

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Patrick Road, Corby NN18 9NT

Inspection dates	6–7 July 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is an improving school. Leadership and management have improved since the previous inspection and senior leaders, including governors, have focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning across all phases.
- Teaching and learning are now good. Leaders and managers, including governors and teachers, have a good focus on all pupils achieving their best.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well because they are effectively supported by their teachers and teaching assistants. Most pupils reach age-related levels or above in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say they feel safe and have confidence in the ability of staff to sort out any incidents that may occur.
- Behaviour is at least good and sometimes better. Pupils are inquisitive, friendly and respectful towards their peers and adults.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start and achieve well. The proportion who reach a good level of development, in Reception, is similar to the national figure.
- The good curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. In all classes, including in the early years, attitudes to learning are enthusiastic. As pupils get older they show positive attitudes to both diversity and equality.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Sometimes teachers do not plan activities that challenge and extend learning for the most able pupils.
- Lower-attaining pupils do not always receive clear guidance on what they need to do to develop their English and mathematics skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders and managers who oversee English and mathematics do not evaluate the information they collect on teaching and learning. Consequently, they do not demonstrate an accurate understanding of the strengths and where improvements are needed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that:
 - the most able pupils, in all classes, are sufficiently challenged and their learning is extended
 - lower-attaining pupils receive more precise guidance aimed at improving their skills in English and mathematics.

- Improve leadership and management further by ensuring that middle leaders evaluate the information they collect on teaching and learning within their subjects so that they can clearly identify strengths and where improvements are necessary.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Staff strengths and talents have been utilised and the senior and middle leadership team has been re-structured to address the school's priorities. Senior leaders, staff and governors are united in believing that all pupils should achieve their best both academically and socially.
- Senior leaders have recently introduced a new system to track pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. They have identified areas for improvements where the system needs to be revised. Current performance information has been analysed to show that most pupils are achieving expected or better progress.
- The role of middle leaders has been developed since the previous inspection. Initiatives and priorities have been introduced this year in both English and mathematics. Reading and spelling, and problem-solving and mathematical reasoning have been particular foci. Currently, the impact of these initiatives is more prominent in English than mathematics, particularly in reading.
- Middle leaders for English and mathematics have been involved in monitoring teaching and learning and looking at pupils' books. However, they do not evaluate the information they collect on teaching and learning within their subjects, so they cannot clearly identify strengths and where improvements are necessary.
- Performance management of teachers is well established and teachers are given clear targets for improvement. Teachers usually meet their targets.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched with many opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities, many of which relate to sporting events and focus on taking exercise and keeping fit. Older pupils speak confidently and knowledgeably about the effects of exercise on their bodies and demonstrate a good understanding of the major organs within their bodies.
- Physical education (PE) and sports premium for primary schools is used effectively and both teachers and pupils benefit from a specialist who comes into school. The school buys into the Corby, Oundle, and Thrapston Sports Partnership. The school has, for the second year running, received the primary sports school of the year award for the local area.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to support disadvantaged pupils who often achieve as well as or better than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and learn much about fundamental British values. The mini-ambassadors meet regularly with the chaplaincy team and chair of governors. Pupils representing this group spoke of visiting the Houses of Parliament and then sharing what they learned with the rest of the school. Pupils later contacted their local member of parliament to talk about issues they identified in their neighbourhood.
- Parents have numerous opportunities to attend termly open days to discuss their children's progress. Workshops have been arranged to allow parents to understand the new curriculum and assessment arrangements for their children. These events are usually well attended. A recent questionnaire sent out to parents and responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, showed that parents are pleased with all the school does to support their children.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors say that systems to inform them have improved. As a result, they say they are much better informed than previously. Governors speak knowledgeably about all school systems and procedures. They particularly like listening to information which is presented to them by middle and senior leaders during governing body meetings.
 - Governors say they are able to challenge and support the school well because they visit the school regularly and are involved in monitoring its performance. Governors are invited to be a part of the monitoring of teaching and learning. They enjoy accompanying staff on learning walks, observations and book scrutiny and this gives them a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment.
 - Governors described recent challenges that have included asking senior leaders to simplify pupil performance information so that they can understand it more easily. This has now been rectified and governors say they are now more confident in looking at pupils' performance information and asking questions about it.
 - Governors understand how additional funding, for example the pupil premium and the PE and sports premium for primary schools, is spent. They speak knowledgeably about its impact on pupils' achievement. For example, governors have an accurate understanding of how well the school is closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils in the school and the national picture.

