

Saint Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Harrison Road, Leicester, LE4 6QN

Inspection dates 14–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good provision for pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development permeates the school, underpinned by an atmosphere of calmness, tolerance and respect for each other.
- Pupils develop into confident, socially mature individuals who have a pride in their school and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 now achieve well. They make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They are catching up fast from previous underachievement. Pupils this year are now beginning to reach the higher levels of which they are capable.
- Teachers mostly have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and how well they should behave. Reading is taught particularly well.
- Disadvantaged pupils, the disabled and those who have special educational needs achieve as least as well as other pupils.
- Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. They feel safe and secure in school and arrangements to keep them safe are exemplary.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership. Together with other senior leaders and governors, he has successfully improved the teaching over time and raised achievement.
- Parents are very supportive of the school. The communication with parents successfully encourages them to be effective partners in their children's education.
- The governors are well organised and skilled in monitoring the performance of the school. They help to improve pupils' achievement by providing appropriate support and challenge for the headteacher.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is effective in giving children a good start in school, where they make good progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in mathematics is not as strong as that in reading and writing. Fewer pupils reach the higher standards or make better progress than expected in this subject.
- Teaching fails to improve pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling, and does not always provide clear steps for further improvement for pupils to reach a consistently high level.
- On occasion, teachers set work which is too easy in mathematics and writing, particularly for the most able, and they do not always expect enough from these pupils when they write independently.
- The progress of some pupils in Key Stage 2 is hampered by untidy presentation.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 12 lessons and two assemblies. They talked to pupils about their progress and the work in their exercise books. Two of the visits to classrooms were undertaken jointly with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed the deputy headteacher reporting back to the teachers on her findings regarding the quality of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes were observed in lessons, assemblies, playtimes, when they moved around the school, during lunchtime, and at the beginning and end of the school day. The inspectors spoke with pupils about their perceptions of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' writing, mathematics, science and other exercise books, and heard some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with members of staff, groups of pupils and the Chair and two other members of the Governing Body. The lead inspector spoke on the telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took into account the 42 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and parents' written comments. They held informal discussions with a random sample of parents.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 20 members of staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, which included: the school's checks on how well it is doing and its plans for improvement; evidence about how teachers are set targets to improve pupils' progress; records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching; minutes of meetings of the governing body and the senior leadership team; information about pupils' progress over time; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Terrance Mortimer, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Richard Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Patrick's is an average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the Nursery part-time and Reception class on a full-time basis.
- Over three quarters of the pupils are from various minority ethnic backgrounds, over one third from Indian, Pakistani and other Asian backgrounds and just over 10% from African or Black backgrounds. Just over 60% of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is nearly 24% and this is around the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about 15%, which is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a member of the Local Authority Development Group 2/3. This is a group set up for schools to give mutual support and development. The school has led the group in the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school is also a member of the Family of Catholic Schools which is grouped around the English Martyrs Catholic Secondary School.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, and further raise attainment in writing, by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to express their own ideas in their writing
 - ensuring pupils take more care and pride in their handwriting and the presentation of their work, particularly in Key Stage 2
 - teachers having consistently high expectations of grammar, punctuation and spelling, especially in boys' writing
 - ensuring marking and feedback in books provides pupils with precise guidance on ways to improve their work
 - making sure that pupils of all abilities are constantly challenged, especially the most able.
- Raise standards and accelerate progress in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - pupils are provided with regular opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in problem solving
 - pupils understand mathematical problems that are stated in words and can apply their mathematical skills in different situations.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, school leaders and governors have successfully maintained a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. As a result, the school's performance has continued to improve. Pupils' achievement is good and the school has good capacity to continue to improve.
- Leaders ensure that the school is a welcoming environment where no pupil is left out. All adults ensure that pupils are treated equally, feel safe and enjoy school. The headteacher and staff are held in high regard by the pupils. Staff work as a well-organised, committed group and morale is high. Staff questionnaires completed during the inspection indicate a high level of confidence in the school's leadership. All share the vision of pupils striving for academic excellence but also the highest levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School leaders have a good awareness of the school's strengths and areas for development. The leadership team thoroughly evaluates the school's performance, and development plans accurately identify the correct priorities. Currently, the improvement of mathematics, particularly for the most able, is the clear focus across the school. This is already leading to improving levels of achievement in the subject across the school.
- Writing and improving boys' interest in writing have been aided by the governors instigating a writing competition in school for the past three years that has local support from authors and dignitaries from the area. The result of all of the initiatives, seen in the scrutiny of pupils' work, is an improvement in the quality of writing across the school but especially that of the boys.
- Senior leaders have robust procedures for managing the performance of teachers. Leaders set challenging targets for teachers. They have established a clear link between pay levels, the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- The subject leaders and teachers with responsibility for other aspects of the school's work, such as special educational needs, work effectively together to support senior leaders in monitoring provision and outcomes for pupils. Leaders' checks focus rigorously on the quality of teaching and on pupils' achievement. As a result, leaders at all levels have a detailed and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Where concerns are found, urgent action is taken. Plans are frequently updated to address emerging issues.
- The good range of subjects taught is enriched by a range of after-school clubs, trips and visitors to the school. The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. It is a strength of the school. Very good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, customs and traditions, and to reflect on their relationships with others, are included in their learning. The impact of this is seen in pupils' respect for themselves and others, and their understanding of their rights and responsibilities. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve better now than they did previously because leaders have used the pupil premium funding effectively to provide additional teaching support and resources. Senior leaders and governors carefully check whether the use of the funding is making a difference, and they constantly seek new ways to provide extra help to pupils who need it.
- The school uses the primary sports funding well. The range of sports available to pupils, during and after school, has increased. Pupils' sporting skills have developed through their work with specialist sports coaches and they have the opportunity to participate more often in competitions. As a result, pupils are developing an increasingly active and healthy lifestyle.

- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They speak extremely positively of the headteacher and staff, saying that they are approachable and know pupils well as individuals. The school creates and maintains strong links with families of children whose circumstances might make them vulnerable and for those who speak English as an additional language. This contributes to pupils' good progress and achievement.
- Safeguarding requirements are fully met. All staff and governors consider that keeping pupils safe is one of their prime responsibilities.
- The local authority provides good support for this school, notably in the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching and learning, and governors' training. It has an accurate understanding of the school's performance and has confidence in the school's ability to improve further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly supportive of the school and determined to improve it and make it more successful. Governors bring considerable expertise to their role. They skilfully analyse and interpret the range of evidence provided about attainment and progress, and how these compare to national standards.
 - Governors ensure that they are well informed about the school's strengths and the priorities for development. As a result, the governing body holds leaders to account well.
 - Governors know what the quality of teaching is and ensure that performance management arrangements link teachers' pay to improved teaching and pupils' achievement.
 - School finances are managed well. Governors carefully check on the impact of the spending of the pupil premium and, as a result, know that it is helping disadvantaged pupils to achieve well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They are well mannered, take good care of each other and show great respect for adults.
- Some pupils who, at times, find it difficult to manage their emotions and behaviour are helped to do so sensitively, yet firmly by the adults. As a result, their behaviour improves.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they work hard. Positive attitudes towards learning can be seen in the levels of concentration evident in lessons. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the way their teachers make learning fun, using games and many interesting activities in lessons to help them learn in different ways.
- The playground is a happy, busy place, despite its restricted size. Pupils of all ages play together extremely harmoniously. Pupils new to the school are helped to feel very welcome and settle in quickly.
- Pupils enjoy taking on active roles in the school. For example, pupils take responsibility as members of the school council or for the prayer room, which is reverently used by all.
- Pupils do not all take enough care over their handwriting and the presentation of their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Their personal development is nurtured. As a result, they flourish as individuals within a climate of tolerance and equality.
- The school encourages pupils' well-developed understanding of prejudice-based bullying. Key Stage 2 pupils' understanding is extensive. As a result, pupils know that 'You should not judge people by the colour of their skin' and that 'No-one should be treated badly because they are different.'

- Pupils know about the different types of bullying. They say that incidents are rare. School records support this view. If incidents do occur, pupils trust the adults to take prompt action to sort things out quickly.
- The school rules are well understood by everyone, and pupils are confident that adults apply these fairly. Pupils have a very good understanding of risk, including those in school and outside, and are supported well by the school's input on personal safety, including when they use the internet and mobile phones.
- Staff are well trained to keep pupils safe. Procedures for checking the suitability of staff and visitors are robust. The school has formulated a detailed policy and has provided training to support all adults to be alert to the dangers of radicalisation and respond appropriately to concerns, should they arise.
- The school's actions to improve attendance and punctuality have had a positive impact. Attendance continues to be above national figures and there is minimal persistent absence.

The quality of teaching is good

- The work in pupils' books and their rates of progress reflect teaching that is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to provide a wide range of activities that promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well.
- The high priority given to the teaching of phonics (how letters link with sounds) helps to ensure that pupils read well. Younger pupils demonstrate that they can read with good understanding, while older pupils read with added confidence and enthusiasm. The older pupils have a love of books and can talk confidently about the authors they enjoy reading.
- Teaching assistants make a very positive contribution to the learning of pupils of all abilities. They are highly skilled and support the work of the teachers well. They provide pupils with practical activities which enable them to experience things for themselves. Their extensive training in skills to help and guide pupils enables the pupils they work with to make good progress.
- Many teachers ask questions to make pupils think carefully and to check their understanding. This helps them to learn well because they have time to share and develop their ideas. Activities are generally challenging so that all groups are able to make good progress.
- There is good provision for pupils requiring additional support. Teachers treat pupils with respect and are interested in what they have to say. All adults ensure that these pupils are fully involved in their learning by matching activities carefully to their particular learning needs and sensitively supporting them through difficulties. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and they respond readily to tasks with interest and enthusiasm. All activities help to increase pupils' speaking skills and their confidence as learners.
- Teachers mostly use information about how well pupils have learnt a topic or a skill to plan future work at the right level for them. They take every opportunity to ensure that there are no barriers to learning, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Teaching focuses carefully on the most able in each year group through probing questioning and activities to make them think deeply. However, pupils are occasionally not challenged enough to make faster progress. In such cases, pupils find tasks too easy because work is not sufficiently demanding for them.
- Teachers do not always plan enough opportunities in mathematics for problem solving to help pupils deepen and broaden their learning, especially of problems that are set out in words. Pupils' books show that they sometimes continue to repeat exercises in calculation when they have already clearly grasped a concept or a method.
- Work is marked regularly. Sometimes the information gathered about individual pupils' progress feeds directly into lesson planning. Pupils respond very positively to this, and are given extra challenges to complete in different subjects. At other times, however, pupils do not get enough guidance, particularly to improve or extend their writing.

