

St Patricks Church of England Primary Academy

Salter Street, Earlswood, Solihull, West Midlands B94 6DE

Inspection dates

3–4 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and all staff place a high priority on both the academic and personal development of pupils. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything the school does. As a result, pupils are happy and safe and behave exceptionally well.
- Governors are ambitious for the success of the school. They conduct regular reviews of their effectiveness and have recently appointed two new governors who have specific skills that will further enhance the capacity of the governing body. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge for leaders. This ensures that there is a tight focus on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to plan learning that excites and interests pupils. Occasionally, the most able pupils have to complete tasks that they find easy before they move onto more challenging tasks.
- Leaders are determined that all pupils will achieve well. Following a period of underachievement, current pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Phonics teaching is very effective. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the national phonics screening check has been above average year on year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress in a range of subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect and kindness to others. They are proud to attend the school and said that everyone is welcome, regardless of culture, belief or background. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are good.
- There have been some recent changes to the structure of the senior leadership team. The skills of newly appointed leaders complement the expertise of the headteacher and other leaders very well. However, the skills of new leaders require further development in order for them to have greater impact on school improvement.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years. They enjoy coming to school where they are safe and make good progress. Over time, boys have not achieved as well as girls particularly in reading and writing. As a result, a lower proportion of boys has achieved a good level of development compared with girls.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils apply their English and mathematics skills in a range of subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - developing the skills of those new to senior leadership, including governors, so that they can have a greater impact on school improvement.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching further by:
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly the most able, are moved onto challenging tasks more quickly.
- Further improve the provision in the early years, by:
 - ensuring that opportunities for boys to acquire age-appropriate reading and writing skills are more closely matched to their needs and interests.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders, including governors, are ambitious for each pupil to achieve as well as they can. Their aim is for all pupils to be lifelong learners. Leaders ensure that teachers know the starting points of the pupils in their class and that everyone has high expectations about what each pupil can achieve. Leaders conduct regular checks on pupils' progress and ensure that appropriate support is put in place to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Over the last 12 months, there has been a tight focus on improving the quality of teaching throughout the school. This is because, over time, there has been a decline in the rates of progress pupils in key stage 2 have made in reading, writing and mathematics. Following effective training, teachers have strong subject knowledge, teaching has improved and pupils now make better progress.
- The headteacher ensures that all staff feel valued. Staff spoke enthusiastically about the high quality of the training they receive and how this enables them to improve their practice. Teachers, including those who are new to the profession, benefit from effective mentoring from more experienced members of staff. Additionally, staff said that the headteacher is mindful of their well-being and that there is a strong sense of community. Relationships are very positive.
- The curriculum is creative and imaginative, while maintaining a focus on the important basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics. There are many purposeful opportunities for pupils to write extended pieces in a range of subjects. Pupils enjoy topics that have historical or scientific themes. Pupils told inspectors that the visits they go on support their learning well. For example, Year 4 pupils visit Wroxeter during their Romans topic, and in Year 2 pupils visit the seaside. Tasks are carefully planned so that pupils develop subject-specific skills, including planning and carrying out investigations, considering the impact of the actions of people from the past and the geographical features of the United Kingdom. Excellent use is made of the outdoor learning environment. For example, pupils grow and cook their own vegetables using compost they have produced.
- British values are woven into the school curriculum. As a result, pupils understand what it means to be a British citizen. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well. They understand the importance of looking after their local and wider-world environments. Pupils talked about the importance of being a global citizen; for example, some pupils in key stage 2 are leading a project on reducing how much plastic is used in school because they understand the impact of plastic waste on the environment around the world. Pupils enjoy sharing their own prayers, both through the class refecton book and during school assemblies.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to meet the academic and personal development needs of disadvantaged pupils. Carefully planned interventions are used successfully to enable this group of pupils to make rapid progress in phonics, English and mathematics.
- The school makes good use of the physical education (PE) and sport funding. Pupils

experience a wide range of sports during PE lessons and at lunchtime and after-school clubs. Additionally, pupils take part in a range of competitions including football tournaments, athletics events and dance shows. Leaders ensure that teachers are trained to deliver all aspects of PE effectively.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows the needs of each pupil well. She tracks the progress they make accurately and checks the quality of the additional support or intervention activities. Additional funding is used effectively.
- A new leadership structure has been put in place this academic year. As a result, some senior leaders are new to post. These leaders are beginning to have an impact on school improvement, but this work has yet to be fully embedded throughout the school.
- The school receives appropriate challenge and support from the school improvement partner. This has been particularly effective in supporting leaders to address and reverse a declining trend in pupils' progress in key stage 2.

