



St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 122819
Local Authority NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Inspection number 292519
Inspection date 15 November 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Newell

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ling Forest Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Mansfield
Age range of pupils	3-11		Nottinghamshire NG18 3NJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623 478090
Number on roll (school)	223	Fax number	01623 478099
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Ken Daly
		Headteacher	Mrs Caroline Caille
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002		

Age group 3-11	Inspection date 15 November 2006	Inspection number 292519
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector over one day.

Description of the school

The school is average in size and has a large catchment area covering the parish boundaries. Most pupils are from White British families. A small number of pupils are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. A few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils' social and economic backgrounds vary but are broadly average. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Saint Patrick's is an outstanding school and rightly deserves the overwhelming support and confidence it gets from parents and the wider community. As a parent stated, 'The individual progress of pupils is amazing; I'm delighted my children come here.'

All staff go out of their way to meet the individual needs of the pupils and this contributes much to the exceptional overall progress that they make during their time in school. The school's success is due to how well the school is led and managed, the good quality teaching, the rich array of learning experiences and the exceptional care and support that are provided.

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, all staff and governors work together exceptionally well and share a desire to provide a high quality of education for all pupils. The school never rests on its laurels or stands still but instead just sets the bar higher. The school's self-evaluation is highly effective and at its core is the thorough analysis of test and assessment data and the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Any weaknesses that emerge are tackled swiftly and improvements follow. All these factors contribute to the excellent progress since the last inspection, the school's very strong capacity for continued improvement and the outstanding value for money it provides.

Achievement is outstanding. When children start at school, attainment is a little below average. By the time pupils leave school, standards are exceptionally high. The good provision in the Foundation Stage helps children to make good progress. As pupils move through the school progress does not falter and is at times outstanding, particularly in Year 6. The only relative weakness is that writing standards, as measured by the number of pupils who reach the higher levels, are not as strong as other subjects. Pupils need more opportunities to practise writing in wider contexts than at present. The procedures that are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress, the very challenging target setting and pupils' own knowledge of the levels they are working at, are all impressive and make a significant contribution to how well all pupils learn and achieve.

Teaching is good and at times outstanding because lessons are well paced, challenging and fun. Learning is brought springing to life by a curriculum that is rich and varied and provides many enrichment opportunities. Learning and pupils' well-being are further enhanced by the plentiful chances pupils have to gain a strong understanding of how to live healthily, stay safe and be economically aware. A particularly significant factor in the school's success is the pupils as they play their part to the full in making the school what it is. Their behaviour, attitudes, enthusiasm, desire to do well and the role they play in their own learning are all outstanding and help to create a 'special' ethos that wraps around the school. The many strengths of the school provide a winning combination that enables pupils to leave the school as confident, socially aware and high-achieving individuals.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further raise writing standards by planning more opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The good, and at times, better progress that all pupils make in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 means that standards are close to average by the end of the Reception year and above average by the end of Year 2. By the time that pupils leave the school standards are exceptionally high. A very high percentage of pupils reach Level 5 by Year 6, which is one level higher than expected for 11-year-olds. In 2006 the data shows that 100% of pupils reached Level 5 in science, 82% in reading and nearly 80% in mathematics. The 2005 national data to measure how well pupils progressed between Year 2 and Year 6 placed the school in the best 3% of schools nationally and showed that boys and girls and pupils of differing abilities or ethnicities achieved equally well. The provisional data for 2006 shows further improvement. These figures paint an impressive picture and continue the significantly upward trend in attainment which has been evident since 2003. The only 'blip' is in writing standards across the school which, although good, lag behind reading, particularly in the number of pupils reaching higher standards. The school is rigorously tackling this issue. Pupils' outstanding achievement and high attainment owe much to the good teaching, the excellent assessment and challenging target setting procedures that are ensured by the leadership of the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' outstanding personal development is reflected in their exemplary behaviour, their love of school, their infectious enthusiasm and their desire to do well. Pupils are adamant that bullying does not occur because, 'Behaviour is fantastic and we look out for one another.' Attendance is above the national average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils are very reflective, show a genuine and deep concern for the well-being of others and have high levels of knowledge and respect for cultures and traditions different from their own. Pupils feel that their views are always listened to and they relish the host of responsibilities and opportunities that are provided for them to make a telling contribution to the school and wider community. Pupils have a good awareness of what is needed to lead healthy lifestyles and an excellent understanding of how to keep safe. Setting up and participating in fund raising and other economic enterprises prepares them very well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding aspects. Lessons are often packed with challenge and teachers expect a lot of pupils. Relationships are excellent and teachers are very effective at building up pupils' self-esteem so that they are always ready to ask and answer questions. The good use made of computerised whiteboards brings learning to life and seizes and maintains the interest of the pupils. Teaching assistants play an influential role in supporting and enhancing learning. Consistently outstanding teaching is evident in Year 6 because of very high expectations, excellent subject knowledge and a vibrancy that enthuses the pupils and keeps them hanging on the teacher's every word. Occasionally in other year groups, work is not consistently matched to the differing abilities of pupils. Assessment is excellent. The rigorous and robust procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets, the marking of pupils' work and pupils' involvement in setting and reviewing their own targets all make a significant contribution to achievement.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is rich and varied and adds to pupils' academic and personal development. From the Foundation Stage to Year 6 literacy, numeracy, computer and investigative skills are mostly developed very well but there is room for improvement in how pupils' writing skills are developed in different subjects. Good provision is made for pupils with learning difficulties and the small number of pupils at an early stage of acquiring English. The good use the school makes of visits, visitors and links with institutions such as The Northern Ballet Theatre, together with a good array of after-school clubs, all bring another dimension to pupils' learning. They also have good opportunities to learn a foreign language and to perform in dance and drama productions in front of large audiences. The headteacher's vision for a curriculum 'that enables all pupils to grow in every way' is further realised through the good emphasis the school places on helping pupils live healthily, develop good citizenship skills and make a noticeable contribution to the local community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

