

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107157
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	356100
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2011
Reporting inspector	James Kidd

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	318
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Gill Brown
Headteacher	Mrs Finnuala Nelis
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons or part-lessons, taught by 11 teachers. They held meetings with the school council, the free trade council, teaching and support staff, two members of the governing body, parents and carers and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, safeguarding and child protection documentation, pupil progress monitoring files and pupils' workbooks. Inspectors also analysed 128 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How, and with what impact, the school is addressing previous underachievement.
- Whether the school's strategies to improve pupils' writing skills are leading to improvement.
- Whether challenge in teaching is good enough to enable more-able pupils to reach the standards of which they capable.
- Whether the curriculum promotes pupils' progress in both their academic and personal development.
- How, and with what impact, the school has addressed the area for improvement from the previous inspection in relation to tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school, two miles from the city centre and serves a mixed area of local authority and private housing. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic heritages and who speak English as an additional language are above average and increasing. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with that usually seen. It is a nationally accredited Healthy School and it also holds the Activemark for its work in physical education.

There have been several staffing changes since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher and the establishment of a new senior leadership team.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a rapidly improving school which provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Pupils feel safe in school and they benefit from outstanding care, guidance and support from the adults who work with them.

Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are below expectations for their age, particularly in communication, language, literacy and writing. Following a period of considerable underachievement, which impacted negatively on attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are now making satisfactory progress across the school and reaching broadly average standards by the time they leave. The school recognises that if pupils' progress is to continue to rise, it needs to ensure that the advice pupils receive on how to improve their work is consistently good across the school and also that pupils act upon it. Staff are aware, too, that some activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage do not have a clear purpose which is understood by the children and that provision in the outdoor area does not always facilitate the reinforcement and extension of learning indoors.

Pupils' personal outcomes are invariably good. They behave well, understand how to live a healthy lifestyle and why this is important, and their attendance has been above average for several years. They are keen to take on responsibility: school and fair trade councillors meet regularly, are proactive in their support for others and have even been invited to the Lord Mayor's parlour to discuss their work.

Teaching is satisfactory. On occasions, the more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently well to enable them to reach the higher National Curriculum levels. The skills-based curriculum impacts well on pupils' academic and personal development, and motivates them to want to learn.

Leaders have a growing understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and, as a result of a detailed, perceptive and accurate analysis of school performance, led by the inspirational headteacher, it has been able to improve pupils' achievement rapidly and securely. Staff feel valued and speak highly of the school's emphasis on the need to develop their leadership skills further. Members of the governing body have a sound understanding the school's strengths and areas for development and are concerned to enhance their strategic role. Principled leadership, marked improvements in pupils' progress and attainment and much more effective pastoral care demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate pupils' progress by:
 - – sharing good practice in assessment and marking across the school in order to ensure that pupils are consistently aware of how to improve their work and that they act on the advice they are given
 - – ensuring that challenge in teaching is consistent and enables more more-able pupils to reach the standards of which they capable
 - – extending the coaching programme in order that teachers can benefit more widely from the expertise of their colleagues.
- Continue to embed the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - – further developing the leadership skills of middle managers
 - – developing the strategic role of the governing body.
- Continue to develop provision within the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - – ensuring that all activities have a clear purpose, which is understood by the children
 - – ensuring that learning developed indoors is reinforced and extended in the outdoor environment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enter school eagerly in the morning and greet their classmates and their teachers with a smile. They enjoy their lessons and value the many opportunities they have to share their ideas as 'talk partners' and in groups. They enjoy and are generally engaged in their learning and believe that their teachers do everything they can to make the lessons interesting. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve satisfactorily across the school. The underachievement in recent years has been arrested and the progress of all groups is beginning to accelerate. Attainment at the end of Year 6 was broadly average in 2010, after two years of below average standards. Inspection evidence shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to meet, and in some cases exceed, their challenging targets, thus ensuring that improvements in progress and attainment are being sustained. An increasing number of pupils are making two levels progress across Key Stage 2. Pupils' attainment and progress in writing are improving apace, as a result of the emphasis the school places on pupils rehearsing their ideas before they put pen to paper. This 'talk for writing' initiative is proving to be a considerable success.

