

# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Cashmore Avenue, Leamington Spa, CV31 3EU

**Inspection dates** 4–5 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school leaders have improved teaching and learning since the previous inspection. As a result, attainment has risen and pupils now achieve well.
- From low starting points, children learn and develop well in Nursery and Reception. The good progress they make there continues throughout the school.
- Teaching and learning are good. Work is almost always set at the right level of difficulty for each pupil, and swiftly adjusted in response to pupils' different rates of learning.
- Pupils in danger of falling behind, for whatever reason, are given good help and guidance to close the gaps in their learning.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They enjoy school and they behave well. Attendance is above average.
- Staff are proud to be at the school. The headteacher has moulded them into a strong team, wholly focused on securing the best for the pupils.
- The governing body is well informed. It keeps a close check on how well pupils are doing and constantly challenges the school to do better.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in reading is slower than in writing because pupils do not always understand the meaning of the words they read.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to sharpen their mathematical skills by solving problems in mathematics or using these skills in different subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 16 lessons, three of which they saw together with members of the senior leadership team.
- Play and lunchtimes were also observed and the breakfast club was visited.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, including those with management responsibilities, and the school's adviser from the local authority.
- The views of 13 parents were analysed through the Parent View website. Other parents' views were obtained informally at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors looked closely at a wide range of documents, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation document. They also examined the work in pupils' books.

## Inspection team

Doris Bell, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Patricia Underwood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families, is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those who speak English as an additional language, is average but varies between year groups.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave partway through their primary school education is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress.
- The school has its own breakfast club.

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

- Improve pupils' comprehension skills, by ensuring that all adults who listen to pupils read ask relevant questions to help pupils understand what the words they read mean.
- Give pupils regular opportunities to use their mathematical skills to solve problems, and to practise those skills through work in other subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Although attainment is below average at the end of Reception, pupils start Year 1 having caught up considerably in their learning and personal development. Attainment is broadly average in Year 2. It has risen in Year 6 and in 2012 nudged to above average, the highest it has ever been.
- Pupils who stay in the school through to the end of Year 6 achieve consistently well. Those who join at different times make good progress from their different starting points. More pupils make the expected two levels of progress between Year 2 and Year 6 than is found nationally. The proportion doing better than that is increasing steadily.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They learn to read for pleasure and for information. They know how to link letters and sounds (phonics) but their comprehension skills are not as well developed as their ability to read words. This holds them back in reading tests and assessments.
- Writing has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Pupils use their writing skills well in different subjects. Both boys and girls enjoy writing because different subjects include work that appeals to them, for example writing letters, diaries and reports. Year 2 pupils really enjoyed writing their own books with contents, index and glossary.
- Pupils learn a wide range of skills covering all aspects of mathematics, but do not have enough regular opportunities to use those skills to investigate and solve problems, or to apply them in different subjects. When they do use them, they do not always set their work out correctly, and become confused when trying to explain their thinking.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. They are supported well in their learning. Their individual learning targets are kept under constant review and quickly adjusted in response to any changes in their learning.
- Good help and guidance for pupils who speak English as an additional language ensure that they make good progress in learning to speak English so they can catch up in their learning. Pupils supported by the pupil premium also make good progress. A wide range of support helps to close gaps in their learning and raise their self-confidence. This includes individual help from extra adults, working in small groups, and attending the 'nurture group' where they learn to overcome trauma, control their behaviour and develop good attitudes to learning.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection. It is sometimes outstanding, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Planning is detailed and the checks carried out on pupils' progress, including through marking, are mostly thorough and accurate. Activities are usually matched well to pupils' different ability levels. Pupils know and understand their targets, and what they need to do to reach them. The strong emphasis on showing pupils how to 'up-level' their work, particularly their writing, is increasing the pace of learning.
- Teachers often draw pupils' attention to what they have learned previously, and help them to see how doing so can help with new learning. Nevertheless, they occasionally do too much for the pupils, and this means that sometimes, pupils lack the confidence to move on to the next

steps they know to take without first gaining the approval of an adult. This occasionally slows their progress.