This aspect of school life is outstanding. A view of one parent, echoed by others, is that, 'The school provides an excellent learning platform in a very caring atmosphere.' Pupils feel very safe and secure in school and know that there is always someone to talk to if they have any concerns. As pupils pointed out, 'There is a worry box in the prayer area that you can put a note into.... but it's always empty!' Very thorough attention is paid to procedures for safeguarding pupils, child protection, risk assessment and general health and safety. The school draws very effectively on a range of external

support agencies if help is needed for pupils experiencing learning or other difficulties. A particularly impressive feature of the school's excellent assessment procedures is the role played by pupils. They set and review their own personal academic and social targets and have a very good grasp of precisely what level they are working at in a number of subjects and what they need to do to reach the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management by the headteacher are outstanding and are pivotal reasons for the impressive and continued improvement in standards over the last three years. She is very well supported by a highly effective deputy headteacher and strong senior management team. Together they have created an exceptional team spirit which is focused on attaining high standards and the best quality of education for all pupils. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and effectively by the head, deputy and subject leaders. Data analysis is rigorous and robust. The school's self-evaluation is highly effective, if a little modest, but it reflects the school's constant desire to do better. It is this desire that lies at the core of the school's many successes. Also any identified weaknesses are tackled swiftly through very well planned support, interventions or strategies that often see immediate and then sustained improvement. Governance is good because governors are both very supportive and play an influential role in monitoring the work and performance of the school. Based on the school's excellent track record of improvement, its capacity for further and continued success is outstanding.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

16 November 2006

Dear Children

St. Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, Ling Forest Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 3NJ

You will probably remember that I visited your school not too long ago and I am now writing to let you know what I found out. Before I do, I would first of all like to say thank you for making me feel so welcome and making my visit one that I will remember for a long time. I have told your teachers how you were all so helpful and polite and that you were great ambassadors for the school. I managed to talk to lots of you and it was good to hear how much you enjoy school, the after-school clubs and all the other activities that are on offer.

There are so many impressive things about Saint Patrick's School that it is actually an **OUTSTANDING SCHOOL!** Teachers and other staff make learning enjoyable and help you to achieve exceptionally well and to reach very high standards by the time that you leave school. The school is really good in the way that it helps you to learn about the importance of keeping fit, staying healthy and safe and it works very hard at making sure you are cared for and looked after very well. Another strength is the way in which your headteacher runs the school and helps to make it such an exciting place to learn. But another great strength of the school is**YOU**. The way you behave, how hard you work, how you know the targets you are working towards, how you contribute to the life of the school and how you care for one another are just some examples.

I have talked to your teachers about how they can help make the school even better. They are going to help you reach even higher standards in writing so that your writing is as good as your reading, mathematics and science standards.

The headteacher and all the staff and governors want the school to carry on getting better and better. Having met you, I know you will continue to play your part as well. I wish you every success in the future. It was a pleasure and privilege to meet you.

Martin Newell

Lead Inspector