Pupils are very proud of St Patrick's and they represent the school and their families with dignity and respect. They get on well with each other, are welcoming to visitors and are more than pleased to show them their work. They value the vibrant displays in school and are delighted when their assignments appear on the walls in classrooms and on the corridors. They display an enviable social conscience, explaining to pupils and adults just why fair trade should be promoted and working hard to raise money for people less fortunate than themselves. They support each other willingly and older pupils look after younger ones with sensitivity. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is a racially harmonious community and pupils have a good understanding of

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cultures and religions which are different to their own. This awareness is reinforced by 'story week' when local families visit school to talk about their cultural heritages. The Easter production is the highlight of the school year and the neighbouring church is packed with pupils and their families, representing a variety of religions.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory but improving and there are examples of good teaching in both key stages and of excellent practice in Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, there are examples of visual prompts to motivate pupils and to reinforce their learning. In an outstanding Year 5/6 literacy lesson, for example, pupils looked at pictures and used gestures and actions to help verbalise the instructions about how to 'catch an ogre' and then wrote their own stories, which they presented with gusto to the class and to visitors.

Teaching is more consistent than at the time of the previous inspection, but some inconsistencies remain, particularly in relation to the levels of challenge for more-able pupils, which do not always lead to them reaching the higher National Curriculum levels. Nonetheless, relationships between pupils and between pupils and the adults who work with them are warm and mutual respect abounds. Assessment continues to improve and teachers monitor pupils' work regularly and accurately, leading to the establishment more challenging targets, of which pupils are generally fully aware. However, although there are examples of good practice in marking, which offers pupils detailed advice on how they can

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improve their work, its quality is not consistent across the school. Moreover, pupils sometimes do not appear to act on the advice that their teachers give to them.

In the words of pupils, 'Learning is fun now and we can see the links between the different subjects we study.' These comments are a testament to the developing curriculum, which provides a good balance between pupils' own interests and their acquisition of discrete subject skills and those which are common to all areas of learning. Visits or visitors often open topics and whet pupils' appetites for more. The curriculum is under continuous review and is modified and amended when needed, following detailed discussion between staff and pupils about its impact. This has a positive impact on raising pupils' self-esteem, on their enjoyment of learning and on their academic and personal development. There is a wide range of in-house and external enrichment activities and pupils benefit from residential visits, visits to museums, libraries and historical sites. Physical activity is a key element of curriculum delivery and the girls' football team is just one example of how pupils can represent their school.

Care, guidance and support are of the highest order and recognised as such by pupils, parents and carers, one of whom commented, 'The care and commitment of the staff of St Patrick's benefit pupils greatly in all aspects of their learning and development.' Indeed, the outstanding work of the cohesive and proactive pastoral team, comprising the special educational needs coordinator, teaching assistants, including those with the higher level qualification, and also the learning mentor, leads to pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, taking full advantage of everything the school has to offer. Induction procedures are comprehensive and pupils settle down quickly into school and into their new classes at the beginning of the academic year. Similarly, strong links with local high schools ensure that pupils are fully aware of what to expect and of what is expected of them when they begin their secondary school careers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Although only in her second year at the school, the able and perceptive headteacher, supported by a talented senior team which leads by example, has galvanised the staff and they all share the vision for how the school is to improve and develop. The pupils and staff are proud of the school and of what it has achieved in a relatively short time. Middle leaders value the emphasis which is being placed on developing their leadership skills. They are also aware that an extension of the peer coaching programme is of the essence if staff are to share good practice in teaching across the school. Governance is

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satisfactory. Members of the governing body, although fully supportive of the school, recognise that their strategic role is currently underdeveloped.

There is good engagement with parents and carers, several of whom speak positively about the reading, numeracy and literacy sessions provided for them by the school. There are good partnerships with a variety of schools and outside agencies for the benefit of pupils. For example, the school has strong links with higher education establishments and the Sheffield University Confucius Centre enables Chinese to be taught in school.

