

# St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Langley Moor

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114268
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	357509
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Petts

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	76
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Carol Bainbridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pauline Burnside
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Goatbeck Terrace Langley Moor Durham DH7 8JJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 3780552
<b>Fax number</b>	0
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and observed four class teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body and spoke to staff and groups of pupils. They analysed 39 questionnaire responses from parents and carers and looked at questionnaires from staff and pupils. The inspectors also looked at: pupils' progress and achievement data; intervention and support programmes; documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils; school policies; and plans for improving the quality of learning. They scrutinised pupils' current and past work and spoke to the local authority's School Improvement Partner to discuss her reports.

The inspectors reviewed many aspects of the school's work and looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The quality of learning and the rate of progress made by pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those learning English as an additional language and the more-able pupils, especially in mathematics.
- How well the school is using assessment data to secure improvement for all groups of pupils.
- The effectiveness of senior leadership in bringing about further improvements, tackling any issues, enriching the curriculum and sustaining the school's existing improvements.

## Information about the school

St Patrick's is a much smaller-than-average primary school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage, with a few at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities; none has a statement of special educational needs. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. However, currently, all pupils receive a free school meal as part of the national pilot scheme. The school extends its services by providing a breakfast club. The school has gained the Intermediate International School award and Healthy School status. Since the last inspection, the acting headteacher has been made the substantive post holder.

**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

St Patrick's is a good school. It provides outstanding care, guidance and support in a happy, nurturing atmosphere. Pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the respect they have for each other and their excellent behaviour and attendance. Consequently, they feel extremely safe. At the hub of the school's rapid progress since the last inspection and its current outstanding outcomes, is the excellent determination and drive of the headteacher. She is effectively supported by the staff and a perceptive governing body. All staff build extremely positive relationships with parents and carers and this includes providing some excellent family support. One parent summed up the views of most of the parents and carers by writing, 'Staff have been very good at helping and working with me to help my child.'

Skills on entry into Reception fluctuate from year-to-year, but are usually broadly in line with national expectations, though communication skills are often lower. In the 2010 Year 6 national tests, attainment was above average overall and in mathematics, with high attainment in English. This represents good progress over time for pupils, including for those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, with improving rates of progress in Years 3 and 4. Inspection evidence, confirmed by reliable school information, shows that the current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach even higher levels of attainment in both English and mathematics. Increasingly, progress in English is outstanding. The rapid closing of the attainment gap between mathematics and English is the result of the concerted action to enliven learning. Rigorous checking of pupils' progress and the accurate pinpointing of any learning gaps is having a positive impact on sustaining and improving progress rates. The more-able pupils are constantly challenged and consequently achieve in line with their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress, because their work is so skilfully matched to their needs and their support so effectively targeted. Assessment practice is good, although written feedback to identify even more precise steps for improvement is occasionally inconsistent. Pupils are keen to learn, because most teaching is good. On the few occasions when teaching is less imaginative and inspiring, rates of progress can slow a little. From arrival, pupils respond really positively to the high expectations made of them. Staff make certain that all pupils share the same happy experiences. Their increasingly well-honed skills and high rates of attendance prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage in their learning.

The reflective and self-critical approach of the senior leaders leads to accurate self-evaluation. All staff share the same high aspirations and they are totally committed to ensuring that pupils share the same happy, enjoyable experiences, enabling them to fulfil their potential. The growing confidence and expertise of middle leaders is adding to the momentum of continuous improvement. As a result there is a good and strengthening capacity to build upon all the improvements made.

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

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by:
  - exploiting and building upon the current highly effective and inspiring practice within the school to increase the proportion which is outstanding
  - providing more activities that use imaginative and thought-provoking approaches to inspire pupils
  - ensuring that all pupils are provided with more clearly defined steps for further improvement through teacher's marking of work.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils make good progress overall and enjoy their learning. Improving rates of progress in Years 3 and 4 are strengthening the pattern of good progress. The progress all pupils make in English is outstanding. Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make outstanding progress, because the help they require is so well matched to their needs. Increasingly, all pupils are exceeding what is expected of them, including the more able. Pupils are extremely well motivated to think for themselves and apply their skills to problem-solving tasks, exploring Kaprekar number options. Writing, a weakness in the last inspection, is now a clear strength for all pupils. Those potentially vulnerable and those new to learning English as an additional language make the same good progress as their classmates, because their intervention and support is so carefully targeted.

The pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in the high quality of their relationships and the respect that pupils have for each other and adults. Pupils say they really do feel safe and have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe, such as when using the internet or walking safely along busy roads. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. They gain a broad understanding of life in other cultures and countries. They are given excellent opportunities to reflect on the targets that are set for each of them. Pupils take their decision-making role seriously and are keen to take on responsibility, such as when organising an international day. Their excellent attendance, appetite for learning and the confident use of their skills, prepare them exceptionally well for transfer to secondary school.

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*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>	2
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	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are stimulating and friendly places for pupils to learn. Progressively, more lively approaches to learning are capturing and holding interest. For example, during the inspection pupils were observed adopting the role of a pottery salesman in the market place at Parthenon, to help to develop their persuasive writing skills. When progress is quickest, effective use is made of assessment information to shape activities to match age and ability, adding variety and pace to challenge pupils' understanding and thinking. Occasionally, in those lessons when pace is not quite as brisk, work is not always so well-matched to pupils' abilities. Good systems are in place to mark pupils' work and they all have the regular opportunity to contribute to their targetsetting and assess their own progress. However, step-by-step guidance for improvement is not always detailed enough to help drive even more improvement.

The curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils well and is continuing to develop. A good feature is the variety of trips, visits and visitors to stimulate pupils' interests and to make their learning more relevant, for example, visiting Durham to draw and paint the landscape around the cathedral and castle. Increasingly, themes are used in creative ways to promote more inspiring activities in which pupils can use a wider range of skills, for example, using the issue of environment management and protection to promote descriptive writing. Collaborative working with an inner city school in nearby Newcastle

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and a school in Beauvais, France, adds to the richness of their first-hand learning experiences.

The outstanding care, guidance and support enable all pupils to take full advantage of the range of activities provided for them and help boost achievement. Staff can identify some striking examples in helping pupils overcome barriers to their learning. Parents and carers are particularly appreciative of the excellent quality of information they receive about their children's progress and development. Excellent links with specialist support agencies help to enhance pupils' well-being and quicken progress, for example, providing specialist speech therapy. It also enables staff to adopt personalised approaches to support the needs of individual pupils and their families.

*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>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The high aspirations of senior leaders have created an extremely positive climate for learning. All staff are clear about their roles and what is expected of them in the drive to add to, and sustain, all improvements. Good partnership working is making an effective contribution to continuous improvement; for example, maintaining the rate of attendance at high levels. Intensive action to improve the quality of learning has rapidly eliminated any gaps in pupils' learning or pockets of underachievement. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning. The school, including members of the governing body, works relentlessly to prevent any form of discrimination, to ensure all have an equal opportunity to achieve their full potential. As a consequence, the richness of pupils' learning is continuously improving and all groups of learners achieve well.

The members of the governing body share the headteacher's passion and play a full part in shaping the strategic direction of the school. They hold the school to account constructively. The emerging confidence and growing experience of middle leaders is adding to the quality of the pupils' learning, for example, developing interesting themes which link subjects together. The excellent engagement of parents and carers can be seen in the open and helpful relationships they have with staff. The positive links with the local community and the parish church add to the strong sense of family. The school adopts good procedures for safeguarding and risk assessment which fully meet requirements. Staff and members of the governing body ensure that these are effective in keeping pupils safe, and result in pupils having an excellent understanding of how to protect themselves. Community cohesion is promoted well with a good range of experiences, such as watching Newsround's television coverage of famine in Africa, and provides pupils with a good understanding of the diversity that exists in the world around them.

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*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>1</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>1</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

Younger children settle into their mixed-age class confidently and happily to make good progress in all aspects of their learning. They quickly start to catch up where skills are lower than expected, such as developing good listening and speaking skills when hunting for the keys to the pirate's treasure. Lively, purposeful activities and tasks challenge their thinking, enabling children to develop a wide range of skills. The position and size of the outdoor classroom limit opportunities to fully extend children's physical skills or to allow them to investigate the interesting natural environment around them.

Children regularly practise their sounds and letters in fun ways, for example, 'chopping up the sounds' when identifying the clues given by Captain Jack the pirate, in a video interview. Early reading and writing development is intensely rehearsed leading to good progress across all abilities and needs. The excellent engagement of parents and carers ensures they are fully involved in their children's development. Welfare requirements are particularly well met, making certain that good health and well-being are continually encouraged. Children behave sensibly and thoughtfully and respond very positively to the praise and encouragement that they are given by adults. Comprehensive systems are in place to observe and check children's development and well-being and this leads to accurate, on-going assessment of each child's progress. However, not all the evidence is collated in the single learning journey the school holds to record the development of each child. The increasing experience and developing skills of the leadership is demonstrated by the continuously improving quality of the children's learning.



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*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

Just under one half of parents and carers returned the questionnaire which expressed their views of the school. This is well above the national average level of returns for primary schools. The overwhelming majority agreed that their children were making enough progress in school, that staff helped them to support their children's learning and help their children to lead a healthy lifestyle. These views are in line with those of the inspection. A very small number of those who responded made comments about behaviour. Inspectors investigated and judged almost all behaviour to be exemplary and that any very minor episodes were dealt with highly effectively by staff. Almost all parents and carers were happy with their children's experiences at the school and all felt that they were effectively informed about their children's progress.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Langley Moor 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 39 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 76 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	49	16	41	3	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	59	14	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	54	18	46	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	51	18	46	0	0	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	23	59	14	36	2	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	51	18	46	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	41	22	56	1	3	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)	20	51	15	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	46	20	51	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	38	20	51	2	5	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	26	26	67	2	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	44	21	54	0	0	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	54	16	41	1	3	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 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](http://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"> <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 pupils' 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.**



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Patrick's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School,  
Langley Moor, Durham, DH7 8JJ**

I want to thank all of you for the extremely friendly welcome that you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We found the time we spent talking to you, your teachers and other adults enjoyable and extremely rewarding.

St Patrick's is a good school. Some things at your school are outstanding. We were impressed by your excellent behaviour and your keenness to learn. What you are all able to accomplish is outstanding, because you have a determined headteacher, a talented group of staff and a governing body who know exactly what to do to make your school even better. They all take exceptional care of all of you and enjoy extremely positive links with your parents and carers. As a result you clearly feel really safe in school and enjoy very friendly relationships with your staff. You really know how to keep yourself safe. All this prepares you exceptionally well for moving to your next school. You can be proud of the good and sometimes excellent progress you make. Your school works hard to improve the way you learn and develop and makes certain that all of you share the same happy experiences.

We have asked your senior leaders and staff to look at even more ways of helping you to make faster progress. We think that some of your lessons could be made more interesting and thought provoking. We have also asked senior leaders to make sure that you are given clearer guidance in your books on how you can improve your work.

You can play your part by continuing to work as hard as you can. Thank you for helping with this inspection. I hope your school will continue to improve.

I wish you all a bright future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Clive Petts  
Lead inspector

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