

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123555
Local Authority	Telford and Wrekin
Inspection number	327938
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Roy Bowers HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	222
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	41
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gay Kendrick
Headteacher	Sarah Louise Coggins
Date of previous school inspection	12 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	North Road Wellington Telford TF1 3ER

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	21–22 October 2008
Inspection number	327938

Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is an average size school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children in Nursery and Reception. Attainment on entry is broadly as expected although a significant number of children enter into Nursery with literacy skills which are below those typical for children of a similar age. The percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is lower than that found in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who receive additional support in lessons is below average. Many of those receiving support have moderate learning difficulties and find basic literacy and numeracy difficult. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has achieved the Schools for Health Gold Award, the International Schools Award and the National Healthy Schools Status in recognition of its work in these areas.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and looks after the pupils well. Parents say that children are happy in lessons and enjoy coming to school. One parent said, 'The school is like one big family. Everyone knows everyone and they care for each other well.' This is typical of many comments made by parents during the inspection. The school helps all pupils feel valued and secure through giving high priority to pupils' social and emotional development, and providing a good level of pastoral care and support. Consequently, pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils attend well and have positive attitudes to their learning. The good partnership with the church and external agencies promotes pupils' personal development and welfare well. In the EYFS, good teaching and a curriculum which is matched well to individual needs help children make good progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and reach average standards at the end of Year 6. Teaching is satisfactory. Although there is some good teaching, there are too many lessons where teaching is only satisfactory and pupils do not make as much progress as they could. In some classes, the pace of learning is too slow and work is not challenging enough because it is not well matched to pupils' needs. Although the pastoral care of pupils is good, the academic guidance that pupils receive is only satisfactory. There are some good examples of marking of pupils' work which give clear advice on how to improve, but this is not consistent in all classes. Some pupils know their targets for improvement, but many do not. Targets are not consistently integrated into day-to-day learning and provide only general guidance for improvement. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched through a wide range of activities including French, residential visits, art, dance, a variety of sports and the opportunity for pupils to play a wide selection of musical instruments. The school is beginning to reorganise the curriculum to ensure a better progression of skills and knowledge, and to ensure that literacy and numeracy skills are taught in a variety of subjects. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils understand clear moral and social codes, behave well and show respect for property, other pupils and adults. They have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy through correct eating habits and exercise. Pupils readily take on the responsibilities offered to them in school and in the local community. The children's committee feels that the teachers listen to their views and act on them when they can. These positive attitudes, together with their achievement in lessons, give pupils a satisfactory grounding for their future learning. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Following a period of staffing instability and declining standards, the headteacher has successfully established a clear direction for improvement. The key stage coordinators are highly skilled teachers who are committed to improving the work of the school. However, they are still developing their leadership and management skills and are not holding the staff to account well enough for the progress made by pupils. Capacity to improve is satisfactory. Governors are supportive of the school and, through their visits to the school and reports from the headteacher, know the school well.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS is well led and managed. Children enjoy their work, play happily together and achieve well in a friendly and caring environment. Parents report that the children settle in quickly because of the welcoming ethos of the school and supportive induction arrangements. Relationships between adults and children are good. This helps create a relaxed, purposeful atmosphere where children feel safe and secure. Behaviour is good and children have positive

attitudes to their learning. Adults quickly assess the individual learning needs of all the children, including those learning English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties. Detailed records are kept of pupils' progress, which help teachers match activities closely to the individual needs of all pupils. Close partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure all children are well supported. Teaching and learning are good. There is an appropriate balance of teacher-led activities and opportunities for children to choose for themselves. Teachers and teaching assistants plan stimulating experiences for the children which cover all areas of learning. Excellent use is made of a small outdoor area with shrubs and trees to stimulate children's imagination and curiosity. The school has already begun to improve the separate outdoor play area which does not promote children's learning as well as it could.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that in all classes, work given to pupils is well matched to their needs, provides a good level of challenge and the pace of lessons is brisk.
- Develop academic guidance so that pupils have a better understanding of how to improve their work.
- Develop the leadership and management skills of the key stage coordinators, ensuring that they hold their team members to account more effectively for the progress made by pupils.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

