

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Radnor Drive, Churchtown, Southport, Lancashire, PR9 9RR

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- St Patrick's inspires pupils to thrive in all aspects of their academic achievement and personal development.
- Pupils of all ages are highly motivated and inspired by the adults around them. As a result, all pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium, have outstanding achievement.
- Outstanding teaching stimulates and supports pupils. This is due to the skills, dedication and commitment of teachers, teaching assistants and visiting specialists. They work extremely well together to plan lessons which enthuse pupils.
- Teachers continually measure pupils' understanding of their work and use this to plan lessons which meet the needs of every individual. Occasionally in lessons, pupils do not always have long enough to find out things for themselves.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, in the local community and beyond is often exemplary. Pupils enthusiastically contribute to the school community through their school council and the eco-group. They are pro-active in supporting those less fortunate than themselves by instigating fundraising activities.
- Together, all staff, members of the governing body, volunteers and visitors create an exceptional environment in which to learn. This contributes to the pupils being extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education which is very much appreciated by pupils and their parents.
- The headteacher, senior staff and the governing body are totally committed to continually improving St Patrick's. They thoroughly check on the quality of teaching and this has led to continuous improvement in pupils' achievement across all subjects.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 teachers and visited 20 lessons and part lessons, which included two joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with school staff, groups of pupils, senior leaders, subject leaders, parents, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, reports of the school's checks on how well it is doing, development plans, local authority reports, records of pupils' current attainment and progress, documents relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour and pupils' work.
- There were 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) prior to the inspection and these were taken into account when planning the inspection. A further 48 responses were recorded during the inspection and these were also considered by the inspectors.

Inspection team

Naomi Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maureen Hints

Additional Inspector

Anthony Buckley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Patrick's is a larger than average size primary school. A growing number of pupils travel from well outside the immediate area and there has also been an increase in the number of pupils joining the school during Key Stage 2, including those from overseas. This had led to an increase in numbers since the previous inspection and the school has responded by building additional classrooms.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those from services families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is lower than found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is slightly below average and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is about half that found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average as are those who speak English as an additional language although numbers in these groups are rising year on year.
- Several new staff have joined the school since the previous inspection.
- Since the previous inspection the school has gained a number of awards including: Arts Mark, National Healthy Schools status, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Mark, Full Eco-school Status, Full International School Status and Basic Skills Quality Mark.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase further the amount of time in lessons for pupils to work out things for themselves and show they can work on their own.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Children settle very quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of highly effective links between staff, parents and many nurseries. From a young age they learn how to respect each other, the adults around them and their school environment.
- Children join Reception with skills and knowledge that vary from year to year but are generally in line with those expected for their age. The teachers and teaching assistants are deployed very efficiently to ensure a wealth of adult-led activities and opportunities for children to play and learn independently, both in the classroom and outdoors. They develop an eagerness for learning which helps to ensure pupils make outstanding progress overall through the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment and achievement in recent years have been well above average.
- Pupils continue to make exceptional progress throughout Years 3 to 6. This includes those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding and those for whom English is an additional language. A significant proportion of pupils, including those from overseas, join the school during Key Stage 2 with skills that are typically lower than those expected for their age and they too make outstanding progress.
- As a result of excellent teaching and very precise support for those who need extra help from time to time, attainment and achievement in English and mathematics are well above average by the time they leave school. This ensures they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well above similar pupils nationally in English and in mathematics and similar to other pupils at school. The pupil premium is being successfully used to narrow further the gaps between groups of pupils and this demonstrates commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Staff are highly skilled in developing a keenness in children to read from a very young age. Those children who read to the inspectors demonstrated well developed skills to work out unfamiliar words by linking letters and sounds. They could retell stories in their own words demonstrating their understanding of what they had read. By the time pupils leave school, they are extremely competent readers.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The headteacher has been relentless in driving improvements in teaching, resulting in the quality of teaching now being outstanding overall. The progress of pupils is precisely measured and recorded to help inform teachers' planning of lessons in order to meet individual pupils' needs. As a result, there is early and highly effective help for pupils whose progress is occasionally not quick enough.
- Much of the teaching is outstanding as a result of exceptionally well-planned lessons. Teachers provide ongoing opportunities for pupils to learn through a very wide range of activities and at a rapid pace, which highly motivates, continually engages pupils and challenges their understanding. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson for example, pupils were encouraged to compare different weights and use different equipment for measuring. After a brief, whole class introduction, pupils were moved into different groups depending on their level of ability and eagerly embarked on weighing and measuring different objects and recording their results. Pupils were clearly enjoying their learning and the teacher and teaching assistant were highly skilled in monitoring progress and moving pupils onto their next steps for learning.
- Similarly, in Year 6, pupils were investigating World War II in an English lesson to develop their creative writing skills. They analysed in depth a video clip with the only sound in the animation being piano accompaniment. The teacher used highly effective questioning techniques to