Child protection and safeguarding policies and practice are good overall and the procedures to ensure that all staff and visitors are appropriately vetted are exemplary. The school tackles discrimination whenever and wherever it occurs but its promotion of equality of opportunity is no better than satisfactory because the more-able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.

The school promotes community cohesion well as a result of strong links with a range of other schools, through the curriculum, which celebrates diversity and through the many visitors, often from pupils' families, who come in to talk about the cultures to which they belong.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

This is a satisfactory and improving setting. From starting points which are generally below age-related expectations overall, and well-below in communication, language and literacy and in writing, children make satisfactory progress throughout the Nursery and Reception classes. Improvements in provision are now leading to increasing proportions of pupils entering Year 1 at appropriate stages of development for their age. Children behave

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well and show good levels of cooperation, enabling them to become increasingly independent in their learning.

Children settle down quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of the setting's strong relationships with parents and carers and the emphasis staff place on ensuring children are safe and secure. Indeed, children's welfare is a major strength. Teaching is satisfactory and improving but opportunities to promote language development, interest and excitement are missed, particularly in the outdoor area. Consequently, children's learning indoors is not always reinforced and extended in the outdoor environment. In addition, activities within the setting do not always have a clear purpose, which is understood by the children. Assessment has improved and parents and carers are involved from the beginning in contributing to children's 'learning journeys.'

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Adults work closely together under the clear direction and guidance of the headteacher.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a 40% return of questionnaires, which is above average. Almost all parents and carers who returned the questionnaires believe their children enjoy school and that the school keeps them safe. Most are of the opinion that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle, that it meets their particular needs and they say that they are entirely satisfied with their children's experiences at St Patrick's. A small minority believes that the school does not deal effectively with inappropriate behaviour. Inspectors examined this concern and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site at breaks and at lunchtimes. They judge both behaviour and behaviour management to be good. A small minority also believes that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team considered this view closely and talked to parents and carers informally at the beginning of the school day. They also held a meeting with a group of parents and carers on the second day of the inspection. They found no evidence to endorse this view and judge the school's engagement with parents and carers to be good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Patrick'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 128 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 318 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	44	70	55	0	0	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	65	51	59	46	1	1	3	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	25	77	60	14	11	5	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	24	81	63	10	8	5	4
The teaching is good at this school	38	30	73	57	9	7	4	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	26	73	57	14	11	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	24	91	71	3	2	2	2
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)	22	17	84	66	7	5	5	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	26	79	62	13	10	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	35	27	67	52	17	13	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	20	77	60	15	12	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	38	30	71	55	15	12	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	38	67	52	9	7	2	2

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 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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



20 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Sheffield, S5 0QF

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn and are particularly grateful to the school and fair trade councillors who gave up their time to tell us about their work. Here is the letter I promised I would write to you!

St Patrick's provides you with a satisfactory education but it is improving very quickly indeed. You are making improving progress in your lessons and the standards you reach are rising. You behave well, enjoy looking after each other and collect lots of money for charity. You explain to visitors why a balanced diet is so important and you keep yourselves fit by playing games and sports.

Teaching in school is satisfactory but it is sometimes good and outstanding. You think the curriculum is very interesting and you attend so many clubs and educational visits. The grown-ups look after you exceptionally well and we know that you have a high regard for them.

All the staff want to make your school better. To help them do this I have asked them to make sure that they give you good advice on how you can improve your work and also to challenge those of you who sometimes find the work easy, to reach higher and higher standards. I have asked them to share their ideas with each other to make the teaching better. I have asked that the roles of school leaders and the governing body be strengthened and finally, I have asked the school to make sure that the children in the Nursery and Reception classes know why they are learning what they learning and to give them chances to learn even more in the outdoor area.

Thank you again for being so friendly, kind and polite. Please keep working hard, looking after each other and listening to the advice your teachers give you.

Yours sincerely

James Kidd

Lead inspector

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