

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Wednesfield

Graiseley Lane, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV11 1PG

Inspection dates

20–21 November 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have failed to improve pupils' achievement in key stage 1. Too few pupils meet the expected standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 2.
- Teaching does not enable current pupils to make good progress. Pupils who did not achieve well in key stage 1 are not making the progress needed to catch up quickly.
- Leaders have not addressed the weaknesses identified at the previous inspection with sufficient urgency. Plans do not prioritise the most important things that need to improve.
- Middle leaders do not have the skills to improve the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility. As a result, poor teaching persists.
- Leaders' use of additional funding is weak. Disadvantaged pupils do not make enough progress to catch up with other pupils nationally.
- Teachers do not plan lessons that build on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding. This limits pupils' progress.
- Teaching does not match pupils' needs closely, including the most able and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not secure enough to ask questions that deepen pupils' understanding.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding in a range of subjects.
- Teachers and leaders do not assess pupils' progress accurately. This means that they do not have a realistic understanding of pupils' achievement.
- Although safeguarding is effective, leaders do not maintain a clear oversight of concerns about pupils.

The school has the following strengths

- The recently formed governing body has quickly established an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders provide strong support for pupils' personal development and welfare.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years are improving. The proportion of children that achieve a good level of development is rising.
- In 2018, pupils attained well in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve pupils' progress and thereby raise attainment in key stage 1, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including in the early years, by ensuring that:
 - leaders' plans are sharply focused on improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' outcomes
 - leaders and governors thoroughly evaluate the impact of their actions on school improvement
 - assessments of pupils' learning and progress are accurate
 - leaders monitor pupils' progress from their starting points so that they can identify when pupils are falling behind and act swiftly to help them to catch up
 - checks on teaching focus on how well pupils are learning and how much progress they are making
 - additional funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - middle leaders receive further training to develop their skills in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning effectively
 - the curriculum is well planned and develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of subjects
 - the designated safeguarding lead maintains an effective oversight of all safeguarding concerns and the actions taken.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, including in the early years, by:
 - planning learning that builds on what pupils know, understand and can do
 - making accurate assessments of pupils' learning and using these to plan work that matches pupils' abilities closely
 - providing work that is sufficiently challenging and deepens the understanding of the most able pupils
 - ensuring that support for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND is appropriately tailored to their needs
 - improving staff's subject knowledge so that they can ask questions that challenge pupils and deepen their understanding

- developing pupils’ reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics
- providing pupils with clear guidance on how to use and apply their writing skills so that they write with increasing complexity and depth.

An external review of the school’s use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have not taken the action needed to raise pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. As a result, for the past three years, pupils have underachieved considerably at the end of Year 2 and have not been well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders have not addressed the weaknesses identified at the last inspection in January 2018 with the urgency required. The quality of teaching has declined further, and the school's overall effectiveness is now inadequate. The capacity of the current leadership team to secure the necessary improvements is weak.
- Staff changes, absences and the use of temporary staff have disrupted pupils' learning over time. During the inspection, several parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, expressed concern about the effect of frequent changes in teachers on their children's progress.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's performance is overgenerous. They have not acknowledged the link between the effectiveness of leadership and management and the declining quality of teaching across the school and low pupil outcomes at the end of key stage 1.
- Systems for checking pupils' progress are not thorough enough. Although leaders collect a wealth of assessment information, they do not ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate. Consequently, information is not a true reflection of the quality of work in pupils' books and gives too positive a view of how well pupils are doing.
- Leaders do not evaluate the progress pupils are making from their starting points so do not know if they are making the progress that they should be making. As a result, they are slow to identify pupils who are falling behind and to provide them with support so that they can catch up quickly.
- Leaders' plans have been ineffective in bringing about the rapid improvements needed to the quality of teaching. Priorities are too broad and do not focus sufficiently on the most important things that need to improve. Action plans do not set out clearly how teaching is going to improve and the impact that this is going to have on pupils' progress.
- Leaders do not evaluate thoroughly the impact that their actions are having on improving teaching and pupils' outcomes. This means that the quality of teaching is not improving quickly enough.
- Too often, leaders' checks on teaching concentrate on compliance with school policies and do not evaluate the difference that teaching is making to pupils' learning. Feedback to teachers does not consistently pinpoint what teachers are doing well and what needs to be better. As a result, teachers do not take sufficient ownership of how they are teaching and whether this is helping pupils to learn effectively.
- Middle leaders have received training to begin to develop their leadership skills. However, they do not have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in