encourage pupils to record key words to describe the relationships and feelings at different stages and the impact of the music. Pupils used advanced vocabulary in their note-taking and articulated well their individual perceptions. This showed how exceptionally well pupils were able to work on their own and explore ideas for themselves. In a few lessons, however, there is not enough time given for pupils to work out things for themselves.

- Teachers follow a clear, consistent whole school marking policy to ensure that pupils know exactly how well they are doing and also what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils' books contain work which is well presented and reflects the pride they take in completing tasks to the best of their ability.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- From an early age, children learn how to value each other, the adults around them and their strong school community. There is an exceptionally strong ethos of mutual respect starting in Reception and continuing throughout the school. This leads to pupils feeling happy, safe and secure. This is reflected in their above-average attendance and their punctuality in the mornings, which is very good indeed.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school and this leads to extremely good attitudes to learning and sensitively caring for each other. This was reflected in conversations with pupils and their families, and from the vast majority of views expressed on Parent View. Almost all parents expressed their confidence in the school.
- The older pupils really do enjoy taking responsibility for caring for the younger children and this was seen first-hand when Key Stage 2 pupils, who are trained as coaches, collected younger groups of children at lunchtime. They took them to the junior playground and organised sports for them to play.
- It is clear that there is confidence in St Patrick's to provide not only a high standard of education for pupils but to ensure that pupils are safe and secure and learn how to keep themselves safe both within the school environment and beyond.
- Pupils say that bullying is not an issue at this school although they do learn about different types of bullying and, for example, how to stay safe when using the internet. They are adamant that they could turn to any adult in the school if they felt unsafe and that there are clear procedures that would deal with issues should they arise.
- The creative curriculum is enhanced by a raft of trips and visits contributing to pupils enthusiastically learning about the breadth of cultures within Britain and overseas. Visiting professionals such as artists and musicians regularly visit the school and enhance the curriculum.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The exceptional headteacher works tirelessly to improve all aspects of the school for the benefit of pupils, their families, staff and the local community. Alongside prioritising improvements in teaching, he has worked very effectively with the governing body in making important spending decisions. This includes making significant new appointments, building new classrooms and developing the outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- All staff share the headteacher's vision and are dedicated and committed to providing an all-round education for pupils. This enables pupils to reach their academic potential alongside developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth, which is at the heart of the school.
- The school's systems to check pupils' progress are very strong and this is used alongside other procedures to check the quality of teaching and measure how well staff are meeting their various areas of responsibility. Staff appreciate the fact that the headteacher 'leads by example'. All staff feel extremely well supported through training opportunities both within the school and beyond. They are set challenging targets which are checked and linked directly to pay awards.
- The local authority provides 'light touch' support at St Patrick's. There is confidence in the staffing structures to embed new initiatives to drive improvement and sustain pupils' excellent

progress.

- A more creative curriculum is now being used and this gives pupils the opportunity to learn through topics, which they really enjoy.

- **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body brings a breadth of expertise to the school. They are deeply committed to continually driving improvements at St Patrick's. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities; all staff have been vetted and trained appropriately to keep pupils safe. They have a very accurate overview of overall provision. Governors regularly challenge staff on pupils' progress and they thoroughly check the link to new initiatives on the quality of teaching. This level of enquiry and accountability contributes enormously in shaping the long term plans for the school based on how well pupils are progressing compared to other schools. They have also agreed the use of pupil premium funding to ensure that all pupils make outstanding progress, no matter when they start at St Patrick's.

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

Unique reference number	104918
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	402955

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	328
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs R Travers
Headteacher	Mr G Bevin
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2007
Telephone number	01704 225906
Fax number	01704 507180
Email address	Admin.StPatricks@schools.sefton.gov.uk

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