- In most lessons, teaching and support staff work well together to show pupils how they might approach their learning. This happened particularly well in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were learning to use figurative language, and was evident too in a Year 5 lesson where they were shown the importance of asking the teacher to explain what they might not know.
- During lessons, teachers use examples of pupils' work well to show others how to improve their own. Pupils are becoming skilled at giving and receiving constructive comments about their work. Comments in marking often refer to pupils' targets, showing pupils what they have done well and what they need to do to improve.
- Phonics are taught well, and pupils have many opportunities to learn to read and write increasingly difficult words and sentences. However, not all adults who listen to pupils read make sure pupils understand the meaning of the words they read. This limits pupils' overall progress in reading. The school has implemented a training programme for volunteers to tackle this issue.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils in Year 6 said they 'enjoy school 110%'. All pupils said they felt safe and knew how to keep themselves safe. Virtually all parents agreed. Parents said staff were approachable and friendly, helped them to help their children, and supported their children's individual needs well. Pupils echoed these views, saying, for example, that teachers are 'kind and helpful', 'make learning fun' and give them 'lots of support'.
- The pupils' positive attitudes contribute greatly to their good progress, as does their much-improved attendance.
- Pupils in all age groups get on well with others. They listen attentively in most lessons, help each other with their learning, and ensure that no-one is lonely in the playground. Pupils have lots of opportunities to help around school, for example as school councillors, 'peer mediators' who help sort out any disagreements in the playground, and play leaders. They thank each other for any help they receive.
- Pupils say that behaviour is almost always good, and staff act quickly if it is not. The school's tough stance in managing behaviour has reduced exclusions. Teachers handle the occasional disruptions in lessons calmly and effectively, minimising their impact on learning. The nurture group and the much-appreciated system of rewards and sanctions help pupils to improve their own behaviour and feel good about themselves. The breakfast club ensures the day starts positively for pupils who attend it.
- Pupils told inspectors that there was 'no need to worry about bullying' at this school because, although it happens occasionally, 'it just isn't tolerated'. Pupils understand the different forms of bullying, and the effect they can have on people's self-esteem. They know what to do if they experience or know of any bullying. They are keenly aware of how the internet, mobile phones and social networking sites can be misused, and what to do if this happens.
- Pupils trust staff to help them deal with any concerns they might have. They particularly appreciate the 'worry boxes' where they can share concerns anonymously, knowing they will

always be followed up. Pupils new to the school feel well supported and able to settle quickly.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- Each member of the senior leadership team is passionate about securing the best possible progress for all pupils. Staff and governors are fully behind them. Their clear and accurate awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is based on good information. The school improvement plan includes the right things to do in the right order, and shows clearly who is responsible to ensure each one is achieved. As a result, pupils' achievement has continued to improve, despite changes of staff.
- The school's monitoring of teaching and the management of teachers' performance are accurate and thorough. Staff quickly respond to advice given and feel well supported on the road to further improvement. The success of this is most evident in writing, and work is well underway to secure similar improvements in reading and mathematics.
- The school has had to take some difficult decisions to get to the point it is at now. The local authority has provided or arranged good support for teaching, and the school has independently sought support for leadership and management, and for professional development. All of this has helped the school to keep moving forwards.
- The close working partnership with parents, and their increasing involvement in their children's learning, has also contributed to the improvement in pupils' progress, not least because it has improved pupils' attendance. The school supports its vulnerable families exceptionally well. It uses its close links with a wide range of external specialists to help in this.
- Pupils are taught a wide range of subjects, often in themes that are carefully chosen to appeal to particular groups of pupils. Pupils' personal development is promoted well in all subjects, building their resilience and ability to persevere. Writing skills are also given due emphasis in different subjects but mathematical skills are not.
- The good range of visits, visitors and well-attended out-of-school clubs widens pupils' experiences and makes learning more exciting for them. Good links with the wider community, including a school in Sierra Leone, help to raise pupils' awareness of different faiths and cultures at home and abroad.

### ■ **The governance of the school:**

The governing body knows the school well and holds it to account effectively. It ensures safeguarding procedures meet current national requirements. It is particularly vigilant in ensuring extra staff are trained at the higher level for child protection so that issues can always be dealt with promptly. Governors make sure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed, whatever their background or ability. They are aware of how pupil premium money has been used effectively to close gaps in pupils' learning and personal skills, for example through personal tuition and the nurture group. Governors check carefully that performance management targets for staff are met. They asked for them to be more clearly defined so that progress towards them could be more easily measured. They support the headteacher well in making decisions about staff pay rises, and know the reasons for them. They visit the school regularly to find things out for themselves, keep a close eye on how well pupils are doing compared to others in similar schools, and attend all relevant training to ensure they are fully up to date with current thinking.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125715
<b>Local authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	402352

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ann Allison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Ferguson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	01 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 425958
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