- Governors make sure that they all receive the appropriate training to fulfil their roles. For example, the safeguarding governor, who is relatively new, has had recent training. All adults have relevant and updated child protection training. Governors follow the correct procedures to vet all adults who work with or have contact with the pupils. Governors carry out health and safety walks. Safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is now good. Improvements in teaching have come as a result of senior leaders checking teaching and learning regularly and providing an effective continuing professional development programme. Teachers are enthusiastic about taking up opportunities to develop their expertise. Recent training has been offered to teachers to develop further their questioning skills and their reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and plan activities that are usually interesting, engaging and well planned to meet the differing needs of the pupils.
- Pupils' understanding is checked during and at the end of lessons through skilful questioning. Ongoing assessment as lessons progress is good and adds to the effective learning that takes place.
- Teachers' marking in pupils' books identifies the link between pupils' learning and the learning objective. Written feedback is always supportive and sometimes informative. At times, lower-attaining pupils need more guidance from teachers to show them how to develop skills, such as forming numbers correctly or writing letters properly.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive. Pupils say they have trust in their teachers and observations show they develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils say that poor behaviour rarely interrupts their learning because pupils generally know what is expected and how to behave.
- The school has addressed an issue from the previous inspection which related to use of grammar. Staff had training to rectify this. Discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of science books show that an issue relating to science has also been addressed.
- At times, a few most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and sit around waiting for others to finish.
- The new curriculum supports writing in other subjects such as in religious education, science and mathematics. Teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work and many pupils' books that were looked at were a joy to read and clearly showed the good progress that pupils made, particularly in English and mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe and know who to go to if they are concerned about anything. They speak confidently about safety aspects such as the importance of internet safety.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well in all they do. Consequently, pupils from many different backgrounds get along well with each other.
- Attendance has improved over the last three years because it is thoroughly monitored. Currently, attendance is above the national average. Awards are given to pupils who achieve 100% attendance and to the class with the best attendance. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and really like these awards.
- Pupils are mature and work hard in their lessons. They say they know they are doing well because teachers keep them well informed. Pupils confidently told inspectors that their parents think they get a good education. Parents confirmed this through their responses to the questionnaires they filled in.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour is good throughout the school. Some outstanding behaviour was observed during discussions with pupils in Year 6 and when children in Reception learned as they played. The majority of parents who replied to Parent View stated that the school ensured that pupils behave well.
- Pupils, in all classes conduct themselves well when they move around the school because expectations are clear and routines firmly established.

