

St Patrick's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105535
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	377258
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2011
Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI

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	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Ged Murphy
Headteacher	Nicola Nelson
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed eighteen lessons taught by seven teachers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including attainment data, curriculum files, monitoring records and planning. Inspectors looked at the school's assessment and tracking information, minutes of meetings held by the governing body, documents related to safeguarding and the school's action plans for improvement. Meetings were held with staff, three members of the governing body, a local authority officer, two groups of pupils and a group of parents and carers. Inspectors also spoke with some parents and carers at the start and end of the school day. Questionnaires were analysed from 40 parents and carers and 57 pupils.

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

- The quality of learning and progress for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and boys, particularly in writing.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment throughout the school.
- The capacity of leaders and managers, including the governing body, in ensuring sustained capacity to improve.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average, whereas the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. There has been an increase in the proportion of pupils who leave or join the school unexpectedly along with an increase in the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language and these proportions are above average. A very small proportion of pupils are from a Traveller heritage. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for Nursery- and Reception-aged children within the Early Years Foundation Stage unit. A newly constituted governing body took over responsibility for governance from the interim executive board in September 2011.

At the time of its previous full inspection in October 2009, St. Patrick's Primary School was deemed to require special measures. The school has received termly monitoring inspections to evaluate the progress it has been making since this time.

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

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. St. Patrick's Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and represents satisfactory value for money.

The determination of the headteacher and the assistant headteacher, along with the support of the staff has been instrumental in tackling the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. Consequently, key aspects of the school's work, specifically safeguarding, the Early Years Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and attainment have improved. Improvements to the quality of teaching along with well-chosen programmes to provide extra help to those pupils with the greatest need have ensured that learning and progress for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are improving. However, there remains some variability in the rates of progress and attainment in English, particularly for boys in writing. This relates directly to inconsistencies and variability in the quality of teaching and learning that remain. Although satisfactory overall, and some is good, where teaching is less effective it is because teachers do not always accurately assess pupils' progress in order to modify tasks in lessons so that their learning always moves forward at a rapid pace, particularly for the most able and those with lower levels of ability. In some lessons time is not always used well; sometimes all pupils sit and listen for too long as several tasks are explained for three or four groups before they are able to begin their own work. There have been improvements to school policies and routines. Consequently, the quality of lesson planning and the deployment of teaching assistants have improved. The frequency and detail of the feedback provided by teachers when they mark pupils' work have improved. Where this is most effective, it regularly provides clear points for improvement. However, there remains some inconsistency in the quality of this practice and pupils are not always given sufficient time to allow them to respond to their teacher's comments.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, along with some other important outcomes for pupils is good, including the extent to which they feel safe and lead healthy lifestyles. Many pupils say that they enjoy school. Although there have been some significant reductions in the number of pupils who are persistently absent; rates of attendance are rising overall. However, attendance is low and punctuality for some pupils is poor.

Self-evaluation is accurate and plans for improvement are sound. Leaders and managers are acutely aware that much work remains to be done in order for all pupils to make good progress. Effective leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage has brought about strong improvements so that this area is now good overall. Although leadership has improved and a new senior leadership team has been formed, some staff are at an early stage of developing their leadership and management roles as middle leaders and subject leaders. The improvements secured since the previous inspection indicate the capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve rates of progress and raise attainment further in English, particularly for boys in writing.
- Improve rates of attendance and punctuality.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is consistently good or better by:
 - improving the use of assessment information so that teachers plan tasks to successfully meet the learning needs of all pupils, particularly the most and least able
 - ensuring that the pupils use all available time productively
 - improving the consistency of feedback on work and ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to respond to comments in a way that helps them to improve their work.
- Improve the effectiveness of middle leaders at judging and influencing both outcomes and the provision.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' learning and progress are at least satisfactory in almost all lessons. Children start at the school with skills and knowledge that are mostly well below what is typical for their age and during their time at the school they make satisfactory progress overall. The most recent statutory assessments indicate that there have been particular successes at Year 2, where attainment is now securely average. At Year 6 attainment is now broadly average overall; it is average in mathematics but below average in English, this is in part because a smaller proportion of boys reach the expected Level 4 than girls, particularly in writing. Across the school rates of progress have improved but the progress of boys lags behind that of girls, especially in writing. The progress of all groups, including Traveller pupils, those who join the school at unexpected times and those who speak English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. A developing strength is the progress that pupils make when learning about letters and sounds.

Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for, and pupils from all races and cultures get on very well together. They stated clearly that they feel free from bullying and racism and are confident that if there are any issues staff will address them promptly. Pupils have a good understanding about how to keep themselves safe and understand the dangers associated with using the internet. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. For example, they know about healthy eating and the importance of exercise. Pupils contribute satisfactorily to the school and wider community. Although there is a school council, members are not yet initiating or taking the lead with areas they wish to improve. Pupils' secure basic skills and positive attitudes to learning mean that they are appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils behave well and they understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good; linked to the Catholic ethos there are strengths in pupils' spiritual and moral development.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	3
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	
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	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with a core which is good. Common features of teaching include good relationships between pupils and teachers, and clear learning intentions which are shared with pupils along with success criteria. Often pupils work well in pairs, and additional adults are well deployed. Where teaching is good the expectations of pupils are explicit and tasks are well matched to pupils' learning needs. The most effective questioning is targeted to check on individual pupil's understanding of what is being taught or to add just the right amount of challenge. However, these features are not found consistently in all lessons. In some lessons, expectations are low or unclear and work is not well matched to the needs of all pupils. An improvement has been to provide pupils with individual weekly targets in mathematics and sometimes in English. However, this is a recent development and individual targets are not always widely known by pupils.

