

St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	122780
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	380533
Inspection dates	15–16 May 2012
Lead inspector	Richard Marsden

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	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Buck
Headteacher	Nick Benzie
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2006
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Richard Marsden

Additional Inspector

Richard Boswell

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by nine teachers. They spoke with parents and carers, and held meetings with pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and examined safeguarding documentation, attendance records, information on pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation and planning, as well as responses to questionnaires from 41 parents and carers, 21 staff and 111 pupils.

Information about the school

The school is of average size. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is more than twice the national average, and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above the national figure, although the proportion currently supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school part way through each year is roughly double the national average.

The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. It holds Healthy Schools Gold status.

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 where pupils achieve well. It is highly regarded by parents and carers for the high standard of care and the good education it provides. Pupils do particularly well in English. The school is not outstanding because their achievement in mathematics, although good, is not yet promoted as effectively.
- From starting points which are well below national expectations, pupils make good, and, in some cases, outstanding, progress as they move up the school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average in mathematics, and above average in English.
- Good teaching engages pupils' interest and challenges them very effectively. Teachers meet the learning needs of all groups of pupils well and give them clear guidance about how to improve. They promote literacy skills particularly well across different subjects, but are not as rigorous at planning opportunities for pupils to develop their numeracy skills beyond mathematics lessons, and the pace of learning in mathematics lessons is not as rapid as in English.
- Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes promote effective learning. Pupils are highly esteemed as individuals, and relationships display mutual respect. Pupils and their parents and carers rightly feel that the school is a safe place where pupils do not fear bullying or harassment.
- The headteacher and staff have been effective in bringing about improvements since the previous inspection. Improved monitoring has strengthened teaching. New ways of teaching reading and writing and a strong emphasis on tracking pupils' progress and setting individual targets have improved pupils' achievement in these subjects. School self-evaluation is accurate and leaders and staff share a common vision to provide the best for all pupils, including good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the teaching of mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2, so that, by summer 2013, pupils' progress and attainment in this subject are as good as they currently are in English. Do this by:
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is as rapid in mathematics lessons as it currently is in English
 - taking every opportunity to consolidate and extend numeracy skills across different subjects, not just in mathematics lessons.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

From starting points which are well below expectations for their age in English and mathematics, as well as in social and emotional development, children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared to move into the main school. They make better progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 than pupils nationally, and by the end of Year 6 their attainment is in line with the national average in mathematics and above average in English. Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires rightly said that their children achieve well.

There are no significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress as a result of the support they receive. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well because their progress is meticulously tracked and they are supported well in lessons and in small-group or individual activities with an adult nearby. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve in line with others.

In the lessons observed, pupils responded well to opportunities to work in small groups or pairs and to tackle practical tasks, rather than having to listen to the teacher for too long. They concentrated well on their work and enjoyed the challenges they were given. Standards of reading in Years 2 and 6 are currently above average. The most-able pupils read fluently and with excellent expression, showing skills above those expected for their age. They talk enthusiastically about what they enjoy reading and why. Less-able pupils in these years also show a sound grasp of the principles of reading. They showed inspectors how they use 'sounding-out' techniques to tackle unfamiliar words.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers who returned questionnaires, and the pupils themselves, rightly say that teaching is good. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that tasks are

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well matched to pupils' needs and enable them to make good progress. Teachers explain things clearly and question pupils very skilfully to check their understanding. They reshape tasks and explanations to make sure that everyone learns at a good pace. In the Early Years Foundation Stage songs and games enhance learning both indoors and out. Throughout the school topics are related to real life and are chosen carefully to engage both boys and girls. In an English lesson pupils gave thoughtful and humorous responses when challenged to include features such as personification and metaphor in descriptions of everyday objects such as a toothbrush or an ironing board. In a mathematics lesson pupils went outside to record their heart rates before and after various types of exercise before returning to the classroom to produce graphs of their findings. In this lesson pupils' engagement was outstanding and the pace of learning was very rapid. In a few other mathematics lessons the pace of learning was not quite as rapid.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they convey high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. New methods for teaching reading and writing have been successful in raising standards. Teachers promote literacy skills very effectively across different subjects, although numeracy skills are not consolidated and extended to the same degree beyond mathematics lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously and provide high-quality feedback, showing pupils clearly how well they are doing against their personal targets and how to improve. Pupils say they find these comments very useful in helping them to make progress. Pupils are encouraged to develop independence in their learning. They develop computer skills in a range of contexts. Homework is used well. Early identification and good-quality support mean that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught effectively. The individual support for pupils whose first language is not English is particularly strong.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school community is a striking example of multicultural harmony where pupils' cultures and backgrounds are explored and celebrated together. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect, for example during assemblies and class prayers, and they make thoughtful and sensitive responses. They listen to the views of others with interest and respect.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