- During outside play, pupils were observed cooperating well with each other as they played games, some led by themselves and some led by adults.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are appropriately logged but these are rare. Pupils agree that such incidents are rare and say any poor behaviour, including bullying, is quickly dealt with by adults. There have been no suspensions in the last two years.
- Pupils say how much they enjoy coming to school and many come early to eat breakfast with their friends and join in with the sporting and creative activities that are offered before school starts.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' outcomes are improving in reading, writing and mathematics because senior leaders have high expectations and track pupils' progress carefully. Teachers are now more accountable for the progress their pupils make, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, and meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss the progress of their pupils.
- In 2015, as the Year 6 cohort moved through key stage 2, progress was better than the previous year. Pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics and average progress in writing. Disadvantaged pupils made good progress in mathematics as well as reading and writing.
- Attainment, in 2015, at the end of key stage 1 was broadly average and was similar in key stage 2 for all pupil groups, including disadvantaged pupils. Few pupils in key stage 2 reached the higher level 5 in reading and mathematics. Current school performance information shows that most pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 are at expected or above age-related levels.
- In key stage 1, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and the national picture has narrowed considerably over the last three years. In 2015, in writing and maths disadvantaged pupils did better than the others. In 2015, in key stage 2, the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and pupils nationally has narrowed and, similarly, it has narrowed when compared with other pupils within the school.
- Current results for Year 1 phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening is 6% above last year's figure which was above the national figure. Visits to classrooms and a scrutiny of pupils' books in all year groups shows that progress during the last year has been good in almost all classes.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive quality support from teachers within the classroom. Teachers know pupils' strengths and what they need to improve.
- Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English make good progress because they receive good teaching that focuses on developing language as well as their specific needs.
- Most-able pupils make good progress when they are suitably challenged with activities that deepen their skills, knowledge and understanding. However, this is not always the case.
- Pupils are generally well prepared academically and socially for their next stage in education.

Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They enter Reception with levels of attainment below those typical for their ages, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014 and 2015 the proportion of children that reached a good level of development in Reception was similar to the national figure. This represents good progress.
- In the Nursery and Reception classes, children are taught well. Teachers plan activities that interest the children and are well suited to their ages and stages of development. Children have good opportunities to play as they learn inside and out. The learning environment is safe because safeguarding arrangements are secure.
- Nursery children played and learned well as they experimented with bubbly water in the outside area. Adults' interactions were purposeful. Learning was reinforced and language was developed because adults asked carefully selected questions as children emptied and filled jugs.
- Personal and social education is particularly well promoted in the Nursery and Reception classes. During snack times, after washing their hands, children in Reception were observed showing excellent independence as they made their own sandwiches, poured their own drinks and washed up their plates and beakers afterwards. Children demonstrated a good understanding of healthy foods, such as salad, and went on to say that fizzy drinks were not good for you because they were full of sugar.

- Behaviour, as these young children learn through play, is excellent. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes know how to share and are kind and considerate towards each other. They know the difference between inside and outside behaviour and how to play safely together. In Reception, children shared paint and brushes as they painted African necklaces and played happily together in the African house. Children were observed enjoying learning about other cultures and confidently repeated words in Swahili, they had recently learned. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and permeates many planned activities.
- Literacy skills are focused on well. Children experience working in small groups as they learn about letters and sounds. In Reception, most-able children begin to write sentences, some with capital letters at the beginning and full stops at the end. All children have regular opportunities to make marks on paper and white boards and learn how to write letters and simple words.
- Mathematical skills develop well and children were observed learning how to subtract numbers. The most able children worked confidently with numbers up to 100 while lower attainers worked with numbers up to 20.
- Provision for the early years is good. Staff develop good relationships with parents and have clear transition arrangements. As a result, children settle in quickly and are eager to start each new day. Opportunities to involve parents in their children's education are not missed. For example, parents are encouraged to note down 'star moments' which are shared with school staff and displayed for all to see. Children's learning journeys show the good progress children make in all areas of learning and give parents a clear understanding of how their children are achieving.

School details

Unique reference number	122045
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10009090

This inspection 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	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann-Marie Lawson
Headteacher	Louise Blair
Telephone number	01536 744447
Website	www.stpatricksprimaryschool.com
Email address	head@stpatricks.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 January 2014

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- Just under half of pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium, which is the additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor stands which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school website complies with the government's stipulations.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 17 parts of lessons taught by eight teachers. The headteacher was involved in seven of the observations.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, safeguarding documents, pupils' books from Years 1 to 6 and learning journeys from the children in Reception.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority who was spoken to during a telephone discussion.
- The views of parents were considered by analysing 22 responses to Parent View, the online Ofsted survey, and the 103 responses to the questionnaire sent out to parents in March 2016.

Inspection team

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