- Marking does not always address the issues of presentation and the accuracy of pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation. This slows attainment in English.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The results in the Year 6 national tests in 2014 reflect a legacy of underachievement of that group of pupils, rather than the current picture. Year 6 pupils in 2014 had made accelerated progress in the second half of the year in reading, writing and mathematics, but they had too much ground to make up to have an even greater impact on their overall attainment. Therefore, the results remained well below the national average.
- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills at levels that are below those typical for their age, particularly those that relate to speaking, reading, writing and mathematics. The children's self-confidence is low. Around half the class reach a good level of development. This represents good progress in relation to their starting points.
- The school's current data on pupils' progress and attainment, work in pupils' books and evidence from lesson observations indicate that standards are rising fast in Years 1 to 6. Most pupils have made rapid progress since early 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics and are now attaining at least in line with expectations for their age. Due to the improvements in teaching and the targeting of work, many more pupils are reaching higher levels.
- In the Key Stage 2 tests in 2014, disadvantaged pupils' scores were a term and a half behind other pupils in the school in writing and mathematics. The gap was less than a term in reading. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment was two terms behind pupils nationally in reading but was a year behind in writing and mathematics. The gaps had narrowed from those in 2013. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making faster progress than other pupils nationally and the gap has narrowed further.
- As a result of the new, clear criteria for identifying and supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, their progress is improving and is in line with that of other pupils.
- In 2014, pupils who speak English as an additional language attained above those in their year group and in line with similar pupils nationally. Currently, those pupils are also making faster progress than previously experienced in the school.
- In 2014, some of the most-able pupils in Year 6 did not make as much progress as they should in reading and writing. They made expected progress in mathematics, but none made more progress than this. The most-able pupils are currently being well challenged in Years 5 and 6 and school records indicate they are making good progress, so they are beginning to reach the higher levels of which they are capable.
- Pupils make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in both reading and mathematics. They develop the skills of counting, recognising number and identifying the properties of two-dimensional shapes. Pupils currently in Key Stages 1 and 2 are reaching the standards expected for their age in mathematics. Older pupils are increasingly exceeding the standards ordinarily expected for their ages.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing because teachers are knowledgeable and have improved their skills. Pupils are encouraged to read more regularly at home and in school. The impact can be seen in results in the national Year 1 phonics screening check in 2014 which were above those seen nationally.
- Pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to achieve standards that are above expectations for the end of Key Stage 1. This represents at least good progress, given that the attainment of these pupils was below average when they entered Year 1.
- New initiatives have been introduced to encourage pupils, particularly boys, to become very confident young writers. More pupils now make very good progress in writing throughout the school, and standards are rising.

- Pupils speak confidently in lessons, and formally – as in assembly. They speak appropriately in informal situations to adults. Older pupils are confident to ask questions and to challenge what others say.

The early years provision is good

- From starting points below those typical for their age, children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Good planning is seen across all areas of learning. Teachers adapt tasks effectively to reflect the interests and needs of the children. As a result, children enjoy learning and achieve well. The highly organised and stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors, makes a significant contribution to children's personal development and learning, especially in language development.
- The good support from staff and close partnerships with parents and carers ensure children form secure bonds and strong emotional attachments. Children join in with assemblies and church services with older pupils.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is always at least good and is often outstanding. As a result, children get off to a good start by learning about number and developing good phonics skills. Children enjoy their learning and are always willing to show what they can do.
- When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers work extremely closely with parents and carers to assess what skill levels children are working at. Teachers keep a close check on children's progress so they quickly identify children who are more able and those who need additional support. Daily communication with parents is highly effective in helping children to make good progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and staff work well together. They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in early years, and they use this knowledge to plan for improvement.
- Children's behaviour is good. They are very cooperative and tolerant of one another. They get on very well, sharing and playing happily together.
- Arrangements for keeping children safe are highly effective. Children rapidly develop a sensible and increasingly independent approach to their own safety and that of others, particularly in their outdoor learning.

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	120223
Local authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	449617

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	243
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dominic Niven
Headteacher	Miroslaw Olszewski
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2010
Telephone number	0116 2661149
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