Governance of the school

- Governors have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They provide challenge through well-targeted questions and through their roles as link governors, working alongside individual school leaders. They also provide support to leaders and make regular visits to the school to see the work of the school for themselves.
- Governors conduct self-reviews to ensure that they have the necessary skills to be an effective governing body. They access appropriate training, including on how to analyse assessment information published nationally and that which is presented by school leaders. Governors actively seek new members who have specific skills to further strengthen their capacity.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff understand that safeguarding pupils is a priority. Leaders ensure that staff have appropriate training in child protection. Staff know how to report any concerns they have and they do so promptly. All staff who spoke to inspectors said that children are safe and well cared for.
- Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities well. All members have child protection training, and those who are responsible for employing new staff have safer recruitment training. The chair of governors has carried out checks on the school's single central record of staff and visitors.
- Child protection records are well organised and stored securely. Safeguarding leaders have positive relationships with parents and carers. School records show where additional support has had a positive impact on families who receive it.
- All staff and the parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire agree

that pupils are safe and happy. One parent told inspectors that 'teachers take care of the children and give lots of attention'. The school's curriculum helps pupils to stay safe. Pupils develop a secure understanding of how to stay safe online, they are aware of the danger that strangers can pose and they know who to talk to if they are worried about anything.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders ensure that teachers know pupils' starting points and that they use this knowledge to plan activities that are effective in moving on the learning of most pupils. This has not always been the case, and leaders and teachers have worked hard to address and reverse a decline in progress identified following end of key stage 2 tests in reading and mathematics. As a result, pupils now make stronger progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Work is usually well presented. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use well to plan interesting lessons and provide opportunities for pupils to develop and apply core skills in a wide range of subjects. They bring learning in a range of subjects 'alive' for pupils, for example through planning meaningful and interesting educational visits linked to topics.
- Teachers often use questions effectively to explore pupils' responses and understanding and to deepen their learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and most participate confidently, for example through sharing their ideas with others. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Pupils work hard and want to do their best.
- Leaders have improved the quality of teaching of mathematics. Pupils have a sound grasp of calculation strategies and they are given ample opportunities to apply these when solving problems linked to a range of mathematical concepts. Teachers have a high expectation that pupils will use the correct mathematical vocabulary when they reason about their work. Pupils' books show that the mathematics curriculum is broad and that teachers plan activities that will challenge pupils, including the most able. However, sometimes pupils have to complete tasks that they find easy before they get on to more difficult work. This limits the progress pupils make, particularly the most able.
- Pupils have many opportunities to practise their writing skills in English lessons and in a range of subjects. As a result, pupils acquire knowledge of the features of different types of writing.
- Teachers' use of the school's agreed feedback policy is inconsistent. For example, sometimes pupils continue to make the same errors in their use of punctuation and spelling. Occasionally, teachers do not make sure that pupils respond to improvements that they have suggested. This limits the progress that some pupils make and they do not consistently reach the standards of which they are capable.
- As a result of effective training, reading is taught well across the school. As a result, pupils' comprehension skills are well developed. They are able to make plausible predictions, justify their explanations and demonstrate an understanding of a broad range of vocabulary. Teachers ensure that there are plenty opportunities to read texts linked to a range of subjects.

- Phonics is taught effectively. As a result, pupils apply their phonics knowledge and skills when reading unfamiliar texts. They read confidently and are given the opportunity to express their reading preferences, including their favourite authors. Adults do not always insist that pupils, particularly the younger ones, use their phonic knowledge when spelling. Some pupils' books show repeated errors when spelling common words.
- Teaching assistants work well alongside class teachers to ensure that the pupils they are supporting make good progress. Teaching assistants promote independence in learning because they help pupils to develop effective learning skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. Almost all pupils work hard to produce their best work. Pupils are able to sustain their focus on an activity for long periods of time and produce extended pieces of work. Pupils' work in a range of subjects, including English, history, religious education and art, is of a high quality.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is a high priority. Pupils told inspectors that they learn about growing up, eating healthy food and how to get along well with each other. Pupils in Year 6 said that the residential visit to an outdoor activity centre helps them to work as a team and to face their fears, for example through completing an abseiling activity. Staff know pupils and their individual needs very well. The additional support that adults provide for pupils' specific needs ensures that these pupils have a highly positive experience at school. Pupils told inspectors that they can talk to adults about any problems they have. They have absolute confidence in school staff to help solve any difficulties.
- The school works hard to ensure that pupils understand what it means to be a global citizen who has a positive impact on the world around them. Pupils develop a deep understanding of different faiths and cultures. They recognise the importance of valuing and celebrating diversity. They are extremely respectful and demonstrate empathy for others.
- All pupils spoken to said that they feel safe in school. Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying in school. Pupils explained that this is because of all the work they do on anti-bullying and because everyone gets on so well. One pupil said, 'We have a strong bond here.' Pupils know exactly what to do if they have any worries about bullying.
- Pupils who have responsibilities take these very seriously. For example, pupils on the eco council are able to show how they have a direct impact on the school. They conducted an audit of the use of plastic in the school and set about reducing this. As a result, the school kitchen no longer uses disposable plastic covers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well in lessons and as they move around school. Monitors who are on duty during breaktime and lunchtime are respected by other pupils. Pupils are ready to resume learning as soon as breaktimes are over.
- Pupils are extremely polite to visitors, staff and one another. They are proud to be members of the school and would recommend it without hesitation.
- Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about how well the school manages behaviour. Recently, leaders reviewed the behaviour policy to ensure that it supports the needs of a small number of pupils who have, in the past, had difficulty managing their own behaviour. As a result, these pupils are also behaving very well in school and told inspectors how the school has helped them to improve their behaviour.
- Over time, pupils' attendance has been above national averages. Leaders act quickly if a pupils' attendance starts to decline. The vast majority of pupils arrive promptly to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 was well below average. Leaders' actions to improve outcomes for pupils have been effective and, as a result, current pupils are making good progress. Pupils are well prepared to start secondary school.
- Because leaders make careful checks on the progress that all groups of pupils make and analyse assessment information, they have a good grasp on where there are any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders and teachers use this information to plan effective intervention activities. As a result, pupils' progress has improved and is now good. This has been particularly effective in mathematics and reading.
- Throughout the school, disadvantaged pupils make similar rates of progress to that of other pupils in a range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Over time, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has been above national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 has been consistently above average over the last four years.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 was above the national average in reading and writing at both the expected and higher standard in 2016 and 2017. Attainment in mathematics declined over this period and, although standards were in line with national averages, pupils did not make the progress of which they were capable. The school's assessment information and pupils' books show that a higher proportion of pupils are now working at a higher standard in mathematics in Year 6 than over the past three years.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This has not always been the case because, in the past, this group of pupils made less progress than their peers in key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The