their areas of responsibility. Many leaders lack the knowledge, skills and experience to bring about essential improvements to the quality of teaching.

- Leaders' use of the pupil premium funding is not effective. Until very recently, leaders did not have an understanding of the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, they have not targeted funding to address these pupils' individual needs. There has been little evaluation of the impact of the funding on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes, which remain persistently below those of other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders do not check the effectiveness of support for pupils with SEND. They give limited time and priority to ensuring that these pupils make the progress that they should be making. As a result, these pupils make less progress than other pupils make, both in the school and nationally.
- The school's planned curriculum provides coverage of all the national curriculum subjects. Visits out of school enhance and broaden pupils' learning experiences. However, teachers do not teach different subjects well enough, which results in pupils making poor progress in subjects such as science, history and geography.
- Pupils speak knowledgeably about how staff help them to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. They recognise and embrace the diversity within the school and local community. This helps to create a harmonious school culture. Pupils have a clear understanding of British values and show respect and tolerance towards others. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to broaden the range of sports activities on offer to pupils, for example through the introduction of archery and tri-golf. This has led to an increase in the proportion of pupils taking part in physical activity. It has also helped to improve partnerships with parents, who have been keen to try new sports alongside their children.
- Staff value the training and support they receive. This is beginning to improve the skills of some leaders, for example in English, and to develop the quality of teaching in a small number of classes. However, much of this support is in its early stages so it is too soon to determine the impact on the overall quality of teaching and current pupils' outcomes.

Governance of the school

- Until very recently, the governing body has not been effective in holding leaders to account for the quality of education the school provides, including the use of additional funding.
- Wholesale changes to the governing body in September 2018 have brought about much needed change. Governors have been quick to gain a comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are beginning to put in place the strategies necessary to improve the school. However, it is too early to see the effect of governors' work on school improvement.
- Governors are now providing more challenge to leaders, particularly in relation to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They have started to evaluate the use of the

pupil premium funding because they recognise that this is not making a difference to improving disadvantaged pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the appropriate checks are made on all adults that work in the school. The single central record of these checks is up to date and well maintained.
- Staff receive regular training, which ensures that they understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Staff are clear about the signs to look for that might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They know when and how they should report concerns.
- Leaders respond to concerns appropriately, including making referrals to external agencies when necessary. They know pupils and their families well and are alert to changes in pupils' appearance and behaviour. However, the current recording system does not enable the designated safeguarding lead to maintain an effective oversight of the concerns that have been raised and the actions taken.
- Leaders do not monitor staff supervision at the beginning of the day, on the playground at breaktime and in the dining hall at lunchtime. On occasion, supervision is not adequate to provide the swift support that pupils need, for example if they arrive early at school or if they fall over on the playground.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- There have been several changes in teachers over the past year, which has contributed to weaknesses in teaching across the school.
- Teaching is poorly planned. Too often, lessons are a series of disconnected tasks that do not support learning and develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding over time. This limits pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not assess pupils' work accurately. They do not use information about what pupils know, understand and can do to plan what they should learn next. Often, pupils repeat work they can already do or move on too quickly before they have secured new concepts.
- Teachers do not plan work that matches pupils' abilities well enough. Therefore, work is too difficult for some pupils and too easy for others. Consequently, pupils across a range of abilities are not making the progress that they should be making.
- In many classes, teachers do not provide work that meets the specific needs of pupils with SEND. Because work does not match their learning needs, these pupils are too dependent on adult support and when an adult moves away, some pupils stop working.
- Work is not sufficiently challenging for the most able pupils and does not provide enough opportunities for them to work at greater depth. These pupils are often made to complete tasks that are too easy before being given more of the same to fill the time, rather than being provided with work that requires them to use and apply what

they have learned or extends their thinking.

