

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Derwent Street, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2DW

Inspection dates 12–13 May 2015

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

- The very determined leadership of the headteacher, who is well supported by senior leaders, governors and all staff, has been instrumental in bringing about improvements in teaching and achievement at St Patrick's.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' behaviour has improved and attendance has risen. Pupils are reaching higher standards and their progress is accelerating. The school has successfully tackled weaknesses and identified appropriate further areas for improvement. It is well placed to achieve its goals.
- Pupils, rightly, feel extremely safe in school. Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning are very keen to succeed. They are polite, kind and respectful and have a very strong awareness of the needs of others.
- Teachers use a range of interesting activities to engage pupils' interest so they enjoy learning. Lessons are well planned and teachers explain topics clearly so pupils achieve well.
- Children in the Early Years quickly settle into school routines, become confident learners and make good progress in the Reception class.
- This good progress continues as pupils move through the school. Attainment at the end of Year 6 has been average for the last three years and is rising. Work in pupils' books currently indicates they are on track to reach above average standards this year in English and mathematics.
- The curriculum equips pupils with good basic skills and successfully develops their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their lives as future citizens and for the next stage of their education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The learning of all pupils is not always checked effectively and sometimes pupils are not moved on quickly enough to new work that extends their understanding as soon as they are ready.
- Teachers' questioning does not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to think more deeply and fully develop their answers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons being taught to full classes and smaller groups of pupils of all ages and in a range of subjects including mathematics and English. The headteacher and inspectors made several shorter joint visits to classrooms. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- The 26 responses to the on-line questionnaire, 'Parent View', were considered, as well as those from the school's own parental survey and from school staff.

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Mawer

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a below average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and so eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education (LLE) and provides support for another school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The early years provision is in a Reception class. Children of Reception age attend full-time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching in order to raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress by;
 - moving pupils on quickly to more demanding work as soon as they are ready
 - ensuring teachers' questioning always gives pupils opportunities to think more deeply and develop their answers fully
 - regularly and effectively checking the learning of all groups of pupils in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by the whole staff team, has created a climate at St Patrick's where good teaching and excellent behaviour can flourish. The school celebrates its strengths but has effectively tackled weaknesses, such as attendance, and raised pupils' achievement across the school. Clear priorities for future improvement have been identified and the school has the capacity to achieve them and become even better.
- Staff performance is managed effectively. Teaching is well led and is carefully monitored. Staff have access to high quality training to improve their skills. They feel valued and well supported by the headteacher and senior leaders. Consequently, morale is high.
- Extra funding (the pupil premium) has been used wisely to provide small group and one-to-one tuition for disadvantaged pupils. The school monitors the progress of these pupils carefully and school's own data shows that the gaps between their attainment and progress and that of other pupils, both in school and nationally, have now narrowed markedly.
- The school promotes the British values of tolerance and respect and fosters good relations very successfully. Pupils are very aware of the needs of others and show respect for those who come from faiths and cultures different to their own. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in school and all pupils are given good equal opportunities to succeed.
- Middle leaders monitor the work of their subject areas closely and have clear plans for further improvement. They have, for example, initiated a greater emphasis on solving real-life problems in mathematics and introduced new ways to encourage reading. This has led to pupils making faster progress in both areas of learning.
- The curriculum equips pupils with good literacy and numeracy skills which they can build on when they move to secondary school. Pupils are well prepared for their future careers and lives as British citizens through work in lessons, meaningful assemblies and a range of enrichment activities which successfully develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Trips and visits to places as far apart as London, Beamish and the local garden centre add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of learning at St Patrick's. These are complemented by an equally broad range of activities which captures pupils' interest such as high quality artwork, drama and dance productions, fundraising activities and specialist teaching in computing.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements and are highly effective. Staff are highly trained and acutely aware of the schools safeguarding policies and procedures which are updated regularly and implemented consistently.
- The local authority provides very light touch support for the school. Headteachers work together to provide valuable support for each other by reviewing the work of each other's schools. The headteacher (in her role as a Local Leader of Education) and the deputy headteacher also give advice and help on improving the quality of teaching in a neighbouring school.
- Primary school sports funding is used well to employ specialist sports coaches who work closely with the school's own enthusiastic leader of physical education. Pupils have the opportunity to learn new sports, take part in competitions and perform to the level of which they are capable. Pupils' fitness and healthy lifestyles are promoted well through activities ranging from football to dance and yoga.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors monitor the work of the school closely, are kept well-informed and ask challenging questions about, for example, the school's performance data. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and how staff performance is managed. Governors understand how good teaching is rewarded and weaknesses tackled. They have been fully involved in successful initiatives such as to improve attendance. Finances are well-managed and governors keep a careful check on how extra funding, such as the pupil premium, is spent and the impact this has. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are of an exceptionally high standard.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are extremely kind and polite to each other and show great respect for adults in the school. In the school yard, pupils play harmoniously together and behaviour in corridors and in the dining hall is of the highest order.