SENCo checks the impact of additional interventions to support this group of pupils carefully. She ensures that activities are well matched to individual pupils' needs.

- The most able pupils are now making better progress across a range of subjects including reading and mathematics. However, sometimes tasks are not challenging enough for this group. This means that some of the most able pupils do not reach the higher standards of which they are capable.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' progress and attainment in science are monitored carefully. The proportion of pupils who are working at the standard expected for their age in science is above national averages in both key stages 1 and 2. In other subjects, including art, history and PE, leaders know the proportion of pupils who are working at the standards expected for their age, but they are still developing systems for assessing the rates of progress that pupils make.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader knows the strengths and areas for improvement within the setting. He ensures that all adults know the starting points of individual children and that learning activities are planned to meet the needs and interests of children. As a result, most children demonstrate good levels of engagement. Occasionally, a small number of children do not focus as well as they could during adult-led activities because they have not developed sufficient concentration.
- Teaching across the early years is good. Adults focus on ensuring that children develop good communication skills and acquire a broad knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Adults have a high expectation of the language that children will use and of the level of detail when children express their ideas. For example, children are encouraged to respond in full sentences. The Nursery teacher is new to the school this term. She is benefiting from mentoring from more experienced members of the early years team in order to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent across the setting.
- Children enjoy the activities on offer and they demonstrate that they are able to work equally well on their own or with a partner. Children mostly listen carefully to adults and one another. They follow instructions and behave well because they know exactly what is expected of them.
- Additional funding is used effectively to ensure that disadvantaged children make good progress from their starting points in all areas of the curriculum. This includes additional support to enable this small group of children to make rapid progress in developing language and communication skills.
- The indoor environment is well organised and inviting and promotes learning in all areas of the curriculum. Resources are of a high quality. Adults celebrate children's success through displays of their work and photographs. The outdoor space is used well to promote practical activities. For example, children have plenty of space and a wealth of resources to create any construction their imagination desires. Additionally, children use sports equipment to organise their own games including tennis matches. However, children, particularly boys, do not show as much interest in completing the writing and mathematics tasks that have been set up for them. Assessment information

shows that fewer boys than girls reach the standards expected for their age in these areas of the curriculum.

- Safeguarding practices are effective. The early years provision meets all welfare requirements.
- Leaders value the contributions that parents make to children's learning journeys. Parents are positive about the early years provision. One parent told inspectors that it is 'a warm, nurturing environment'.
- Over time, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has been consistently above or in line with the national average. Most children make good progress from their starting points. However, the proportion of boys who achieve a good level of development is lower than the proportion of girls. This is because too many boys do not acquire the writing skills needed. The difference is wider than the difference nationally and is not diminishing over time.

School details

Unique reference number	136320
Local authority	Solihull
Inspection number	10048265

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms G Gathercole
Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Glennon
Telephone number	01564 702278
Website	www.st-patricks-ce.solihull.sch.uk
Email address	office@st-patricks-ce.solihull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in November 2010. When Ofsted last inspected the predecessor school, it was judged to be outstanding. The school is managed by the academy trust. The trust is made up of the school's board of governors.
- St Patricks Church of England Primary Academy is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is significantly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have education, health and care plans or a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- In 2016 and 2017, the school met the government's floor standards, which set out the

minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups. Some of the observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and the assistant headteachers.
- Inspectors met with pupils and heard pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read. Inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their views of the school.
- Inspectors met with the senior leadership team, the early years leader, the SENCo and subject leaders. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body and had a conversation with a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work from a variety of subjects, alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors looked at documentation including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Inspectors also considered information about pupils' progress, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents before school.
- Inspectors met with a group of staff.

Inspection team

Jo Evans, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Brown

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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