- Teachers do not have secure subject knowledge and do not question pupils effectively. Their questions are basic and do not probe pupils' understanding or encourage them to explain why they think as they do. Teachers do not check pupils' understanding thoroughly in lessons and are not clear about whether pupils have grasped the concepts taught.
- In mathematics, activities are too simplistic and do not enable pupils to develop their understanding in enough depth. There are too few opportunities for pupils to reason and solve problems.
- Teachers' expectations for pupils' writing are too low, particularly in key stage 1. Across the school, teachers do not challenge pupils to use sufficiently complex vocabulary, punctuation and sentence structure. This means that current pupils are not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Teaching does not enable pupils to develop their learning and understanding in different subject areas, such as science, history and geography. Activities often lack depth and challenge.
- Leaders and teachers have been successful in promoting the importance of reading. Pupils are keen to read and enjoy visiting the school library and the library in the local community. Training for staff has focused on ensuring a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. However, weaknesses remain. In lessons, the texts pupils read do not match their reading ability closely enough. Teaching does not deepen pupils' understanding of what they read.
- The teaching of phonics is improving. Staff have benefited from training to develop their subject knowledge and skills. As a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose to be in line with the national average in 2018. However, some pupils continue to receive teaching that is not good enough, which limits their progress.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils are eager to respond to questions and most listen carefully in lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The distinctive Catholic ethos fosters an atmosphere of respect and understanding that permeates all aspects of the school's work. Pupils are kind, thoughtful and caring and there is a strong feeling of community.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to learn and take pride in their work. Pupils recognise that working hard and behaving well will help them to be successful in their learning.
- Staff teach pupils about different faiths and cultures. This enables pupils to be reflective about their own values and to show tolerance and understanding for the

beliefs of others.

