

# St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	125715
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	293341
<b>Inspection date</b>	2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graeme Bassett

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	125
School	
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mary MacDonald
<b>Headteacher</b>	Noel Neeson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 January 2001
<b>School address</b>	Cashmore Avenue Leamington Spa CV31 3EU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01926 425958
<b>Fax number</b>	01926 423 958

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional inspectors

## Description of the school

Situated on the southern edge of Leamington Spa, the school draws most of its pupils from the neighbouring area, which is less advantaged than usual, but some attend from further away. The number on roll is increasing and currently there are four classes, each having a mixed age range, and also a Reception class and a part- time nursery class. Most pupils are White British but the proportion of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Taking the intake as a whole, the children's attainment is below the level expected when starting in the Reception Year. The headteacher was appointed in January 2006, following a period of disruption, with four acting headteachers and many staff changes. The school has recently received a Healthy School award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that is improving rapidly because of the outstanding leadership of the new headteacher. With the support of staff, governors and the local authority, the headteacher has drawn up a rigorous programme of improvement based on a clear evaluation of how well the school is doing. Good overall leadership and management mean that many weaknesses, which in the past have had a detrimental effect upon pupils' progress, have been tackled with exceptional organisational skills and have been quickly resolved. Some of these initiatives have not been in place long enough to raise standards but have already resulted in significant improvements in teaching and pupils' personal development. Consequently, the school is now growing in popularity with parents and gaining respect in the community. The staff and governors have a good understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards and have a very positive attitude towards the shared vision to improve achievement. The capacity for further improvement is good and, as one parent said, 'The school goes from strength to strength'.

Improvements needed to be made because pupils were not doing as well as they should and progress in some classes was inadequate. Last year, standards were exceptionally low and achievement was unsatisfactory at the end of Year 6. This underachievement has now been eradicated and pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, now make satisfactory progress. Standards are now slightly below average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards below expected skills and understanding. They make satisfactory progress overall and great strides in their personal and emotional development. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory and teachers' expectations of what pupils can do have improved. The improvement in teaching has made an immediate impact, especially in the current Year 6, where good teaching is more consistent. This has enabled these pupils to achieve well and to make up for lost time by reaching average standards in English, mathematics and science. Teaching overall is generally no better than satisfactory because comments made in pupils' books are not followed up rigorously enough to ensure that pupils correct their mistakes. Teachers do not always plan precisely enough for the full range of pupils' abilities within their mixed aged classes. Opportunities to develop English skills and understanding through other subjects such as science and history are often lost. Nevertheless, the curriculum is satisfactory and plans are well advanced to implement the new guidelines for September. The school is in a good position to move forward because other aspects of its work are good. The school evaluates itself well but underestimates the impact of its provision on pupils' personal development. The care, support and guidance given to pupils are good. The pastoral care is outstanding and forms a keystone in pupils' good personal development and self-esteem. As a result, pupils' personal development and well-being are good and are reflected in their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good progress with which pupils with little or no spoken English have acquired English as additional language is a credit to the significant support given by the school.

Good assessment tracking records are being established for each pupil. These are beginning to be used to help teachers' support and challenge pupils more effectively but this system has not yet had enough time to show its full outcome.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English, mathematics and science through planning tasks that match more precisely the full range of pupils' ability within the mixed aged classes.
- Follow up the comments written in pupils' books to ensure that pupils correct mistakes and benefit from the advice they are given.
- Ensure that opportunities to develop English skills and understanding through other subjects are fully exploited.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are slightly below average and achievement is satisfactory. The school's results in the national tests last year show exceptionally low standards in Year 6 and below average in Year 2. In both year groups, the progress was unsatisfactory. Standards are improving and underachievement has now been halted. There is no significant difference between the achievements of the boys and girls. Children make satisfactory progress in the nursery class and this continues as they enter Year 1. Standards are slightly below average and pupils progress satisfactorily as they move up the school. Currently, the pupils in Year 6 are achieving much better than this because of the good teaching. They are working conscientiously and are making good progress to compensate for their unsatisfactory achievements caused by disruptions in the past. Standards in Year 6 are currently average, with some pupils exceeding the expected level for their age.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good. Nearly all pupils enjoy school and are very positive about their teachers who 'do everything they can to help you'. Pupils are attentive and hardworking in class. These positive attitudes are not reflected in the attendance figures which, although improving, remain below average. This is because a few pupils do not attend as regularly as they should, despite efforts made by the school to improve this.

