

Inspection of a good school: St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Derwent Street, Workington, Cumbria CA14 2DW

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Outcome

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud ambassadors for their school. They flourish due to its peaceful atmosphere and the positive relationships that they have with staff, who care for them well. In the early years, children make a positive start to their education. They show great kindness towards each other. Pupils have impeccable manners. They are happy.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond well to the high aspirations that the school has for their achievement and conduct. They achieve well. Pupils demonstrate positive behaviour around the school.

Pupils make the most of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. These include clubs in art, cookery and a variety of sports. Pupils relish the chance to take part in the school's musical productions.

As school councillors, pupils have an active role in helping to improve the school. They aspire to the many leadership positions that are available to them. For example, pupils act as library leaders and buddies to younger children. They raise money for local and national charities.

Pupils enjoy trips, such as to places of worship, the library and a farm. These visits help them to deepen their understanding of the wider world. They take part in adventurous activities, including during residential stays. They become resilient young people. They show this in the positive attitudes that they have towards their learning.

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

Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They have an accurate view of the school's performance. They support and challenge the school appropriately. They assure themselves about the quality of education that pupils receive. The governing body has

worked closely with the school to create a welcoming culture where everyone is included and valued.

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum. It has thought carefully about the important information that pupils should learn and when they should learn it. This includes children in the Reception class. Pupils achieve well across a broad range of subjects. Their knowledge builds securely over time. In the early years, children make a strong start to their education. They are well prepared for the demands of key stage 1. The school ensures that most pupils are ready for each stage in their education.

Staff use their subject knowledge well to design activities that help pupils to follow the curriculum successfully. The school accurately identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. These pupils receive the support that they need to follow the curriculum alongside their peers. Children in the early years speak with confidence and clarity about what they have learned. They benefit from the highly effective interactions that they have with staff.

In the main, staff make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. However, on occasion, staff do not address promptly the gaps and misunderstandings that some pupils develop in their learning. This means that these pupils move on to new learning before they are ready.

The school has an accurate understanding of pupils' reading needs. Children begin to learn to read from the start of the Reception Year. Overall, staff deliver the phonics programme well. Most pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge receive the help that they need to catch up quickly. However, at times, the support that some pupils receive does not focus sufficiently on what they need to improve. When this happens, these pupils struggle to remember the sounds that staff have taught them. The books that pupils read from match the sounds that they already know. This helps them to become confident and fluent readers.

The school ensures that pupils read a variety of books that make a valuable contribution to their understanding of the world. For example, pupils learn about the importance of friendship, helping others and different cultures.

Pupils work extremely well together during lessons. They respect each other's views and opinions. The school provides a small number of pupils with highly intelligent support to improve their behaviour. Staff are quick to respond to pupils who are absent from school. They build positive relationships with parents and carers and provide the necessary help to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities that make a strong contribution to their wider development. Pupils know how to care for their physical and mental health and how to keep themselves safe. They value differences between people. They know the signs of a healthy relationship and how their body changes as they grow. An enterprise project teaches pupils how to run a small business. They become confident and independent young people. Staff undertake relevant training, which helps them to carry out their work effectively. The school provides staff with time to work together to make improvements without increasing their workload. For example, they have time to

refine the curriculums in a range of subjects. This supports their well-being, and they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, staff are not quick enough to identify and rectify the gaps and misconceptions in some pupils' knowledge, including in phonics. This means that these pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. The school should support staff in addressing gaps in pupils' learning to ensure that they successfully build a secure level of knowledge.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2015.

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 Ofsted 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.

Further information

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local

authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	112340
Local authority	Cumberland
Inspection number	10348109
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Jones
Headteacher	Sheryl Slack
Website	www.stpatricksworkington.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This Roman Catholic school is part of the Diocese of Lancaster. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in November 2023. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place by December 2028.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time inspection judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The inspector held meetings with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese.
- The inspector met with leaders to discuss SEND, pupils' behaviour and attitudes and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- The inspector observed some pupils from the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also considered responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. The inspector gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed the single central record and took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils. He considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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