

St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Ling Forest Road, Mansfield, NG18 3NJ

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2013

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| 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.

- Standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics are typically well above average. Most pupils make good progress in all subjects.
- Children make particularly good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the stimulating surroundings and high quality teaching.
- Teaching is typically at least good, and some is outstanding.
- Reading is taught well. Pupils enjoy reading at home and at school.
- Pupils feel safe in school and behave well. The school is a very calm place to learn in.
- School leaders have created a very caring atmosphere in school. All pupils are well known and valued as individuals.
- The new headteacher has made a very positive impact in a short time, and has acted quickly with other leaders and governors to improve teaching and raise achievement.
- The school has built an excellent relationship with parents and carers, who are very supportive of the school and its leaders.
- The governing body supports and challenges school leaders very effectively.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking is not consistent in showing pupils how to improve their work.
- In some lessons teachers talk for too long at the start of lessons.
- Teachers' questions do not give pupils enough chance to discuss their learning.
- Pupils cannot often use their initiative to decide for themselves how they are going to do their work.
- Subject and other leaders do not do enough checking of the quality of teaching, pupils' books or the progress made by pupils to make sure all pupils are making at least good progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with school leaders. All teachers and classes were seen. Inspectors also attended a Mass held in school and a school assembly.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and looked at pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with the school's independent school improvement adviser and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with a small number of parents and carers at the start of the school day. Inspectors also looked at the 45 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as results of the school's own recent survey of parents and carers. Inspectors also considered the 18 staff questionnaires they received.
- Inspectors looked at documents including the school's plans for improvement, records of the quality of teaching, school information on the progress of its pupils and at nationally published results. They also looked at the school's records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and at how the school keeps its pupils safe.
- All pupils in Year 6 were out of school on an educational visit on the first day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Michael Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Johnson

Additional Inspector

Nigel Grimshaw

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportions of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides the school with additional funding for children in local authority care, for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and for pupils from service families, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher was appointed temporarily in April 2013 and her post was made permanent in June 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by making sure that:
 - teachers' introductions are not too long, and that pupils can begin work by themselves more quickly
 - pupils have more chance to discuss their learning and how they are going to go about their work
 - teachers' questions make pupils think more
 - pupils are given more chances to investigate and find out for themselves
 - teachers' marking more consistently shows pupils how to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that teachers in charge of subjects and areas regularly check:
 - the quality of teaching in their areas, and help teachers to improve the quality where it is needed
 - pupils' books to make sure they are achieving the highest standards
 - the progress made by pupils, and provide help if pupils fall behind.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most pupils make good progress in all year groups. Pupils' standards in English and mathematics are typically well above average.
- Children start school with skills and abilities which are slightly below those expected for their age. They make good and sometimes outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. By the time they enter Key Stage 1 their skills are slightly above those expected for their age.
- In Key Stage 1 pupils continue to make good progress. Pupils' standards in English and mathematics have risen steadily in recent years and were significantly above national figures in 2012. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is typically good.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported, so they usually make good progress in line with other pupils. Individual needs are identified early, and effective help is given.
- The school spends the additional funding from the pupil premium appropriately on in-class support, on one-to-one support for certain pupils and on subsidising class visits. As a result pupils known to be eligible for free school meals across the school generally achieve standards which are at least as high as those of other pupils in school, and higher than similar pupils nationally. However, in 2012 these pupils were around four terms behind other pupils in school in both English and mathematics. This gap is predicted to close completely in Key Stage 2 results this year.
- Pupils from minority ethnic background and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported. As a result they achieve more highly than similar pupils nationally.
- Reading is taught well. Standards of reading are above average. Pupils enjoy reading at home and school. By Year 6, pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors.
- Pupils write at length in different subjects, for example in religious education, as well as in literacy lessons. Pupils enjoy exciting writing tasks, so they make good progress in writing.
- Pupils' standards in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 in recent years have been significantly higher than national figures. However, in 2012 they fell to around the national average. This was because the support for a small number of pupils in Year 6, particularly disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for free school meals, was not effective in helping them to catch up. This meant they made slower progress than in previous years, especially in mathematics.
- School leaders have taken rapid and effective action to make sure that all pupils achieve well. Evidence seen by inspectors in lesson observations, in pupils' books and in the school's records show that the progress being made by all groups of pupils is now good. Key Stage 2 results in 2013 in English and mathematics are on course to be well above average.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the best teaching, work is closely matched to pupils' abilities. In a mathematics lesson, for example, Year 6 pupils made outstanding progress in calculating percentages because the teacher made sure the work for each group provided just the right level of challenge.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is of high quality. In a session for nursery-aged children, for instance, children made good progress in counting because of the range of activities and resources for them to explore and choose from. Adults' questions encouraged children to use correct mathematical terms.
- Pupils enjoy interesting writing tasks. In one English lesson, for example, Year 4 pupils made good progress when they were asked to write a letter to persuade the local council not to build houses on their school playing field.
- In less successful teaching, teachers sometimes talk for too long at the start of lessons. In a Key Stage 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the progress of pupils was limited because they did not have enough time left in the lesson to apply what they had learned through independent tasks.
- In other lessons pupils talk too little. On these occasions, teachers' questions are not probing enough and do not encourage pupils to reflect upon and discuss their learning. For example, in a reading lesson seen by inspectors, pupils' progress was limited because the teacher did not give pupils enough time to think about and discuss their ideas.
- Teachers' marking is frequent and detailed. However, it does not consistently and clearly tell pupils how to improve their work. This is done better in some classes than in others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- All behaviour observed in and around the school was at least good. Pupils are friendly, articulate and polite. The school is a very calm and orderly place to learn in.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. Pupils say they enjoy lessons and that poor behaviour is rare. They work well together and concentrate well on their work.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and are well looked after by teachers and other adults. This view is strongly supported by parents and carers.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying and say bullying in the school is very rare. School records confirm this. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe and have an excellent understanding, for example, of the potential dangers of the internet.
- Exclusion rates are very low. Racism is almost unknown. Pupils respond very well to the school's caring attitude towards all its pupils. The school expects pupils to be friendly and co-operate well. As a result, all groups of pupils get on very well together.
- Pupils' attendance is rising steadily and is now above average.
- Pupils' behaviour is not outstanding because in lessons they are not encouraged enough to