- In lessons, pupils are extremely keen to succeed and are highly enthusiastic learners. Pupils are, rightly, proud of their achievements. They were keen to show inspectors their artwork, musical skills, pictures of their dance production and a huge cheque they had received following their successful fund raising campaign for a children's charity.
- Attendance has risen markedly since the last inspection and is now average. Pupils are punctual to school.
- Records show that there have been no recorded incidents of bullying or racism and any very rare incidents of challenging behaviour are dealt with swiftly and effectively. No pupils have been excluded from school.
- Pupils are very keen to take responsibility. They are delighted to act as members of the school council, to look after younger pupils and to help teachers with day to day tasks.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff are checked rigorously for their suitability to work with children. The school site is kept very safe and visitors are carefully checked.
- Safety has a very high profile across the school. Staff are acutely aware of children's needs and ensure that any who are vulnerable are kept absolutely safe at school. Staff are very knowledgeable about child protection and risk assessment procedures.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and have total trust in the adults who look after them. Parents unreservedly feel that their children are kept safe.
- Pupils are highly aware of how to keep themselves safe. They clearly understand how to stay safe when using the internet and know the possible dangers associated with strangers. The school makes absolutely sure they are well informed about road, fire and water safety. Pupils have a sensible attitude to taking risks but are not fearful of new experiences.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Work in pupils' books shows that they respond very well to the good teaching they receive and achieve well in literacy, reading and mathematics. Teachers set interesting and varied tasks which capture their imagination so they enjoy learning.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books clearly shows that they competently solve a wide range of interesting real-life problems connected to the topics they are studying. Helpful marking ensures that they are given useful feedback on how to improve their work further.
- In literacy, in one lesson, older pupils improved their speaking and listening skills as they hotly debated whether or not childhood was better now than in the Stone Age. Younger children made good progress in using correct grammar when putting 'a' or 'an' in front of vowels and consonants.
- Pupils develop good reading skills because phonics (the sounds that letters make) teaching is of good quality. New initiatives to encourage pupils to read a wider range of challenging books have been very successful so even more pupils are enjoying reading for pleasure.
- Pupils make good progress because teachers plan lessons carefully and explain work clearly, in lively and imaginative ways. Teachers manage their classes very well and forge extremely good relationships with their pupils. Consequently, learning takes place in an atmosphere of respect and trust where pupils gain in confidence and enjoy learning.
- In many lessons, teachers' questioning elicits detailed answers, learning is checked effectively and pupils are moved on quickly to the next task. However, this is not always the case and pupils' learning occasionally slows when questioning does not allow them to think more deeply and reflect on their answers. Pupils sometimes make slower progress when their learning is not checked regularly enough and they spend too much time repeating examples of work they have mastered, rather than moving on quickly to a more challenging task.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive good support in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants. This allows them to access the same or similar work as their classmates and make good progress.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Work in pupils' books and the school's detailed tracking systems confirm the good progress that all groups of pupils make from their individual starting points.
- Test results show that pupils have reached broadly average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics for the last three years. However, standards are rising and current Year

6 pupils are on track to meet their targets. The work they are producing currently shows that pupils in Year 6 are reaching above average standards, this year.

- Results of Year 6 tests in 2014 show that the attainment of a small group of disadvantaged pupils was approximately three terms behind their classmates in school and four terms behind pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. Their progress was similar to that of their classmates and pupils nationally. Wise spending of pupil premium funding is helping to close gaps quickly between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of their classmates and pupils, nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because they receive timely and well-focused support from teachers and teaching assistants. They achieve well and develop good basic skills in literacy and numeracy.
- The most able pupils make good progress. They are given more challenging tasks in lessons and some specialist small group teaching, which enables them to reach the higher levels of attainment.

The early years provision

is good

- From starting points which are below those typical for their age and are particularly weak in literacy and mathematics, children make good progress in the Reception class. By the end of Reception, the majority of children become confident learners and reach a good level of development. They are well equipped with the skills needed to be successful in Year 1.
- Children settle quickly into the welcoming and stimulating environment in the Reception class. They are kept extremely safe and very quickly learn to follow teachers' instructions, share and take turns. Their behaviour is excellent and they learn to work and play happily together and look after each other.
- Children make good progress because teaching is good. Well planned, interesting activities allow children to develop their skills in all areas of learning. For example, children thoroughly enjoyed using their phonics skills to complete the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.
- The early years is well led and managed. Parents are successfully encouraged to support their children's learning and good links with feeder nurseries help children to transfer easily into the Reception class. Children's progress is carefully tracked and work is carefully matched to their needs.

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	112340
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	461714

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Jones
Headteacher	Sheryl Slack
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2012
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