From the good start in the EYFS, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. By the time they leave Year 2, standards are average. Although progress is only satisfactory in the first year of Key Stage 2, it quickly starts to accelerate. Because of improved teaching, the decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in recent years has been halted and overall standards are beginning to rise. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. Some of the pupils who are learning English as an additional language achieve well. This is because the school provides good individual support for these pupils and works very well with their parents.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are friendly, courteous and show a high level of care and concern for others. 'The thing that impresses me most is the caring attitude of the pupils towards each other', said one parent. Pupils play together well and willingly help those who wait at the 'friendship stop'. Although pupils say that there are no instances of bullying, they are confident that staff will help them if necessary. Strong links with the welfare service and initiatives undertaken by the school have promoted good attendance which has risen steadily in recent years. The effective children's committee is enthusiastic and well organised. Members of the committee gained a local 'active involvement' award for their contribution to developing the quality of the lunchtime break. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community and can explain the importance of the money they raise to support a variety of charities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good quality relationships between adults and pupils are evident throughout the school. Pupils say that they like their teachers and enjoy the lessons. After an unsettled period due to staff absence and delayed appointments, the school's monitoring shows that the quality of teaching is improving. In some classes, teaching is good, but in too many lessons it is only satisfactory. Where pupils make most progress, teachers match work closely to pupils' capabilities, set tasks which provide challenge for all pupils and stimulate pupils' learning through brisk pace. In these lessons, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are capable of a good level of independence. However, this is not consistent and pupils in some classes do not make the progress they could.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A strong personal, social and health education programme, supported well by a variety of external agencies, contributes well to pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle. Although the curriculum provides a satisfactory overview of activities covered, the whole-school curriculum plan which ensures that pupils' skills are built on as they move through the school is not yet fully developed. There is some effective use of information and communication technology which stimulates pupils' interests and motivates them to learn, but it is not consistent in all classes. The school is aware that the curriculum does not offer pupils sufficient opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in a variety of subjects and contexts. Links with the local church and activities such as faith study weeks and 'one world week' contribute well to pupils' understanding of the beliefs and needs of people from around the world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

One parent echoed the feelings of many and said, 'My child says he feels important because his teacher cares about him.' Rigorous procedures are in place for safeguarding, child protection and health and safety. Support is provided for vulnerable pupils through effective links with a wide range of services including the local authority language support advisory teacher and the multicultural development service. Good support for pupils and parents who speak Polish as their first language is provided through discussions with the Polish teaching assistant. However, the high level of pastoral care is not balanced by the quality of academic guidance. Some of the marking of pupils' work gives clear guidance for pupils on how to improve, but this is not consistent. All pupils have targets for improvement. However, too often they do not relate to what is being taught in the lessons and only provide pupils with a general overview of how to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is resolute, committed and determined to raise the achievement of all pupils. Through the rigorous self-evaluation process, she has gained a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in all aspects of the school. Regular and systematic monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress has helped the headteacher identify areas of weakness and provide support where needed. Some of the initiatives implemented are beginning to have an impact on raising standards and achievement. The recent appointment of the deputy headteacher has significantly strengthened the leadership team. The key stage coordinators share the headteacher's enthusiasm for improvement. However, they are not having as much impact on raising standards and achievement as they could because their skills of leadership and holding staff to account are not sufficiently developed. All leaders are committed to promoting equality and encouraging pupils to value diversity. Consequently, the school's contribution to community cohesion is good. The governing body has recently been reorganised with many new governors appointed. Training is planned so that all governors can monitor the work of the school even more effectively. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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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	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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

22 October 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Telford, TF1 3ER Thank you for making our recent visit to your school such a pleasant experience. We enjoyed visiting your lessons, looking at your books and talking to you. We were pleased to find that you enjoy coming to school and work hard while you are there. We were impressed with your behaviour and attitudes. You are polite, well mannered and get on well together. The teachers are kind and helpful, and want you all to do your best. We have judged the school to be satisfactory. You are making satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science, but many of you could do even better. We have asked that in all lessons you work at a faster rate and are challenged more by work which is well matched to your abilities. We have also asked your headteacher to ensure that all marking of your work informs you clearly about how to improve. All of you have targets for improvement but sometimes the targets do not help you learn as well as they could. Your headteacher has promised that this will improve. All the adults work hard for you and some teachers take on extra responsibilities. We have asked some of them to become even better at making sure that the school continues to improve and you all make even better progress. You can help all the teachers by continuing to work hard at school. We shall take away many good memories of your school and have very much enjoyed the time we have spent with you. Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers Her Majesty's Inspector