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

The broad and balanced curriculum is satisfactory with a clear focus on developing pupils' reading, writing and mathematics skills. A success has been in improving the way that early reading skills are taught. A whole-school scheme involving older pupils reading and sharing books with younger pupils is helping to improve pupils' confidence in reading and positively developing their social skills. Teachers are beginning to make useful links between subjects and are actively planning opportunities to practise reading and writing in a wide range of subjects. However, these developments are recent and their impact has not yet made a difference to rates of all pupils' progress. Although there are good computer facilities, the use of information and communication technology across the full range of subjects is underdeveloped. There are strengths in the way that the curriculum is enriched by, for example, an annual residential visit for the older pupils. After-school clubs, such as football and street dance, are well attended by all groups of pupils.

Safeguarding has been improved and care, guidance and support are now good. Staff are caring and all have received the required training in child protection procedures so that they are clear about what to do in the event that they have a concern about a child. The school places a high priority on providing support and guidance to those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, such as those in danger of becoming persistent absentees. Good arrangements are in place for working with other agencies.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and governing body have not shied away from taking difficult decisions; for example, when making new appointments they agreed not to appoint until they had sufficient candidates of an appropriate quality. This has helped to bring about much needed improvement. Partnerships, particularly with the local authority and a local school, are strong and have proved to be central to securing improvement at the school. For example, a senior teacher from another school has had oversight for the development of mathematics until a newly recruited member of staff was able to take up her post. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and honest so that leaders and managers are clear that there remains much work to be done in order to deliver good overall outcomes for all pupils. There are good systems in place to track the progress of all pupils. Regular pupil progress reviews are used to hold staff to account for the progress of pupils in their care.

Community cohesion is satisfactory and there have been significant improvements to the relationships with the parish and the local Catholic church. Although there are clear policies in place to promote equality of opportunity and the school community is very inclusive, the variability in provision and in the progress pupils make, particularly boys, mean that equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Arrangements to safeguard

pupils have been improved and are now good. All required checks are completed on staff working with pupils. Risk assessments for the site and educational visits are in place. Partnerships with parents and carers are satisfactory but with many good features, for example, many parents and carers stated that they value the weekly newsletters. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. A new leadership team has been forged. However, the role of middle leaders, including subject leaders and key stage leaders, is underdeveloped.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Effective induction procedures ensure that children feel happy and safe and settle well into the Early Years Foundation Stage unit. Children enjoy their time in the setting and get off to a good start to their education. They settle well because of the close links with parents and carers and the good care and support they receive from staff. Most children start with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below what is typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well relative to their starting points in all areas of learning.

The adults work well together and provide activities that are interesting, practical and encourage children to become independent. Children are encouraged to make choices about what they want to learn and this helps their development as independent learners. As a result, all children are fully engaged in their work and are well motivated. Adults support children's learning through talking to them but their use of questioning is underdeveloped in extending children's thinking. Children are developing good early reading skills due to regular and good quality teaching about letters and sounds.

Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage have ensured that improvements have been made. These improvements are recognised by the parents and carers who speak very positively about the provision and care their children receive. Leaders know that the outdoor area still requires some improvement in order to provide even wider opportunities for learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Information from the questionnaires along with conversations with some parents and carers indicate that they are generally supportive of the school's work and have identified that clear improvements had taken place, particularly within the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the progress being made by pupils. However, a very small number commented that the quality of communication, particularly about pupils' English and mathematics targets, could be better.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Patrick's RC 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 160 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	78	8	20	0	0	1	3
The school keeps my child safe	23	58	16	40	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	48	19	48	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	60	13	33	1	3	1	3
The teaching is good at this school	23	58	15	38	1	3	1	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	60	14	35	2	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	45	20	50	0	0	1	3
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)	18	45	13	33	1	3	1	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	58	14	35	1	3	1	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	43	19	48	3	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	58	12	30	0	0	1	3
The school is led and managed effectively	25	63	11	28	1	3	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	70	10	25	1	3	1	3

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



12 December 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's RC Primary School, Manchester, M4 5HF

As you know I have been making visits to your school to see how things have been improving for you. You may remember that I visited your school recently with two other inspectors. Thank you to those of you who spoke to us, particularly the school council, and the pupils who gave up some of their lunchtime to meet us.

We judged that your school is no longer in need of special measures. It is providing you with a satisfactory education. We agree with you that your school is improving. You told us that you feel safer in school and you are making better progress now. You say that you are listening better and this is helping you to learn more. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory so that you make satisfactory progress.

While this is good news, we agree with Mrs. Nelson that there is still much work to be done to make your school even better. We have identified some things which still need to improve. We know you are capable of reaching higher standards. To help you to do this we have asked your school to:

- improve rates of progress and raise your attainment in English, particularly for boys in writing
- improve the attendance and the punctuality of those of you who do not come to school on time every day
- make sure all your lessons are as good as the very best lessons in the school
- help those teachers who have extra responsibilities do their job better.

You can help your teachers by always trying your hardest, behaving well and coming to school regularly. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector

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