decide for themselves how to go about their work, or to explore and investigate issues. In lessons where they are not engaged by exciting teaching, they sometimes lose focus.

The leadership and management are good

- The new headteacher has made a very positive impact in a short time. She is well supported by an experienced and committed senior leadership team who were already taking effective action to drive up pupils' standards before her arrival. She has acted quickly to identify accurately which areas to concentrate on, and has given the school a strong sense of purpose and direction. As a result, the school continues to improve.
- The headteacher checks the quality of teaching regularly. The management of teachers' performance is linked to their salary progression. Teachers appreciate the opportunities they get to develop and improve their practice.
- The school's systems for checking pupils' progress have recently been strengthened. The progress of pupils who may underachieve is now checked carefully.
- In keeping with the Christian ethos of the school, all pupils are known and valued as individuals. School leaders are committed to treating all pupils equally, and discrimination is not tolerated.
- The school's systems for keeping pupils safe meet legal requirements.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with interesting subjects and topics. Pupils enjoy many visits, visitors to school and special events. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Assemblies and religious services encourage pupils to reflect on their experiences. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong, and they learn about other cultures.
- The school has an excellent relationship with parents and carers, who are very supportive of the school and its leaders. Parents and carers told inspectors that their children look forward to coming to school every day, and that staff are helpful and approachable if their child has a problem.
- The school receives very little support from the local authority. The school works closely with an independent adviser who provides valuable advice on the quality of the school's work. The school works well in partnership with its local family of Roman Catholic schools, and receives good support from them. This contributes to the school's strong capacity to make further improvements.
- The roles of teachers in charge of subjects and other areas, including numeracy and literacy, are not fully developed. They do not routinely observe lessons to improve the quality of teaching, check pupils' work, or check the progress that children make in their areas.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are determined to improve the school. They have a good knowledge of what is happening. For example they were quickly aware of the likely fall in pupils' results in 2012 before it happened. They rigorously held school leaders to account for it, and set up a group of governors to monitor pupils' progress. They strategically review the school's performance with school leaders each year, and help leaders to identify priorities and to plan for improvement. The governing body has an accurate view of the school's strengths and

weaknesses, including the quality of teaching and how well the school is performing compared to all schools nationally. They know how teachers' performance is managed and how this links to teachers' salary progression, including how the school rewards good teaching and tackles any underperformance. Governors oversee the budget effectively and have a good knowledge, for example, of how extra funds from the pupil premium are spent and the impact of this funding. Governors are keen to improve their skills and a number have recently undertaken further training.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 122819 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 411813 |

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

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| 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 | 259 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ken Daly |
| Headteacher | Jane Smedley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 November 2006 |
| Telephone number | 01623 478090 |
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