

Inspection of a good school: St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy

Ling Forest Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 3NJ

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 July 2021

Outcome

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, A Voluntary Academy continues to be a good school.

However, the inspector has some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Patrick's is a happy and caring school. Pupils are looked after well. All members of the community are united in their aim to ensure a sense of 'belonging, sharing and caring'.

Pupils behave well. They understand the school's behaviour system. They enjoy receiving shamrocks and golden star awards. They know how sanctions work and how these help to keep the school a happy place. Pupils get on well with each other and extend a warm welcome to new people and visitors.

Pupils enjoy learning about the 'word of the week'. During the inspection it was 'awesome', and the previous week, 'courage'. Pupils understand how learning about these things helps them to develop personally and socially. They enjoy taking on roles to help them develop leadership skills, such as becoming members of the chaplaincy team and sports leaders.

The views of pupils, staff and parents are unanimously positive. One parent summed up many when they said, 'All staff have the very best interest of my child at heart. My child feels safe and valued.'

Pupils work hard in lessons. They listen carefully to what teachers say. Teachers make lessons engaging. There are some subjects within the school's curriculum that are not yet planned well enough. This means that pupils are not gaining the knowledge they need in certain subjects to be well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Teaching pupils to read is a high priority. In phonics, plans set out which sounds pupils should know and when. Teachers make phonics lessons fun and engaging. Pupils regularly revisit sounds they have learned before. Pupils who fall behind are given extra help to catch up.

Teachers read to pupils daily. Teachers promote a love of reading. They bring books to life and hold pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy reading and understand how it helps them to learn new things. They have an impressive knowledge of books and authors.

The mathematics curriculum is planned well. Leaders have made sure that content is taught in a logical order. They have made sure that pupils have caught up on the most important parts that were missed due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Lessons are taught consistently well. Every lesson begins with a 'flashback' which revisits things that pupils have learned before. Pupils remember what they have learned. They have an impressive grasp of the subject.

Other subjects are at differing stages of development. Some subjects, including science, computing and physical education, make clear what pupils should learn and know. Other subjects, including music, art, and design and technology, lack clarity about what pupils should learn and when. In these subjects, plans do not make clear which are the most important parts that pupils should know and remember.

Children in the early years enjoy playing together and learning new things. They are enthusiastic about the strawberries that they are growing and explained to the inspector why some of them are not yet ready to eat. Children like the firepit and know what they must do to stay safe. Adults in the early years are skilled at getting children to think and learn more. However, curriculum plans do not set out what children should know and be able to do at different points during their time in the early years.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help that they need. Leaders think carefully about the type of help that these pupils need. They make sure it is in place and regularly check to make sure that it is working as it should. Staff who work with pupils with SEND support them well.

The governing body is ambitious for the school. It is proud of the school's family ethos. Governors value the support they get from the trust.

The trust has an accurate view of the performance of the school. It is ambitious for its future. It provides senior leaders with regular support. It has helped senior leaders to develop their improvement plans, respond to the pandemic and to provide training and support for staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that safeguarding is given the highest priority. This is reflected in the large number of designated safeguarding leads that the school has. Staff receive lots of training to help them identify where pupils need help. Concerns are recorded thoroughly and shared with everyone who needs to know. Leaders follow up any concerns quickly.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, curriculum plans are not sequenced carefully enough. Plans do not make clear the most important things that pupils need to know and remember. This means pupils, in some subjects, do not remember what they have learned over time. Leaders should make sure that curriculum plans in all subjects are well sequenced and set out the most important things that pupils need to know and remember.
- Curriculum plans for the early years do not make clear what children should learn and when. There are no indicators of what children should know and be able to do at different points during their time in the early years. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for the early years sets out what children should learn and when.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, to be good in May 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school [here](#).

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.

School details

Unique reference number	140783
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10201083
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	243
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair of the board of trustees	Nigel Stevenson
Headteacher	Jane Smedley
Website	www.st-patricksrc.notts.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and groups of staff and pupils. He spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair, and representatives of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic multi-academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. To aid this, he spoke with leaders, pupils and staff, visited lessons and looked at samples of work. He listened to pupils read to adults in school.
- The inspector looked at the school's record of employment checks, a sample of the school's safeguarding records and spoke with safeguarding leaders.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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