Behaviour is good and pupils from different ethnic groups get on very well with each other. Pupils feel that there is very little bullying and what there is, is dealt with well by staff.

Pupils are very aware of what they need to do to stay healthy, although some still tuck into crisps at breaktimes. Pupils adopt safe practices and are careful with the use of tools such as scissors. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the work of the school council and by taking on various responsibilities for the day-to-day running of the school. They are developing their basic skills in literacy and numeracy satisfactorily to equip them for their future well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall which has resulted in satisfactory and improved progress and eradicated underachievement. In the Foundation Stage, the teacher has a clear understanding of what each child has achieved and keeps comprehensive records to show their

development. Occasionally, children are not given sufficient opportunities to work independently and are too dependent upon the teacher for ideas.

There are good features to the teaching across the school and good assessment records are maintained for each pupil. However, good teaching is more consistent in Year 6 where pupils' progress has accelerated rapidly this year. The main reason teaching is satisfactory overall, rather than good, is because teachers do not plan tasks precisely enough to meet the needs of the full range of pupils' ability within their mixed aged class. On many occasions, teachers do not follow up remarks written in pupils' books to ensure that pupils correct work or respond to advice.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

Teachers manage the balanced curriculum effectively for the different ages within the classes by adopting a rolling programme of topics. Opportunities to link work between different subjects in order to make tasks more interesting are sometimes lost. For example, English is not yet developed sufficiently well through other subjects such as history and science. The school is preparing action plans to establish this.

The curriculum in the Foundation stage is based securely upon the six areas of learning but children do not have sufficient opportunities to play and work independently. To some extent, this is because the outside area is not sufficiently developed but opportunities are also missed in the classrooms.

There is a good range of clubs and activities outside lessons, which are enjoyed by pupils. Visits and the residential visit enhance pupils' cultural and spiritual development effectively.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Pastoral care is outstanding and all staff show great care and concern for each pupil's personal development and well-being. Support for different groups of pupils, such as the pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, is good. The support given to the Polish pupils is exceptional and has helped them to make good progress not only in the acquisition of English as an additional language but also across all other subjects. The Christian foundation offers further support through the good focus upon developing values for life. Booster groups are a strong feature of the school's support and pupils willingly attend these groups before and after school.

All reasonable measures are taken to ensure that pupils stay safe. There are good links with parents and also with support services that provide extra help for those who need it.

Academic guidance is good and most pupils know what they need to do to improve. However, systems for checking pupils' progress are relatively new and have not yet been fully embedded.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The deputy headteacher and senior staff give good support to the headteacher. All staff are very clear about what the school needs to do next to become more effective. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management and is determined to ensure that all pupils have the best possible opportunities for a good education. He has instigated vital improvements to

the school in order to raise standards and these are now beginning to take effect. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance, particularly teaching, are rigorous and enabling the staff to make substantial improvements to raise standards and pupils' achievements. The headteacher is also patient enough to know that changes take time. The governing body is very well organised, supportive and committed. The governors carry out their responsibilities well. They are knowledgeable and have good procedures to find out what is happening in school. During the period of disruption, they showed a determination to do the best for the school. They have played an important role, working alongside the headteacher to clear the deficit budget through prudent monitoring and control of expenditure. Areas for improvement at the last inspection have been completed. Value for money is satisfactory and the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Cashmore Avenue, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 3EU

Thank you for helping Mrs Lacey and me when we visited today. We enjoyed meeting you and finding out about your school.

- We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that it is improving rapidly and already does some things well. These are the things that are particularly good.
- Your headteacher leads and manages your school excellently. He has clear ideas about the future developments and has brought about many improvements.
- The progress most of you make is satisfactory, and standards of your work in English, mathematics and science are slightly below average. However, pupils in Year 6 are making a big effort to make good progress so that their work is better.
- You are all developing good attitudes towards your work and towards each other. You know a lot about keeping safe and you understand how to remain healthy.
- You are very polite and you behave well.
- Staff and the teachers give you good support and care for you well.
- The teaching and curriculum are satisfactory. Your teachers are improving their teaching and also developing how subjects are taught to make your learning more enjoyable.
- There are still some ways in which your school could be better. We have asked your headteacher and governors to:
  - help the teachers to plan more precisely in each class so that all of you are challenged by tasks that accurately match what you need to learn next
  - make certain that your teachers help you to use the comments they make in your books so that you understand what you have to do next to improve
  - ensure that you have opportunities to develop your English skills and understanding when studying other subjects such as science, history or religious education.

Once again, thank you for your help.

Mr Graeme Bassett (Lead inspector)