'I am extremely impressed by the support my children receive, not only in respect of their academic education, but also in respect of their moral, social and emotional development. There is a real sense of community and we are delighted to be part of it.' This comment was typical of many that were written on the questionnaires for parents and carers. Many commented on the 'community' aspect of the school. Inspectors found that behaviour is good over time and that pupils feel safe. These views were strongly endorsed by parents and carers, and by pupils themselves. Good attitudes to learning and good behaviour in lessons enable teachers to teach effectively and pupils to learn successfully. Pupils apply themselves well to their tasks. They listen well to adults and to each other.

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Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in various situations, including on the internet. They understand the different forms that bullying can take, but they, and their parents and carers, are confident that teachers take swift and appropriate action whenever such issues arise.

Pupils respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility. For example, they serve as monitors and buddies supporting pupils who are new to the school, and they arrange collections for charities. In the Early Years Foundation Stage children respond well to the warmth and encouragement shown by adults as they are introduced to the school's high expectations. Throughout the school relationships show high levels of mutual respect.

The school gives good support to pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. Inspectors saw telling evidence of ways in which the school's support has enabled such pupils to maintain high standards of attendance, behaviour and work, making progress that is in line with that of their peers.

Leadership and management

The school is led well. Areas for improvement arising from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. There is now rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching, and teaching quality is more consistently good, although still better in English than mathematics. A sharp focus on tracking pupils' progress ensures that that any who are falling behind can be identified swiftly and appropriate action taken. Training has equipped staff to provide high levels of support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils who arrive at the school speaking little or no English. This has strengthened provision and raised pupils' achievement. The school has good capacity to improve further.

The governing body is well informed and well organised. Its members are closely involved in the life of the school, monitoring its work carefully. They hold the school to account for its performance and are not afraid to ask searching questions and challenge the headteacher, in order to secure the best for pupils. The school has good support from parents and carers and engages them well in their children's education.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils well. It promotes good progress and fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Extra-curricular activities, which include sport and music, are popular and well attended. Pupils enjoy a range of visits, including a residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre where they enjoy adventurous and confidence-building activities.

Leaders take care to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities. No pupils, whatever their background or need, are excluded from any activity. Every pupil is known as an individual, and there is no discrimination of any kind. Leaders are highly

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diligent in discharging their duties regarding child protection and the safeguarding of children. They keep these aspects under meticulous review to ensure that statutory requirements are met and that good practice prevails.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



17 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School,
Nottingham, NG11 7AB**

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was a great pleasure to meet you. We came to find out what your school does well and how it might be improved. We listened to your views as well as those of the adults, and a special 'thank you' to those who completed questionnaires. Your school is good, and your parents and carers are right to be pleased with it. These are the things that particularly impressed us.

- Teachers and other adults in school know you well. They look after you and keep you safe.
- You make good progress and by the end of Year 6, the standard of your work in English is above average.
- Your behaviour is good. You are very thoughtful and polite, and you get on well together.
- You enjoy your lessons and you concentrate really hard in class.
- Your teachers mark your work regularly and show you clearly the steps you need to take to improve it.
- You enjoy lots of out-of-school activities and visits.

To make your school even better I have asked your teachers to help more of you to make better progress, particularly in mathematics, where your standards are not quite as high as they are in reading and writing.

It was a great pleasure to visit your school. You can all help it to improve by continuing to behave well and trying your best.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden
Lead inspector

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