stage at The Theatre by the Lake, in Keswick, and also during collective worship in school that morning with a decision by the organisers to end the national dance festival. After being visibly shocked and upset by such a decision, pupils engaged passionately in lively dialogue and developed their speaking, listening and writing skills to present arguments for and against such a decision. There was effective use of sharing and valuing pupils' work and the pupils made excellent progress. All ability ranges were given well-matched challenges to maximise their learning.

Phonics is taught well, as was demonstrated in an outstanding lesson with a combination of pupils from Reception and Years 1 and 2. The pace of learning was rapid as the pupils moved from one activity to another, both in the classroom and outdoors.

When learning in Key Stage 1 was satisfactory rather than good, it was because activities did not meet the needs of different pupils precisely, especially the more-able, and the pace of learning was too slow. Too much time was spent sitting listening on the carpet, rather than moving on quickly to independent work.

The marking policy ensures that pupils' work is marked frequently and regularly, but pupils are not always clear about the next steps to improve their work because some comments in lessons and workbooks lack the necessary detail. All pupils are assessed when they start at the school and a new tracking system allows teachers constantly to set realistic and challenging targets which most pupils know and understand. There is effective use of peer- and self-assessment by the older pupils, which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their own work, which was demonstrated in lessons and in their workbooks.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils say, overwhelmingly, they feel safe in school and are confident that they can turn to any adults if they have any concerns. They have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed and they act safely. This was evident during the inspection from observations in the Early Year Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, discussions with pupils about how the rare occasions of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with and also from the way that pupils talked about regulating their own behaviour. Comments from parents and carers and staff reinforced how effectively behaviour is managed in school. Although attendance is average overall, there are some pupils whose achievement could be improved by attending school more regularly.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in and around school and incident logs indicate that there is very little evidence of bullying. The planned curriculum raises pupils' awareness successfully of different types of bullying. The code of conduct is understood by all members of the school community and good behaviour is celebrated and rewarded. Groups of pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy the responsibility of supporting the younger children. Pupils come together for collective worship, where they clearly demonstrate their ability to organise themselves in an orderly manner. The effective behaviour policy has ensured that pupils are securely aware of boundaries and consequences.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers have worked successfully to raise attainment at the end of Year 6 to above average. The headteacher has worked very effectively with all staff and the governing body to focus on identifying the school's strengths and areas for development. Consequently, there have been improvements in pupils' progress, particularly in reading, in a relatively short space of time. With a new tracking system introduced in September 2011, progress is now very secure and the impact of new initiatives is monitored closely to raise achievement. All staff and pupils have been engaged in developing a new and exciting creative curriculum, which is having a good impact on progress. There is an improving picture in the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and the impact of this is seen in the tracking of pupils' progress and the quality of their work. The senior staff work very effectively to support the professional development of the teachers in order to maximise the opportunities for every pupil to reach their full potential, no matter when they start at the school. These improvements, combined with the pupils' very good behaviour, demonstrate good capacity to improve.

The stimulating environment is enhanced by a range of opportunities, such as developing pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills across the curriculum. This, together with topic work, is developing the pupils' team work and contributing to raising their expectations.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination effectively. Appropriate interventions accelerate the progress of many pupils who join the school other than at the usual times and of those identified as potentially falling behind. There is a strong emphasis of respecting each other and knowing right from wrong.

Pupils talk very thoughtfully about their responsibility to support those less fortunate than themselves. They are engaged with their local community. These activities also impact well on the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development.

There are opportunities for the school to extend sharing of good practice across the school and work with external partners to raise further the quality of teaching and learning. Staff organise a range of opportunities in lessons and through trips and visitors to extend the experiences of pupils.

The governing body, many of its members relatively new, supports and challenges the school to drive whole-school improvement. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and meet all current requirements.

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.
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.



15 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Workington, CA14 2DW

Thank you for the warm welcome to the inspection team when we came to inspect your school recently. A particular 'thank you' goes to those of you who gave your time to talk to inspectors about how much you enjoy your work and the activities you take part in outside of lessons. Some of you who read to inspectors demonstrated how you work out unfamiliar words and told us why reading skills are so important.

You attend a good school, where the staff do all they can to encourage and support you. The teaching you receive is good and improving. Your behaviour is exceptionally good in lessons and around the school and the school ensures that you have a very safe environment. You are good at looking after each other and this helps the younger children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to settle quickly into school. School leaders are successful in helping all these things to happen.

I have asked that the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise attainment in English by the end of Year 2 by:

- extending the opportunities for independent learning in Key Stage 1
- ensuring that the pace of learning in lessons meets the needs of all pupils consistently, particularly those of you who are more-able
- ensuring that you understand how you can improve your work during lessons and through marking in your books.

You can help by attending school regularly and continuing to work hard in all your lessons.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Taylor
Lead Inspector

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