- Pupils feel safe in school. They understand what bullying is and know that they should report this to an adult should it occur. Pupils are confident that staff will look after them. Parents agree that their children are safe at school.
- Leaders are aware of local risks and work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe outside school. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, for example by not sharing their personal details. They show confidence in their own opinions and know not to be influenced by the views of others.
- Staff provide opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example as members of the school council, as 'huff and puff' play leaders and as reading buddies. The 'Mini Vinnies' group has been influential in raising money for a number of local and national charities. Pupils value the chance to have a say in important decisions, such as the selection of the school's meals' provider.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy by eating well and taking regular exercise. Clubs and activities, including sport, music and the breakfast club, support the health and well-being of pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils treat adults and each other with respect.
- Pupils understand the school's behaviour system and what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. They conduct themselves well as they move around the school and are polite and friendly to visitors.
- In lessons, almost all pupils listen carefully and apply themselves productively to tasks, even when the work is too easy or too difficult. However, a small number of pupils lose concentration when learning does not meet their needs and become restless. Teachers do not consistently address any off-task behaviour that occurs.
- At breaktimes and lunchtimes, pupils are active and energetic. They play cooperatively and interact positively with their friends.
- Historically, rates of fixed-term exclusions have been high. However, due to effective support for vulnerable pupils, exclusions have reduced considerably over the past 12 months. There have been no exclusions this academic year.
- Absence and persistent absence are broadly in line with national averages. Staff work closely with parents to encourage pupils' regular attendance at school. There are clear procedures to follow when pupils are absent. Leaders' actions have led to improvements in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils this academic year.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Current pupils are not making enough progress because teaching is weak.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 1 has been in the lowest 10% of schools for the past two years. In 2018, half of the pupils in Year 2 did not achieve the expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. As a result, pupils were not well prepared to move into key stage 2.
- For the past two years, disadvantaged pupils have made less progress than other pupils in the school and nationally by the end of key stage 2. The attainment of this group of pupils is also consistently below that of other pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2. In 2018, two thirds of disadvantaged pupils left the school poorly prepared for secondary education. Current disadvantaged pupils continue to underachieve because of leaders' ineffective use of additional funding and teaching that does not meet their needs.
- Similarly, the progress made by pupils with SEND is weak, particularly in writing and mathematics. This is because these pupils do not receive support that is tailored to their individual needs.
- The most able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Although attainment at the higher standards rose to be at least in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2018, the proportion of pupils working at greater depth in Year 2 remained low, particularly in writing and mathematics. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that teaching does not challenge the most able pupils sufficiently, which prevents them from achieving their potential.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check rose to be in line with the national average. Pupils can use their phonics skills to sound out words when reading. However, they do not routinely apply these skills in lessons to help their reading and spelling.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2018 was in line with national averages in reading and writing, and above the national average in writing. However, due to disruption to teaching and weak progress in other year groups, inspection evidence shows that pupils are currently underachieving across key stage 2.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Over the past three years, the number of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year has risen. However, the least and most able children do not all make good progress.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years. New staff are receiving support to improve their practice, and this is already paying dividends. For example, the reorganisation of the indoor environment has created clearly defined and well-resourced learning areas for children.
- The teaching of phonics in the Nursery and Reception classes is improving. Children use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read simple words and sentences.
- Adults use what they know about children's interests to plan activities that they enjoy. However, some of these activities lack purpose, which means that some children do not sustain their concentration. Furthermore, many activities do not challenge the most

able children sufficiently and these children do not make the progress of which they are capable.

- Some aspects of teaching are not good enough. For example, adults do not use questioning sufficiently well to deepen children's understanding and extend their thinking. Teachers do not make effective use of their observations of children's learning to plan suitably challenging 'next steps' and activities. This limits children's progress.
- Adults do not make thorough enough assessments of children's learning and progress. This means they do not have a precise understanding of children's starting points and do not target support to ensure that those with low starting points, including children eligible for additional funding, catch up quickly.
- The least able children, including those with SEND, do not receive the support they need to make strong progress in core skills such as ordering and counting. Too often, adults dominate activities and do not encourage children to explore and experiment for themselves.
- Children who speak English as an additional language make strong progress in their vocabulary development because adults model spoken language well.
- Adults are positive role models. They support children to share, to help one another and to take turns. Consequently, children play happily together, as well as on their own. They behave well and follow instructions quickly. When adults are speaking or reading a story, children listen attentively.
- Partnership with parents begins before children start school. Staff make home visits to get to know each child and leaders are beginning to invite parents into school to support them in being able to help their children's learning at home.

School details

Unique reference number	104381
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10052856

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Taylor
Headteacher	Helen McKenzie
Telephone number	01902 556451
Website	www.stpatrickscatholicprimary.co.uk
Email address	stpatricksprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018

Information about this school

- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is in line with the national average. The number of pupils with education, health and care plans is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- There is one class in each year group from Reception to Year 6. There is a morning Nursery class.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools with a religious character took place in January 2016.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in parts of 19 lessons. Five of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. One inspector visited the breakfast club.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally with two groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- An inspector listened to a group of pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- Inspectors examined the quality of work in pupils' English, mathematics and topic books. An inspector scrutinised children's learning journals.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with a group of school staff and took into consideration the 27 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and vice chair of the governing body and four governors. She also spoke to two representatives from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, information about current pupils' achievement, records of checks made on the quality of teaching, records relating to safeguarding, minutes of meetings of the governing body and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors took into consideration the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. An inspector spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Claire Jones, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Susan Helps

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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